JCCCNC Welcomes Record High 320 Volunteers at the 7th Annual Colma Japanese Cemetery Clean-up Day

June 27, 2016 (San Francisco) – Over 300 volunteers ages 4 to 90 gathered on Saturday, May 21, 2016 for the Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California’s (JCCCNC) Annual Colma Japanese Cemetery Clean-up Day in preparation for the 65th Annual Community Memorial Day Services. Volunteers from around the Bay Area journeyed to the cemetery to pull weeds, rake leaves, rinse headstones, and place 500 fresh flowers throughout the three-acre cemetery.

In attendance at the clean-up were Consul General Jun Yamada and Deputy Consul General Shoichi Nagayoshi from the Consulate General of Japan in San Francisco; members of the Japanese Chamber of Commerce of Northern California; boy scout troops and the JCCCNC’s Shinzen families amongst many other groups and individual members of the community.

This annual community service program organized by the JCCCNC began in 2010 as a way to honor the past, remember those who passed on, bring the community together and educate others about a place that deeply represents the history of the Japanese American community.

In celebration of the 110th Anniversary of San Francisco’s Japantown, the JCCCNC and the Japanese Benevolent Society unveiled a new bulletin board to help tell the story of the Japanese Cemetery in Colma. Peter Chuck generously donated his time to design and construct the new bulletin board and also provide the structural engineering services for the project pro-bono.

The JCCCNC thanks the following organizations for helping to make this project a success: Boy Scouts of America Troops 12, 29 and 58; Girl Scouts of America Cadette Troop 62092; Buddhist Church of San Francisco; Gentryu Arts; Japanese Benevolent
Society of California; Japan Society of Northern California; Japanese Chamber of Commerce of Northern California; Nihonmachi Little Friends, Japanese Benevolent Society; Japanese Community Youth Council (JCYC), Japanese American Religious Federation (JARF); SF Mitakai; and the San Mateo Japanese American Community Center.

For more information or to have a group or organization participate in next year’s clean-up scheduled for Saturday, May 20, 2017, contact Jennifer Hamamoto at (415) 567-5505.

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**About the Colma Japanese Cemetery**
The Japanese Cemetery is located in the quiet town of Colma on the San Francisco peninsula. It takes about 20 minutes from San Francisco by car. The three-acre cemetery is the final resting place for more than 5,000 people, and the tower commemorating three crewmen from the famous ship Kanrin-Maru is there as well. The pioneers of the Japanese American community built the cemetery in 1901 and received a grant from the Meiji Emperor of Japan in 1906 to provide “for the relief of sick, disabled or destitute persons of the Japanese race” in California and to provide “a suitable burial ground for deceased Japanese.”

The Japanese Benevolent Society of California was established in 1890. The Society performed its historic mandate over the years, assisting those in need and acquiring land in Colma, California, for a Japanese cemetery. It also served as a unifying force in the Japanese American community by bringing together the Buddhist, Shinto and Christian religious organizations, and by participating in local historical, cultural, and memorial events that honor the Japanese heritage in the United States.

**About the JCCCNC**
Envisioned by the Japanese American community, JCCCNC will be an everlasting foundation of our Japanese American ancestry, cultural heritage, histories and traditions. The JCCCNC strives to meet the evolving needs of the Japanese American community through programs, affordable services and facility usage. The JCCCNC is a non-profit community center based in San Francisco.