JCCCNC TABEMASHO 2016: Bunka Matsuri
Celebrating 30 Years Since Opening Doors

San Francisco (August 19, 2016) – In celebration of its 30th anniversary since opening their doors, the Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California (JCCCNC) will be hosting their annual fundraising event, TABEMASHO 2016: Bunka Matsuri on Saturday, September 17 at their facility at 1840 Sutter Street in San Francisco. But equally important, they will also recognize Nobusuke Fukuda and Edith Tanaka for their leadership role as former Presidents of the JCCCNC.

2016 is the year many different anniversaries, including the 30th anniversary since opening doors, 110th anniversary of San Francisco’s Japantown, and the 5th anniversary of the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami. The title of the event, “Bunka Matsuri” translates to “Cultural Festival” at which the JCCCNC will be touching upon and celebrating all anniversaries at the event.

Fukuda and Tanaka served as JCCCNC’s Presidents during some of the most challenging, uncertain and also exciting times in the organization’s history. One of the principle goals of the JCCCNC at that time was to be a focal point for the community, but since then they have become something more, a place that is called a second home for many individuals and families. The JCCCNC would not be here today, 30 years later, if it were not for the Nisei generation for their leadership in shaping its vision and philanthropy and Fukuda and Tanaka will represent them both at the JCCCNC’s annual fundraising event this year.

The program will also highlight three cultural artists from Northern Japan who will share their one of a kind handmade masterpieces. When the 3-11 Great East Japan Earthquake, Tsunami and Nuclear Disaster occurred five years ago, many of the artists residing in the area were affected by the disaster and economic impact caused by the devastation. In its Rebuilding Phase of the Northern Japan Earthquake Relief Fund recovery effort, the JCCCNC allocated some funding to help support artists whose small family businesses were impacted by the effects of 3-11. Each of these family businesses have played a key role in their local tourist economy by preserving the handicap that their area is known for in Japan. The three artists invited, although their businesses have been impacted by 3-11, have also used their craft to help with the recovery effort by bringing awareness to the cause and helping to bring cheer to people’s lives.
• **Koyo Asakura**, an eighth generation kokeshi master is busy year round to make his Togatta style kokeshi doll. Kokeshi doll enthusiasts know that it is important for kokeshi masters to be a part of each phase of creating a kokeshi doll, including the selection of the tree that serves as the foundation for the finished product. Master Asakura uses mizuki (birchwood) and has branched out to create more colorful and whimsical kokeshi while still remaining loyal to the historical process and tradition his family has maintained for over 200 years.

• 13th generation **Master Watanabe of Shirakawa Daruma** has been creating the iconic Daruma style of Shirakawa City, located in the Fukushima Prefecture for 40 years. Master Watanabe believes that it is important to preserve and protect the traditional style of daruma as well as the venue that it is produced in and the Watanabe studio was awarded historic preservation status by the Shirakawa City government as the original footprint and many areas of the workshop have remained unchanged since the Edo Period. Master Watanabe’s wife Sachiko is also a well respected artists who produces a more modern style of daruma. She is often requested to make one of a kind daruma for many businesses, individuals and special events, including for the SF Giants, commissioned by the JCCCNC.

• **Nozawa Mingei Hin** is the main producer of akabeko in Japan, located in the region of Nishi Aizu. Master Hourin is a master hariko creator and is especially known for his traditional red painted paper mache cow, each which is made by hand and painted with careful precision so that the owner can enjoy it for many decades. Even the box that the akabeko is packaged and sold in is handmade by a local nongovernmental agency in the area that employs physically and mentally challenged people who rely on Nozawa Mingei Hin’s orders as their main source of income. Minako Hayakawa, is also well known and respected for her okiagari hariko where she paints well recognized figures onto traditionally created and molded hariko to encourage younger artists and customers to once again take interest and pride in mingei crafts.

Despite the changing times and attitudes of the modern Japanese consumer who no longer purchases and displays traditional mingei pieces in their homes as they once did, these artists have not swayed away from tradition and continue to make the same products in the same method and style of their ancestors.

At the September 19th event, the JCCCNC will celebrate Nobusuke Fukuda, Edith Tanaka and the three cultural artists with new and exciting format for their event. Instead of serving a traditional dinner like they have in the past, this year they will feature 14 different matsuri-style food booths hosted by the best Japanese restaurants and community chefs in San Francisco. Guests are encouraged to graze their way through a Japanese festival with friends, family and loved ones. Popular Bay Area restaurants and businesses, such as Bashamichi, Benihana, Café Mums, Kirimachi Ramen, and Yamasho will line the Center’s beautifully decorated gymnasium, including sake tastings from the Tohoku region of Japan; community chefs, including JCCCNC Board Member Kyle Tatsumoto, Graig Inaba, and Jeff Wun will also serve delicious home-
cooked treats and Nikkei comfort foods at their personal food booths.

The event will also present a silent and live auction featuring a trip to Japan for four with airfare donated by JAL and five-night accommodations provided by KIE.

Supporting the event (as of August 19) are Presenting Sponsors Japan Airlines, The Henri and Tomoye Takahashi Charitable Foundation, and Union Bank; Benefactor Sponsor Wells Fargo; Patron Sponsor Japanese Chamber of Commerce of Northern California and Pacific Gas & Electric Company. Registration and silent auction will open promptly at 3:00 p.m., doors and food vendors will open at 4:00 p.m., and the program will commence at 5:00 p.m. Cost is $175 per person for reserved table seating and $50 for children 6-12 years. RSVP deadline is Wednesday, September 7, 2016.

Call (415) 567-5505 or visit www.jcccnc.org for additional information on the event. The JCCNC is located at 1840 Sutter Street, San Francisco, CA 94115.

Proceeds from the event will go towards the development of dynamic cultural, educational, social, and outreach programs that serve the 185,000 visitors the Center welcomes each year.

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