



Mukogawa Fort Wright Institute

日本文化センターニュース

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Japanese Cultural Center Newsletter

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MFWI at Valleyfest!

Article by Midori Taniguchi & Hitomi Sano, Muko News Reporter

We joined the Bon dance for Valleyfest on September 20th. We wanted to pass on Japanese culture to American people during our stay in Spokane. We thought Valleyfest was a good chance to get on with many American people when we heard it was held, so we decided to take part in it.

At the first practice, we were taught by an RA because we could not do the *bon dance*. We realized that we didn't know our culture, and we felt so happy for American people to know Japanese culture and to enjoy bon dancing.



On the day of Valleyfest, we were surprised that a very nice stage was prepared. We were glad about that. Because we felt nervous, we were worried about dancing well. However, we could relax because American people supported us.



Then we danced *Kouhaku-ondo*, *Hanagasaondo*, and *Tankou-bushi*. American people danced with us during

Tankou-bushi. We were pleased that we could share with American people and exchange our culture with them. We felt the connection with many people. Even though they spoke a different language, we could share the pleasure with them. We want to take part in many things. We had a very good time.

Valleyfest Sidenote:

Saturday, September 20, 2008: Valleyfest has become an annual event where volunteer MFWI students can show their culture by performing dances in their beautiful *yukatas*. Valleyfest is loaded with lots of activities and food venues so the students can enjoy themselves!

The students practiced twice under the direction of Peggy Heyamoto who graciously volunteered her time.



Spokane-Nishinomiya Sister City Fundraising Dinner

There was a Spokane-Nishinomiya Sister City Society Association Dinner held at the Japanese Cultural Center on Wednesday, September 17, 2008, from 6-8pm. JCC was able to assist Polly Kazcmerak and Rol Herriges from the Association help with their Fundraising Dinner.



Winner of one of the door prizes!

There were over 50 participants that came for the dinner. After introductions and welcome we had a tea ceremony performed by Hiroko Clevenger with



Guests enjoy meal and conversations.

Geoff Ruzicki as moderator and assistants Ayako Inotani and Akiko Melton. The Sukiyaki Inn served a five course dinner of different Japanese dishes. At the end there were door prizes for the guests!

Donations

Maneki Neko Story

When my husband and I lived in Japan in 1991, a very kind family, the Noguchis, befriended us. We studied *nihon buyou* at their house. After returning to the U.S. in 1992, we remained in contact with them. Our son, Ian, was born on June 19, 1996, so they sent him the *Maneki Neko* which we had displayed in his room until we donated it to JCC. Ian felt he wanted to display cars in his room where the *Maneki Neko* was, so we discussed what we should do. Together, Ian and I decided to donate the *Maneki Neko* to JCC where thousands of American children would be greeted by him, and yet, we could still see him when we wanted. We last saw the Noguchi family when we visited Tokyo in 2006. They remain dear to us. We are very happy that the *Maneki Neko* will become part of JCC. Thanks, Jill Josquin, MFWI teacher (pictured above)



Hiroko Clevenger demonstrating tea ceremony to all guests including Spokane Mayor Mary Verner.

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Thank you to Debra Calkins (pictured left) for her donations of dolls to the Japanese Cultural Center!

Once again, a big thank you to Hirohito Yokochi for all the donated books!

M-F 10-5pm &
2nd/4th Saturdays 10-noon & by appt
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