

## 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Eastside Nihon Matsuri (Aki Matsuri) (Sept. 6-7, 2014)

The 17th Annual Aki Matsuri was held on September 6 and 7 at Bellevue College.

Various Japan-related organizations introduced Japanese culture to an enthusiastic crowd, including tea ceremony, flower arrangement, calligraphy, martial arts, taiko, Japanese dance, and kimono through demonstrations, lectures, performances, and booth exhibits.

This year's Aki Matsuri featured a ceramic artist, Keizaburo Kubodera from Tobe-Town, Ehime Prefecture, Japan, who exhibited his artwork and interacted with Matsuri attendees. Also featured was Professor of Asian Performing Arts at Musashino University & Certified Kita School Noh Instructor, Mr. Richard Emmert, who presented a Noh Introduction/Training session.



Taiko Performance on Stage



Water Balloon Yo-Yo Fishing



Lecture on Ceramics by Mr. Kubodera



Calligraphy Booth

The Consulate General of Japan, a co-sponsor, had a booth where we distributed various informational materials, including *Niponica*, which introduces the splendor of Japan's culture, and pamphlets promoting all the ways Japan is open for travel and business. As at last year's Aki Matsuri and this year's Seattle Cherry Blossom and Japanese Cultural Festival, the "haiku tree" was set up for visitors to compose their original haiku for display; Japan's latest technology was introduced through "Paro" the therapeutic robot; and the DVD "Japan Fascinating Diversity" was shown.



Consulate Booth

In two days, over 22,000 visitors attended the festival and enjoyed great opportunities to gain further understanding of Japan.