

15th Annual Aki Matsuri

The annual Japanese fall festival, Aki Matsuri, was held on the weekend of September 8th and 9th at Bellevue College. As seen during the previous years, the festival was packed with thousands of visitors, who were introduced to various aspects of Japanese culture in their respective forms and shapes.



The 15th annual Aki Matsuri enjoyed the privilege of visit from a special guest from Sendai, Japan – the 4th generation metal fittings craftsperson, Mr. Eikichi Yaegashi, who makes very decorative hardware for the Sendai-style *Tansu* (a chest of drawers). Mr. Yaegashi presented a demonstration of his skills at hand-made metal fittings continuously during the two-day festival.



Our Consulate hosted the second annual Haiku contest at the Consulate booth with the designated themes of “fall” or “fall festival,” as well as introduced “Paro,” a therapeutic robot from Japan; distributed various brochures and introduced Japanese culture with a DVD, as well as promoted tourism to Japan; and publicized the programs offered through the Consulate, such as the JET Program and the Government-sponsored scholarship programs.



A reception to honor the Aki Matsuri team members and its supporters was hosted by Consul General and Mrs. Kiyokazu Ota at their official residence on Monday, just after the Festival. The guests celebrated the Matsuri's continued success and hoped for further continuation of the Festival. We at the Consulate wish to express our appreciation to Mr. Tom Brook, the chair of the organizer, Eastside Nihon Matsuri Association, as well as all those who extended their support to make this annual event a success.



At this reception, the following five winners of the 2nd annual Haiku Contest were drawn. The prizes will be sent to these winners soon.

(Winner of Haiku Contest)

Mr. Grant Laughlin, Ms. Lauren Fellows, Mr. Jeremy Baba, Ms. Grace Zoppi, Ms. Marie Barnes