
PRESS RELEASE

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ORGANIZATION

Cherry Blossom Festival So CAL
686 S. Arroyo Parkway, #221, Pasadena, CA 91105

**Los Angeles City Council, Mayor, City Attorney & City Controller recognizes
April 5th & 6th as “CHERRY BLOSSOM WEEKEND”**

**2008 CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
LITTLE TOKYO DISTRICT OF LOS ANGELES
www.cherryblossomfestivalsocal.org**

**** Attached to the General Press Release are “Highlights of the Festival”**

WHAT: CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL SOUTHERN CA

WHEN: Saturday 4/5/08 (10:30am-6:30pm) and Sunday 4/6/08 (10:30am-5pm)

WHERE: San Pedro Street between 1st & 3rd; Second Street between Los Angeles & Central

ENTRANCE FEE: FREE

The 7th Annual Cherry Blossom Festival will be held once again in the “*Little Tokyo District*” of downtown Los Angeles. The festival will be on April 5th and 6th on the streets of Los Angeles on San Pedro Street between 1st and 3rd Street and on 2nd Street between Los Angeles & Central. It is produced by a 100% volunteer team and the event is a free admission to the public. It is supported by private donations and sponsors with over 16,000 attendees in 2007.

Festival includes: **MAIN STAGE** – Japanese Dancing, Taiko, Kimono Fashion Show (Sat), Runway Fashion Show {Sun), Teacher’s Making a Difference Awards; Senator Daniel Inouye Cherry Blossom Leadership Awards; George Kiriya Educational Excellence Awards and live stage performances. **KIDS ACTIVITY AREA** - cultural crafts, storytelling and games; **MARTIAL ARTS ARENA** - non-stop martial arts performances and demonstrations; **HAWAIIAN VILLAGE** - Hula and variety of live Hawaiian stage entertainment, crafters and vendors; **CULTURAL PAVILION** - photo exhibit of WWII Internment Camps, Kimekomi Dolls, Japanese American National Museum, Nisei Stamp Campaign, Sashiko and Shibori Exhibits to name a few; **ONDO DANCING IN THE STREETS; CRAFTS, CORPORATE & COMMERCIAL VENDORS** and the Cherry Blossom **FOOD COURT** and the **PLAZA STAGE** in the **Japanese Village Plaza** with more performances and featuring Art Nakane, the One-Man-Band.

The Cherry Blossom Festival’s goals are to produce a festival that grows more spectacular yearly and carve a stronger cultural perception to an already history “*Little Tokyo*” district of Los Angeles for visibility, publicity and tourism; and bridge generations and expose the mainstream population to the diverse Japanese and Japanese American cultural arts and history. Rain or shine we’ll be there for this spectacular festival!

AVOID PARKING – GO METRO www.metro.net

500 FREE SIGNED POSTER BY KELLYE NAKAHARA WALLETT: Take your Metro pass or proof of fare to the information booth on the corner of Second and San Pedro, the first 500 receive a signed poster of *Koi*, *Blue Gates* or *Courtyard* by actress/artist Kellye Nakahara Waller, best known as nurse Kellye in the television series *M*A*S*H* for 11 years. [www.kellyesart.com]

2008 CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS

MAINSTAGE ENTERTAINMENT

4/5 & 4/6 has spectacular Japanese Dancing, Taiko, Hawaiian Performances, Broadway Medley with Kathy Bee and the Red Hot Mamas as well as these events:

SATURDAY 4/5

11:00 am OPENING CEREMONIES

Color Guard with Koyasan Scout Troop; Performance by Daion Taiko; Sake Barrel breaking ceremony and Opening Toast and Welcome by YOSHIMASA TEZUKA, Acting Consul General of Japan in Los Angeles. The National Anthem will be sung by UNE' with his soul-filled R&B flavor.

12:30 pm Teachers Making a Difference Awards with emcee Ted Chen NBC4 - co-anchor weekend edition of "Today in LA" and general assignment reporter – Channel 4 News.
George Kiriyama Educational Excellence Award presented to Mitchell T. Maki, Ph.D. presented by Iku Kiriyama

1:15 PM Senator Daniel Inouye Cherry Blossom Leadership Awards presented by Dr. Gordon Sasaki

3:00 pm **KIMONO FASHION SHOW** – featuring model, LA City Councilwoman **JAN PERRY**
Show producer/Director **KEN KANESKA** has created a dynamic Kimono Fashion Show that spotlights the beauty of the Kimono in the various seasons with the theme "COLORS OF JAPAN" expressing Japan's bright colors with the embroidery in the kimono.

SUNDAY 4/6

3:00 pm **RUNWAY FASHION SHOW** featuring the fashions of Sue Wong, Citron, Jimmy Au's for Men 5'8" Under; Plum Pudding for young girls; Friar Tux and wedding gowns from Ivory Suite Bridal Boutique. Fashions are available for purchase after the show and a portion of sales benefits the Cherry Blossom Festival.

ONDO DANCING IN THE STREETS – ATTENDEES WELCOME TO JOIN IN Corner of 2nd & San Pedro in front of the Hawaiian Stage

At **2:00 pm both Sat. and Sun.** dancers from the **San Fernando Valley Japanese American Cultural Center; Japanese American National Museum** and **Nanka Yamaguchi Kenjinkai** will be performing Ondo Dance Favorites – Tanko Bushi, One Plus One and Sakura Ondo – the dancers are easy to learn and we invite attendees to join in the fun and dance along with them.

MARTIAL ARTS ARENA

Nontop marital arts performances and demonstrations in Aikido, Karate, Jiu-Jitsu, Judo, self defense, Kendo, and many more including the very popular **CALIFORNIA SUMO ASSOCIATION** – Saturday, 4/5/08 at 1:30 p.m.

HAWAIIAN VILLAGE sponsored by U.S. Bank

Includes live stage entertainment both days with lots of Hawaiian Hula and Polynesian Dancers with emcee Hawaiian entertainer, **KAMAKA BROWN**. Village also includes **HAWAIIAN CRAFTERS** with jewelry, wood products, clothing and handmade products with Hawaiian textile.

PLAZA STAGE in the Japanese Village Plaza

This year we had added a 4th stage in the Japanese Village Plaza in front of the Mikawayaya Bakery-Confectionary, home of the renown Mochi Ice Cream. There will be a variety of performances as well as **ART NAKANE, the One-Man-Band** as featured in LA Times Magazine article and appearance on Jimmy Kimmel Show – will be showcasing his own creative musical and singing interpretations of songs in English and Japanese

CULTURAL PAVILION

Pavilion includes demonstrations in Chiigiri Art.; Kimono Textile exhibit; Japanese Internment Photo Exhibit; Nisei Stamp Campaign; The Ancient Game of GO; Japanese American National Museum, Sashiko, Shibori and Sumi-e [Japanese calligraphy] exhibits and the art of Japanese Doll making by Kimekomi Dolls to name a few.

KIDS CRAFT & FUN ZONE

The Kids Craft area features free crafts for Kids which includes: Pet Rocks, Fish Kites, Butterflies and our very own "Cherry Blossom Scavenger Hunt". There will also be a variety of Inflatable Games.

CRAFT – GENERAL – COMMERCIAL VENDORS – FOOD COURT

There will be a large group of vendors a majority of them are craft vendors selling handmade and creative wares many with Asian, Japanese and Hawaiian designs made from pottery, jewelry, textile, paper, etc. as well as general vendors. The Million Trees LA group will be giving away 200 Crepe Myrtle Trees. Enjoy foods including: Sushi, Hawaiian, Mexican, Gourmet Sausages, Tako-yaki, Yaki-soba and Okonomi-Yaki, Japanese Pancakes.

DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY

Grand Pacific Resorts will have touch screens to capture demographic information about attendees at the Festival. Everyone who participates will receive a raffle ticket they take to the Information Booth for a free chance to win Two Round-Trip coach class tickets on **American Airlines** to any American Airlines destination in the US48, Caribbean, Bermuda, Bahamas, Mexico or Canada.

2008 CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA AWARDS

SENATOR DANIEL INOUE CHERRY BLOSSOM LEADERSHIP AWARD HONOREES

**Cold Tofu; Japanese Chamber of Commerce of Southern California
Keiro Senior Healthcare; Frances Hashimoto, Mikawayu Bakery & Confectionary.**

THE BLOSSOM AWARD HONOREE

American Airlines

GEORGE KIRIYAMA EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

MITCHELL T. MAKI, Ph.D., M.S.W., Dean, College of Health & Human Services, California State University, Dominguez Hills

TEACHERS MAKING A DIFFERENCE HONORESS

REBECCA CARUSO, 6th Grade, Cleveland Elementary, Pasadena

JOYCE WAKANO CHINN, 5th Grade, Vanalden Elementary, Reseda

JOE GIVENS, Speech & Language Teacher, Willard Elementary, Pasadena

LESLIE HONG, PreK Special Education Autism, Cleveland Elementary, Pasadena

RON HOSHI, Grades 7-12 Vocal Music Teacher, now Assistant Principal, Oxford Academy, Cypress

SHARON ITO, 8th Grade English, Brightwood Elementary, Monterey Park

BONNIE KASAMATSU, High School Geometry, South Hills High School, West Covina

DR. HIROKO C. KATAOKA, Asian American Studies, California State University, Long Beach

STAN KONG, Professor, Design, Pasadena City College

ANN OGAWA, Adult Education, Belmont Education & Career Center, Los Angeles

MYRON GEE, Adult Education, Belmont Education & Career Center, Los Angeles

CATHY OKITA, 1st & 2nd Grade, Ranch Hills Elementary, Pomona

THERESA PETERS, High School Biology, Mayfield Senior School, Pasadena

DR. GAY YUEN, Professor, Charter College of Education California State University at Los Angeles