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MATSURI! JAPANESE ARTS FESTIVAL CELEBRATES 10th ANNIVERSARY

May 19, 2019, 11am-5pm

At Juilliard Park & the SOFA Arts District in Santa Rosa

SANTA ROSA, CA - Matsuri! Japanese Arts Festival will return to Juilliard Park and the SOFA Arts District of downtown Santa Rosa on Sunday, May 19, from 11am to 5pm.

Matsuri! has become one of the signature cultural festivals in the North Bay. The event is organized by Sonoma County Matsuri, whose mission is to offer deep insights into Japanese culture by providing a forum for artisans, artists, and performers of Japanese traditional arts to showcase their talents.

Performances at the admission-free, family-friendly Japanese festival will take place in Juilliard Park. Joining us for the first time will be Reverend Lawrence Koichi Barrish, a Shinto priest of the Tsubaki Grand Shrine of America in Granite Falls, WA, who will hold a special opening prayer ceremony. The festival will feature *taiko* drumming, traditional Japanese dance and music, martial arts demonstrations, *Kyogen* theater performance, Tea Ceremony, and more. *Press Democrat* columnist Chris Smith will serve as emcee. Once again there will be a children's activity booth and *mochitsuki*, the pounding of sweet rice into cakes. Complementing the festivities will be exhibitors and vendors offering Japanese arts, crafts, and a variety of food.

Matsuri! Japanese Arts Festival is funded in part by the City of Santa Rosa Community Promotion Funds. Additional support is provided by Julia L. Grant Donor Advised Fund of Community Foundation Sonoma County, Sonoma County Japanese American Citizens League, Exchange Bank Sebastopol, Consulate General of Japan in San Francisco, Henry Kaku, Osmosis Day Spa Sanctuary, and other generous supporters. Matsuri! Japanese Arts Festival is an official participant of the Japan 2019 Program.

All proceeds from the raffle held at the event will go to the Cara Kallen Memorial Scholarship Fund. Renamed in honor of Cara Kallen, one of the founding members of Sonoma Matsuri, this scholarship fund supports individuals and organizations in Sonoma County who study or teach Japanese arts and culture in the community.

"This year marks an important milestone as we celebrate the 10th anniversary of Matsuri! Japanese Arts Festival. We're thrilled that the festival continues to grow year after year thanks to the dedication, and support of our sponsors and the entire community. It is our honor to contribute to the cultural richness and diversity of our beautiful county by showcasing authentic Japanese arts, music, and entertainment," says Henry Kaku, Sonoma County Matsuri Festival Board President.

As a prelude to the festival, Sonoma Matsuri will offer a concert by Shakuhachi Grand Master Riley Koho Lee from Australia and local Shakuhachi Master Elliot Kanshin Kallen on Saturday, May 18, at 7pm. The performance will be held at the Church of One Tree in Santa Rosa. Tickets are \$15 advance sale and \$20 at the door.

Sonoma County Matsuri Festival is a non-profit organization based in Santa Rosa. Its mission is to share and promote Japanese arts and culture by providing educational opportunities and enhanced intercultural understanding in the greater Bay Area. For more information about Matsuri! Japanese Arts Festival and the pre-festival concert, please visit www.sonomamatsuri.com or email info@sonomamatsuri.com.