

Growing attendance takes Mochitsuki to PSU

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the papier-mâché animals of the zodiac, to the origami jewels and art for sale, there was something intriguing around every corner.

A matcha tea ceremony was elegantly presented in one tranquil room, with observers able to watch through the windows without disturbing the participants. Members of the local *shogi* (Japanese chess) club held demonstrations as well, and the Portland *go* club had instructors and books available to teach the game to newcomers.

The third-floor auditorium was frequently filled to capacity for presentations of music and classical dance, including perennial favorites the Sahomi Tachibana Dancers and Portland Taiko amping up the crowd. The nonstop performance stage, which also featured the Fujinami Kai Dance Group, Dance Leo, Unit Souzou, and others, was emceed by storyteller Alton Chung.

On the second floor, Obukan, a local *kendo* (Japanese-style fencing) club, kept the crowd thrilled with demonstrations and practice sessions. Students displayed their swordsmanship in full gear while their *sensei* (instructors) guided and provided explanatory details to the crowd.

The celebration also featured an interactive taiko table for people to try their hand at the drums, a new-year postcard-making station, a variety of local cultural organizations, and more. Food vendors were on hand making delicious Japanese and Hawaiian cuisine as well, with the mouth-watering aromas wafting through the crowd.



NEW YEAR 2015. The third-floor auditorium was the location for Mochitsuki's afternoon of nonstop presentations. The stage featured performances by the Sahomi Tachibana Dancers (left photo), Oregon Koto Kai (right photo), and many others. (AR Photos/Jan Landis)

A *dorayaki* cake, a delightful Japanese confection that is basically a little pancake sandwich with sweet *azuki* beans in the middle, was the perfect thing to nibble on while visiting the many educational booths. A dreamy curry dish rounded out the afternoon, and contributed to a full belly and the feeling of abundance in honor of the new year.

We are so lucky here in Portland to be able to experience traditions from around the world. Mochitsuki is a great example of how cultural traditions enrich our lives and strengthen our communities. Mark your calendar for next year's event, which is scheduled for Sunday, January 31, 2016.



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