

# Natsu Matsuri brings food, fun, and the fashion of Japan to Beaverton

By Maileen Hamto  
The Asian Reporter

Sounds of taiko drums reverberated through the festival grounds. Under a tent, people found refuge from the 95° heat with colorful *kakigori*, Japanese shaved ice with syrup. Not far away, a line formed in front of the health screening van of the Portland Bentham Lions Club.

These were some of the scenes at the sixth annual *Natsu Matsuri* (Japanese summer festival) held last month in Beaverton. The event drew many spectators to Uwajimaya Plaza on one of the hottest weekends on record this year.

The heat did not keep the crowds away. Even exhibitors were unfazed by the rising temperatures. Kazuyo Ito, a resident of north Portland and a volunteer for en Taiko for a number of years, helped man the information booth at the event, tending to leaflets about recognizing the signs of heat stroke. Posted signs also admonished attendees to stay hydrated.

On her second year volunteering at *Natsu Matsuri*, Ito was focused on making sure people were having a great time. "This is one of the key events in the Japanese community to share our culture," she said. "I am glad to see so many community organizations and nonprofits represented here."

Among the area community groups at the festival was the Japan International Baptist Church. Mutsuko Wepsala was one of about 20 volunteers at the booth, which sold six pieces of *takoyaki* for only \$3. Church volunteers labored over the special pans to create the ball-shaped snacks with minced octopus and topped with *katsuobushi* shavings. A long line quickly formed as soon as the *takoyaki* became ready, and never died down.

Proceeds from *takoyaki* sales benefit the church's work for survivors of the earthquake in Nepal and Typhoon Haiyan (also known as Typhoon Yolanda) in the Philippines, said Wepsala, who staffed the cash box. A long-time member of the



**HOT BUT HOPPING.** *Natsu Matsuri*, a free family-friendly event celebrating Japanese culture, took place at Uwajimaya Plaza in Beaverton last month. The festival featured live Japanese music, martial arts (left photo), nonprofit organizations (right photo), traditional games, a mobile health-screening unit, and more. (AR Photos/Maileen Hamto)



church — more than 30 years — Wepsala was hopeful the *takoyaki* drew more people to the cause.

"With the church, I've done missions in Nepal, Japan, Argentina, and across the United States," Wepsala said. "There are a lot of people in need, especially when there is a natural disaster. This is how we help."

Food is always a big draw at cultural festivals, but so is fashion, especially when it is tied to an opportunity to snap a selfie. The Portland Kimono Club hosted a photo booth that gave people an opportunity to understand the cultural significance of the kimono and learn the proper way of wear as well as take a few vanity shots.

Volunteers Misao Sundahl and Kimiko Kotsugi were more than happy to answer questions and help people try on the *yukata*, a type of kimono typically worn during the summer months. The Portland Kimono Club was formed more than three years ago by a handful of local women. The group features regular meetups, classes, and other social events highlighting the art of kimono. The club has increased its membership by taking part in large

cultural gatherings, such as the Salem World Beat Festival and other events.

While many of the exhibitors and vendors hailed from the Portland metropolitan area, others travelled from further away. The Japanese Cultural Society, based in Salem, featured a table filled with a compendium of toys, stickers, stationery, and other knick-knacks for visitors of all ages to enjoy.

"We're here to serve as a connection between Japanese and non-Japanese people," said Kaoru Arai Lewman, one of the organizers. "We attend events like this to present the variety of Japanese cultural experiences. We have a good group of volunteers who perform Japanese drums

and dance, and present food culture, calligraphy, and art to the community."

The annual *Natsu Matsuri* at Uwajimaya is supported by a number of local Japanese-American organizations. It's no accident that many of the organizations showcasing their offerings at the festival are up-and-coming community groups and cultural clubs that benefit from the exposure. The volunteer-powered festival gathered people interested in community to give of their time, energy, and resources to local nonprofit groups.

"This is a great event for smaller and younger community groups to reach more people," said Ito. "*Natsu Matsuri* feels like family."



## Go paperless!

Read *The Asian Reporter* — exactly as it's printed here — online! Visit <[www.asianreporter.com](http://www.asianreporter.com)> and click the "Online Paper (PDF)" link to view our last two issues.

## EVERY LIVE GAME. EVERY SUNDAY.

Out-of-market games only.

NFL SUNDAY TICKET INCLUDED AT NO EXTRA CHARGE!

CHOICE™ Package

**\$39.99** MO.

For 12 Months. Plus add'l fees. Regional Sports Fee applies in certain markets.

**175+ CHANNELS ENROLLMENT IN AUTO BILL PAY REQUIRED\***

**ACT NOW!**  
**\$29.99\*** mo.



### Only DIRECTV has NFL SUNDAY TICKET.

Choose any game you want to watch on Sunday. You can't get this with Cable, DISH or Verizon:

**WATCH 8 GAMES AT ONCE OR PICK ONE**  
Game Mix Channel lets you watch up to eight games live on one screen.

**RED ZONE CHANNEL®**  
Never miss a play inside the 20, all on one channel, all in HD.

**DIRECTV FANTASY ZONE™ CHANNEL**  
Exclusive channel lets you watch your favorite fantasy players live from game to game with real-time analysis from our fantasy experts.

**WATCH LIVE GAMES WHEREVER YOU GO**  
Stream every out-of-market game live, every Sunday afternoon, from anywhere.

With DIRECTV and NFL SUNDAY TICKET MAX. Out-of-market games only included in NFL SUNDAY TICKET subscriptions.

ALL DIRECTV OFFERS REQUIRE 24-MONTH AGREEMENT\*\*

Ask me how to Bundle and save. CALL TODAY!

**503-974-4388**

**YRHW Satellite**



Offers extended through 10/20/15. Credit card required (except in MA & PA). New approved customers only (lease required). \$19.95 Handling & Delivery fee may apply. Applicable use tax adjustment may apply on the retail value of the installation. Programming, pricing and offers are subject to change and may vary in certain markets. Some offers may not be available through all channels and in select areas.

\*BILL CREDIT/PROGRAMMING OFFER: IF BY THE END OF PROMOTIONAL PRICE PERIOD(S) CUSTOMER DOES NOT CONTACT DIRECTV TO CHANGE SERVICE THEN ALL SERVICES WILL AUTOMATICALLY CONTINUE AT THE THEN-PREVALING RATES. LIMIT ONE PROGRAMMING OFFER PER ACCOUNT. Featured package/service names and current prices: CHOICE \$70.99/mo.; Advanced Receiver fee \$15/mo. In certain markets, a Regional Sports fee of up to \$5.64/mo. will be assessed with CHOICE Package or above and MAS ULTRA Package or above. Price includes the following instant bill credits for first 12 months: \$41 for CHOICE Package. Customer must, at point of sale, activate and maintain a qualifying programming package and Auto Bill Pay. \*\*2015 NFL SUNDAY TICKET OFFER: Package consists of all out-of-market NFL games (based on customer's service address) broadcast on FOX and CBS. Games available via remote viewing based on device location. Local broadcasts are subject to blackout rules. Other conditions apply. 2015 NFL SUNDAY TICKET regular full-season retail price is \$251.94; 2015 NFL SUNDAY TICKET MAX regular full-season retail price is \$353.94. Customers activating CHOICE Package or above or MAS ULTRA Package or above will be automatically enrolled in the 2015 season of NFL SUNDAY TICKET at no additional cost and will receive a free upgrade to NFL SUNDAY TICKET MAX for the 2015 season. NFL SUNDAY TICKET subscription will automatically continue each season at special renewal rate unless customer calls to cancel prior to start of season. To renew NFL SUNDAY TICKET MAX, customer must call to upgrade after the 2015 season. Subscription cannot be canceled (in part or in whole) after the start of the season and subscription fee cannot be refunded. Only one game may be accessed remotely at any given time. Online access is only available on certain operating systems. Computer hardware, software, and Internet connection not included. Mobile access only available on certain devices. Additional data charges may apply. Please check with your service provider. Visit [directv.com/nfl](http://directv.com/nfl) for a list of system requirements, compatible mobile devices and authorized gaming consoles. For full Mix Channel and interactive functionality, HD equipment model H/HR 21 or later is required. Account must be in "good standing" as determined by DIRECTV in its sole discretion to remain eligible for all offers. \*\*24-MONTH AGREEMENT: EARLY CANCELLATION WILL RESULT IN A FEE OF \$20/MONTH FOR EACH REMAINING MONTH. Must maintain 24 consecutive months of any DIRECTV base programming package (\$29.99/mo. or above) or any qualifying international service bundle. Advanced Receiver fee (\$15/mo.) required for all HD DVRs. TiVo service fee (\$5/mo.) required for TiVo HD DVR from DIRECTV lease. There is a fee of \$6.50/mo. for each receiver and/or Genie Mini/DIRECTV Ready TV/Device on your account. NON-ACTIVATION CHARGE OF \$150 PER RECEIVER MAY APPLY. ALL EQUIPMENT (EXCLUDING GENIEGO DEVICE) IS LEASED AND MUST BE RETURNED TO DIRECTV UPON CANCELLATION, OR UNRETURNED EQUIPMENT FEES APPLY. VISIT [directv.com/legal](http://directv.com/legal) OR CALL 1-800-DIRECTV FOR DETAILS. INSTALLATION: Standard professional installation in up to four rooms only. Custom installation extra. To access HD programming, HD equipment required. Number of HD channels based on package selection. Programming, pricing, terms and conditions subject to change at any time. Pricing residential. Taxes not included. Receipt of DIRECTV programming subject to DIRECTV Customer Agreement; copy provided at [directv.com/legal](http://directv.com/legal) and in order confirmation. DISH is a registered trademark of Dish Network LLC. NFL, the NFL Shield design and the NFL SUNDAY TICKET name and logo are registered trademarks of the NFL and its affiliates. NFL team names and uniform designs are registered trademarks of the teams indicated. ©2015 DIRECTV. DIRECTV, the Cyclone Design logo and CHOICE are trademarks of DIRECTV, LLC. All other trademarks and service marks are the property of their respective owners.