

Hawaii Kotohira Jinsha Hawaii Dazaifu Tenmangu

Where Ancient traditions thrive

August 2009

Back-to-School Education Blessing てんじんさん学業成就

A new school year is a new beginning. New adventure awaits as students and teachers prepare for school. Excitement for new possibilities and fear of the unknown mingle in their hearts.

Whether your children are starting kindergarten, entering high school, or leaving the nest for college, we invite you to have them specially blessed at our annual Back to School Education Blessing, as they go out to face the world.

Our special Back to School Education Blessing is offered to bring positive blessings to students, teachers and support staff as they begin this new school year - so they are surrounded by love, hope, vision, and pro-

tection and the courage to persevere in all they undertake and the gift of joy and wonder in all things.

Sugawara no Michizane, the deity of Dazaifu Tenmangu, was a 9th century scholar and nobleman who was falsely accused of improprieties at court and sent into exile where he died before being exonerated.

Later, his spirit was deified and today is venerated as the deity of learning and scholarship at the 11,000 or so Tenmangu shrines dedicated to him throughout Japan.

Dazaifu Tenmangu in Saifu City, Fukuoka is the main shrine of all the Tenmangu shrines in Japan and millions of students flock to the shrine



each year to receive blessings and education omamori. We are the only branch shrine of Dazaifu Tenmangu outside of Japan.

This year, our Back to School Education Blessing was held on August 2 from 10 am to 2 pm.

A big Mahalo goes out to event chair Axel Obara and the many volunteers who helped to make this special blessing available to the community.

(View event photos at www.flickr.com/photos/kotohira-dazaifu/)



MAHALO for your generous donations

Thomas & Linda Agawa
John & Kazuko Franklin
Phongmani Fujisaki
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Masahiro & Anida Sugano
Rooney Taganit
Chad Takenaka
In Memory of Masao Tsukida
Peggy Tsukida
Ryan & Cheryl Tung
Ronald & Emiko Yonemoto



Rev. Masa Takizawa and Mitsunobu Ohashi performing in an Island Insurance commercial at the shrine.



Congratulations!!! Masahiro Sugano and Anida Yoeu Ali

Rev Masa Takizawa performed a wedding ceremony for the Suganos from Chicago on July 30. 17 family members gathered from Osaka and Chicago to witness the union of the two in a solemn Shinto ceremony.

MAHALO VOLUNTEERS

Sean Burke
Bryson Goda

Doughty Ohana
Meilssa Hamada

Bob Harada
Stacie Hata
Arthur K. Isa

Arthur MJY Isa
Kyoko Isa
Diane Nishida

Jill Nishida
Axel Obara
Takahashi Ohana



The Wrath of Michizane

Michizane Sugawara died in exile in 903. Immediately after his death, the capital city of Kyoto was struck by heavy rain and lightning, and many of Michizane's enemies died, while fires caused by lightning and floods destroyed many of their residences.

Thinking Michizane had put a curse on his enemies and the city of Kyoto, the emperor restored all of Michizane's offices, burned the official order of exile, and ordered that the poet be worshipped under the name Tenjin.

In 959, a shrine was established at Kitano in honor of Michizane to quell the fears of the residents of Kyoto and the social unrest caused by the ever-continuing disasters. It is written that soon after, all disasters stopped, restoring peace and prosperity once again to the capital city of Kyoto.



Tobiume - The Flying Plum Tree

The Dazaifu Tenmangu shrine in Fukuoka is especially famous for its plum blossoms and umeboshi (salted plums).

There are over 190 varieties of plum trees on grounds which cover an area of more than 3,000 acres, with over 6,000 trees.

The Dazaifu Tenmangu shrine was built above the grave of Michizane Sugawawra (see Education Blessing article on page 1). It is said that when he bade farewell to his favorite plum tree in his garden in Kyoto before his exile in Dazaifu, he composed a poem and recited it to the tree.



東風吹かば
匂い寄こせよ
梅の花
主なしとて
春な忘れそ

Kochi fukaba
nioi okoseyo
ume no hana
Aruji nashitote
haruna wasureso

"Plum blossoms, send your fragrance to me through the easterly winds, although your master is no longer there, never forget to bloom in spring."

Legend has it that the tree was so deeply moved by his words, that it uprooted itself and flew to Dazaifu in order to keep him company. That ancient tree, named "Tobi-ume" or literally "flying plum" still exists within the grounds of the shrine, and it is reputed to be the first plum tree to bloom each year.

SHRINE CALENDAR

Sept 1

**Reservations accepted
for Shichigosan**

七五三予約受付開始

Sept 6 3 pm

**Tsukinami-sai Monthly
Service 月次祭**

Sept 26 8:30 am

**Clean-up & Mochi Pound-
ing 掃除と餅つき**

Sept 27 3 pm

**Autumn Thanksgiving
Festival 秋季感謝大祭**

Oct 4 3 pm

**Tsukinami-sai Monthly
Service 月次祭**

Oct 17-31

Nov 1-22

Shichigosan 七五三

Nov 1 3 pm

**Tsukinami-sai Monthly
Service 月次祭**



Umeboshi Superstitions

In Japan, there are many superstitions that surround Umeboshi.

- Bad luck will befall a person who attempts, but is not able to properly pickle umeboshi
- * One must never eat umeboshi and unagi in the same meal
- * Blindness will befall those who eat umeboshi late at night
- * One who eats umeboshi for breakfast will survive unexpected disasters
- * Never eat umeboshi musubi while fishing (local Hawaiian superstition)
- * Stick an umeboshi in your navel to prevent motion sickness
- * Spread some umeboshi paste on your temples to cure a headache