



Culture Fest: Japan Coming to Smith Library

Wylie, Texas, March 5, 2018 – Those interested in learning more about Japan, often called Land of the Rising Sun, are invited to Wylie’s Smith Public Library on March 21 and 24 for Culture Fest: Japan.

The library’s mission is to “Inspire, Inform, and Interact,” and few programs do all three as well as cultural events. People learn about how other cultures and communities work and play, participate in activities like dance and art, and hopefully leave encouraged to explore more on their own.

Wednesday, March 21, at 6:45 p.m., Kent Williams presents **Kabuki Theatre**. Kabuki is a 400-year-old type of popular Japanese drama in which elaborately costumed performers, nowadays men only, use stylized movements, dances, and songs to present tragedies and comedies. Williams will present an intro to Kabuki and teach participants how to present a simple tale.

Williams is a Texas-born actor, who has been teaching for nearly 23 years, introducing young people from kindergarten through high school to marionette puppetry, stage stunt work and Kabuki Theatre. A Telly Award-winning puppeteer, Williams is executive director of Le Theatre de Marionette where he pulls many, many strings. He is also a company member of Dallas’ critically acclaimed Undermain Theatre. An SMU theatre graduate, Williams is a Teaching Artist for Big Thought and Junior Players, two organizations dedicated to bringing creative learning programs and performance opportunities to young people.

Kabuki Theatre is suitable for second-graders to adult, and registration is required at WylieTexas.gov/library.

Saturday, March 24, brings a wide range of programs, with several from which to choose in the morning, from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., and more in the afternoon sessions, from 1 to 2:30 p.m., with the Tea Ceremony closing things out at 2:30 p.m.

Kendo and Iaido Demonstrations presented by Dallas/Fort Worth Kendo and Iaido Kyokai will begin at 11 a.m. Kendo is a modern Japanese martial art that descended from swordsmanship and uses bamboo swords and protective armor. Iaido emphasizes being aware and capable of quickly drawing the sword and responding to a sudden attack. Demonstrations run every 30 minutes from 11 a.m. to noon. Seating is limited, and the program is suitable for all ages.

From 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., it’s **Traditional Dance presented by Miyagi-Ryu Noshō-Kai of TEXAS**. Witness the traditional dance of Okinawa, the southern islands of Japan, from the 15th – 19th centuries when the area was an independent nation called Ryukyu. Demonstrations start at 11 a.m. and run approximately every 25 minutes, with the last performance at 12:15 p.m. This program is suitable for all ages.

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Also from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., learn the art of **Origami**, the art of folding paper into decorative shapes and figures. Participants will make a piece of origami to take home, and it's suitable for second grade to adult. Lines may be capped depending on demand.

Travel Japan presented by IACE Travel is from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Whether you're planning a trip, are curious about study abroad, or want to get an armchair view of popular destinations, you'll enjoy this program presented by travel consultant Yoko Kabayashi, a native of Kumamoto Prefecture. She'll share her unique experience and expertise. Suitable for sixth-graders to adult, registration is required at WylieTexas.gov/library.

From 1 to 2:30 p.m., Richland College Anime Club presents **Make-n-Take Craft** for second-graders to adult. Lines may be capped depending upon demand.

Also from 1 to 2:30 p.m., **Shodo Class** participants will learn the basic brush strokes of Japanese calligraphy. Machiko Hanafusa will lead participants to create a decorate wall hanging to show off their new skill. This class is suitable for fourth-graders to adult, and registration is required at the library's website.

Kimono is offered from 1 to 2:30 p.m. Javan Davis from the UNT Kimono Club will give an introduction to the history of this iconic traditional dress of Japan, including the proper way to wear it. This program is for second-graders through adult, and registration is required on the library's website.

Tea Ceremony presented by Chado Urasenke Tankokai of Dallas/Fort Worth is from 2:30 to 4 p.m. The Japanese tea ceremony is a centuries-old practice that elevates hosting and serving tea to a revered art. Experience the "Way of Tea" by witnessing essential elements of its aesthetics. Guests will be served matcha tea and traditional sweets. Second-graders to adults are invited, and registration is required through the library's website.

Smith Library staff plans the Culture Fest to be a biennial event, with the spotlight on different countries and cultures every two years. The library is part of the Wylie Municipal Complex at 300 Country Club Rd., Bldg. 300. Call 972-516-6250 for more information. Registration is now open.

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Smith Library

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6:45 p.m.
Kabuki Theater

Saturday, March 24

11 – 12:30 p.m.
Kendo and Iaido Demonstrations
Traditional Dance
Origami
Travel Japan

1 – 2:30 p.m.
Make-n-Take Craft
Shodo Class
Kimono

2:30 – 4 p.m.
Tea Ceremony

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About Smith Library – Founded in 1970 by Rita and Truett Smith, the library serves the informational, cultural and recreational needs of the over 44,938 Wylie residents. In 2014, the library checked out over 500,000 items and hosted almost 190,000 visitors. More than 35,000 citizens have library cards, and the library offers 459 programs, attended last year by over 25,000 participants. Wylie was incorporated in 1887 and is home to an outstanding school district, a low crime rate, and an ISO-1 fire rating. One of the fastest-growing communities in the state, Wylie has had a 220-percent increase since 2000. Realtor.com named Wylie the second hottest suburb in the country in February 2017. In 2017, Wylie was named the 20th Best Place to Live in the Country by *Money Magazine*, up from 25th in 2015.