

# San Francisco Bay Area JAPANESE PEACE LANTERN CEREMONY

10<sup>th</sup> Annual Ceremony • Saturday, August 6, 2011 • 6:30–9 P.M. • Aquatic Park, Berkeley



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## For Immediate Release

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*Note to photo editors: Still photos (digital) from the last nine years' ceremonies are available.*

## WORLD PEACE, FUKUSHIMA DISASTER ARE THEMES OF 10TH ANNUAL JAPANESE-STYLE LANTERN CEREMONY AUGUST 6 IN BERKELEY

How does a person avoid becoming overwhelmed when thinking about the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bombings, and the massive earthquake, devastating tsunami, and ongoing nuclear crisis that began in Japan on March 11?

One way is to join hundreds of neighbors Saturday in a community event that focuses on hopes for a positive future. The tenth annual San Francisco Bay Area Peace Lantern Ceremony, a Japanese-style event that remembers the atomic bombings, and this year remembers the Fukushima disaster as well, is an occasion for expressing desire for peace in the world while remembering those who have suffered and died in war and natural disasters, organizers say. It takes place on Saturday, August 6, the 66th anniversary of the Hiroshima atomic bombing. To the tranquil strains of flutes, hundreds of hand-decorated, candlelit lanterns will be floated at sunset at Berkeley's Aquatic Park.

The volunteer-run event begins at 6:30 p.m., when the public is invited to decorate peace lanterns. All materials are provided, and the event is free of charge. Each year, hundreds of people, including many children, participate.

In Japan, lanterns are floated to honor ancestors, and they have taken on special meaning since the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki on August 6 and 9, 1945. The mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki will release messages to the Bay Area ceremony's participants, to be read in a short program that also includes music, poetry, and words from a *hibukasha*, a survivor of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima. A Japanese filmmaker will be recording the event for a documentary.

The event takes place on the lagoon at the west end of Addison Street, two blocks west of Fourth Street and one block south of University Avenue, near highway I-80. It is free of charge, and the location is handicap accessible. Participants are advised to bring warm clothes and folding chairs.

"This year's event is especially meaningful because of the triple disaster of earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear crisis that is still gripping Japan," said organizer Steve Freedkin, former chairperson of the Berkeley Peace and Justice Commission. "Each year, people of all ages find the ceremony meaningful and inspiring." Freedkin founded the event in 2002.

The Bay Area Peace Lantern Ceremony is produced entirely by volunteers, and more are needed. Details and a volunteer form are online at [www.ProgressivePortal.org/lanterns](http://www.ProgressivePortal.org/lanterns). Organizers may also be reached by e-mail at [Lanterns@progressiveportal.org](mailto:Lanterns@progressiveportal.org), or by voice mail at (510) 595-4626.

Sponsors of the 10th Annual Peace Lantern Ceremony include:

- Berkeley City Council
- Berkeley Peace & Justice Commission
- ProgressivePortal.org
- United Nations Association, East Bay
- Friends of Hibakusha
- Society for the Promotion of Buddhism (BDK America)
- Berkeley Fellowship of Unitarian Universalists Social Justice Committee
- Grandmothers Against the War
- Ohlone Community Garden
- Bay Area Outreach & Recreation Program (BORP)
- Waterside Workshops
- Northern California Peace Alliance
- East Bay Meditation Center

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*following pages: statements from mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki; event flyer*

### Message from the Mayor of Hiroshima

It is an honor and pleasure to send this message on the occasion of the Tenth Annual East Bay Peace Lantern Ceremony.

On August 6, 1945, an atomic bomb reduced Hiroshima to ashes and took tens of thousands of precious lives. To this day, the *hibakusha* continue to suffer from the aftereffects of radiation. The pain inflicted on the citizens of Hiroshima is simply indescribable—their beloved hometown obliterated, family and friends lost forever.

With our *hibakusha* aging, I am determined to have their experiences and strong desire for peace absorbed and wholeheartedly accepted by future generations and to have the desire for peace spread throughout the world. I am convinced that disseminating the *hibakusha* message will eventually lead to the realization of their most cherished wish, the abolition of nuclear weapons.

To achieve this goal, the City of Hiroshima, together with Mayors for Peace members around the globe, has been promoting the 2020 Vision Campaign for the total elimination of nuclear weapons by 2020. After the bombing, it was said that nothing would grow in Hiroshima for 75 years. The year 2020 will be the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the bombing, and we are determined to achieve our goal by this target year to ensure that a substantial number of our elderly *hibakusha* will enter with us into a nuclear-weapon-free world. With more than 4,700 cities now members of Mayors for Peace, it is evident that people around the world long for freedom from the threat of nuclear weapons.

As part of my efforts to build global momentum for nuclear abolition, I am working toward a summit for nuclear weapons abolition that will bring the leaders of all nuclear-armed states to Hiroshima. I am eager for world leaders and millions of people from around the world to come to Hiroshima, where the tragic memory of the bombing is still a reality. I want everyone to understand the horrific human damages wrought by nuclear weapons and fully share the wish of the *hibakusha*.

I therefore ask you to make Hiroshima's wish your own. Please support the Mayors for Peace 2020 Vision Campaign and strive with us toward lasting world peace for humankind.

In closing, I offer my warmest wishes for the success of the Tenth Annual East Bay Peace Lantern Ceremony as well as the continued good health and prosperity of all involved.

August 6, 2011

MATSUI Kazumi  
Mayor  
The City of Hiroshima



August 6<sup>th</sup>, 2011

Message from the Mayor

Today I would like to say a few words on behalf of the people of Nagasaki for the Japanese Peace Lantern Ceremony being held in Berkeley California.

I would first, however, like to extend my appreciation for the people of Berkeley California and their continued participation and support in lasting peace activities.

At 11:02 a.m. on August 9, 1945, Nagasaki was devastated by a single atomic bomb. With 74,000 people killed instantly in the explosion and a further 75,000 who suffered injuries, Nagasaki fell into ruin. Those who narrowly escaped death were dealt terrible incurable physical and psychological wounds caused by the aftereffects of radiation that they still suffer from even today, 66 years later.

While recovering from the devastation caused by the atomic bomb, Nagasaki has continued to appeal for the realization of everlasting world peace and the elimination of nuclear weapons together with the atomic bomb survivors and our citizens. However, more than 20,000 nuclear weapons still exist on the earth today. The nuclear issue is not only a problem among those countries affected by nuclear disasters, but also an issue common to all human beings in order to ensure a secure future.

Through the Japanese Peace Lantern Ceremony, I hope many people of Berkeley California can deepen their general understanding of the inhumanity of nuclear weapons, and help us work towards realizing a world free of nuclear weapons and everlasting peace.

In closing, I would like to extend my best wishes for the success of this event, and for the good health and happiness of all the people who gathered here today.

田上 富久

Tomihisa Taue  
Mayor of Nagasaki

Tenth Annual Bay Area  
**JAPANESE  
PEACE  
LANTERN  
CEREMONY**



**Saturday, Aug. 6, 2011 ✨ 6:30–9 p.m.**

**North end of Aquatic Park, Berkeley** ♿

West end of Addison St., 2 blocks west of Sixth St. • 1 block south of University Ave.

*August 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> are the 66<sup>th</sup> anniversaries of the world's first atomic bombings. In Japan and around the world, people will gather in early August to float lanterns in remembrance of the victims of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, all victims of war, and all who have gone before us, including victims of the earthquake-tsunami-nuclear disaster that began March 11, 2011. This moving and beautiful tradition provides a chance to reaffirm our commitment to building a better future.*

3–6:30 p.m. Set-up (*volunteers needed*)

**6:30 p.m. Decorate lantern shades**

**7 p.m. Program**

Music • Messages from mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki • Eyewitness report from an A-bomb survivor (*Hibakusha*)

**8 p.m. Lanterns floated on Aquatic Park lagoon**

9–10 p.m. Take-down (*volunteers needed*)

**Sponsored by:**

Berkeley City Council • Berkeley Peace & Justice Commission • ProgressivePortal.org  
United Nations Association, East Bay • Friends of Hibakusha • Society for the Promotion of Buddhism (BDK America)  
Berkeley Fellowship of Unitarian Universalists Social Justice Committee • Grandmothers Against the War  
Ohlone Community Garden • Bay Area Outreach & Recreation Program (BORP) • Waterside Workshops  
Northern California Peace Alliance • East Bay Meditation Center • Diane Tokugawa • Jack Dairiki • Carol David & Art Leon  
*and other individuals and organizations*

**The Peace Lantern Ceremony is a volunteer-created event.**

**Sign Up Online, E-mail, or Call:**

[www.ProgressivePortal.org/lanterns](http://www.ProgressivePortal.org/lanterns)

E-mail: [Lanterns@ProgressivePortal.org](mailto:Lanterns@ProgressivePortal.org) • Voice Mail: (510) 595-4626

**See our Web site to support victims of the Japanese earthquake/tsunami/nuclear crisis.**