

AHAN Nippon Kan General Headquarters Domo Japanese Country Foods Restaurant

present

AHAN Milestone Celebration

International and Domestic Community Service Milestone

70,000 Homeless Meals Served in Denver * 10 Children Learning Centers Built in Asia

350 Tons of Rice Donated Worldwide

May 10th, 2014

Program

11:30 am. to 12:00 pm. Registration

12:00 pm. to 12:30 pm. Cocktails – in the museum (must be 21 with ID)

12:30 pm. National Anthem- A Nippon Kan Tradition

12:30 pm. to 1:00 pm. Opening Ceremony-Special Guest Speakers

1:00 pm. to 3:00 pm. Buffet Lunch

We are expecting many guests today! Our staff will help direct you to the buffet area by groups. Consumption of alcoholic beverages and safe transportation is a personal responsibility. If you need a taxi, please ask wait staff or Nippon Kan staff with green ribbons for assistance.

About Nippon Kan...

What is this AHAN Milestone Celebration about?

Simply, this celebration is our way of saying thank you to so many who have helped Nippon Kan and Domo in achieving these milestones of international and domestic service to the community.

A Little about US....

Nippon Kan was founded by Gaku Homma Sensei, a citizen of Japan. In 1978, Homma Sensei settled in Denver and opened Nippon Kan Culture Center. At that time, Denver had a strong Japanese community with a strong Japanese cultural identity. Japanese culture was often displayed, but not as much outwardly shared or taught.

Japan's economy was on the rise at that time and there was a peak of interest among American people in Japanese culture, business, language and other Japanese arts. Homma Sensei, thinking about the future and ways to build the relationship between the Japanese and American people, strove to change the direction for sharing Japanese culture here in the United States. He wanted to make a change from displaying Japanese culture to one of sharing and teaching Japanese culture openly to the public. He did this through education; offering experiences and classes in Japanese language, the Japanese martial art of Aikido, *Kado* (flower arranging), *Chado* (tea ceremony), *Shodo* (Japanese brush calligraphy) and other cultural classes. All of these classes were offered at Nippon Kan, instructed by volunteer teachers directly from Japan.

Homma Sensei's approach towards teaching Japanese culture met with a little resistance by established community leaders, but this was a pioneer approach and not an unexpected reaction.

The response was overwhelming. In those early years, Nippon Kan instructed about 500 American students a month in Japanese cultural classes and visited almost every school in Denver performing interactive demonstrations; clearly there was an eagerness and interest for this cultural learning. Today, students from different age groups and school districts continue to come to Nippon Kan. Last year alone, about 2000 school children came to visit Nippon Kan Headquarters.

Nippon Kan Headquarters-the Building on Osage...

Our current facility on Osage street is the 3rd home for Nippon Kan. We moved to this location in 1996 with the help of Former Mayor Wellington Webb's administration and the Mayor's Office of Economic Development. Domo Restaurant was actually more of an accident than a planned project! It still is amazing to us that Domo has grown into a restaurant that along with our neighboring Buckhorn Exchange has made Osage street a popular restaurant destination spot in Denver!

Why do I say Domo was more of an accident than a planned project? The original purpose of Nippon Kan was to be a culture center. The space that Domo now occupies was planned to be classrooms and a space to hold cooking classes. We soon learned that to teach cooking classes you needed to have a commercial kitchen, those were the rules. Since we had to build a commercial kitchen we decided to try to open a restaurant...a restaurant we called Domo...

When building Domo, our budget was tight so the chairs, tables, light fixtures and decorations were all made from recycled materials. The large trees in Domo were donated by Swingle Tree Surgeon Company and

the other wood you see throughout the center we bought from junkyards. The boards were full of screws, bolts and nails so they couldn't be planed. Instead we burned, stained and brushed them to use as decorative beams. Luckily they matched the traditional Japanese style we were creating! The garden was started with plants we bought on sale at Home Depot in \$10.00 pots. Now, 18 years later we have a full grown garden.

All of the interiors and gardens were created by Homma Sensei and student volunteers. Except for regulated systems like plumbing and electrical, no outside professionals have ever been hired to do any of the construction at Nippon Kan or Domo or in the gardens.

Nippon Kan NOW...

Today, the Founder of Nippon Kan and Owner and Head Chef of Domo, Gaku Homma Sensei is a very busy man; traveling extensively internationally as a world renowned Aikido instructor and humanitarian. Domo has become a very busy place. Cultural classes now, except for the martial art of Aikido which is taught daily, are taught only on special occasions. Nippon Kan activities here and around the world will be explained in today's program.

About the Nippon Kan Logo (Are you a member of the Japanese beef industry?)

Sometime people ask this question after seeing our logo! Our logo was designed by *Kigyukika* and contains a symbol from the Zen 10 Ox Chart or *Jugyu Zu* that chronicles the 10 stages of Zen practice. This symbol is *Jugyu Zu #6* and depicts a boy riding an ox. The *gyu* or ox symbolizes the "present" and "truth". The kid riding the ox symbolizes the innocence of following this truth- "Just as you are naturally". You can read more about this chart online- Google Zen *Jugyu Zu*.

Nippon Kan Expands through AHAN

In 2001, the tragedy of 9/11 inspired reflection about what a small organization like Nippon Kan could do for our greater world community. Nippon Kan has been involved with local community support activities in Denver since 1991 but it was time to expand our cross-cultural, humanitarian activities internationally. Small projects, small steps out into the world. That is our motto. "In many countries with people in need, large NGO support large humanitarian projects. We look for small but strong voices, voices of people that we can help in our own way".

What Does AHAN Mean?

亜範 AHAN

亜=A. The "A" in the word Asia and in the word America is written with the same kanji. In this kanji, the square in the center of the symbol represents the earth and the parallel lines below and above the center represent the sky and the ground. These lines also represent the rich and poor or those that have and those that have not. For AHAN they are equal and united. Look at the symbol sideways. 𠄎 In this position this symbol represents the center between East and West.

範=HAN. This kanji for "HAN" has many parts.

竹=The top represents bamboo.

車=The bottom left represents a wheel or a cart.

𠄎=The bottom right represents a human sitting.



All of the parts together, this kanji symbolizes a man riding in a cart made from bamboo. Translation? In ancient times, this kanji would represent the highest level of society's leaders. These leaders were the only ones that were allowed to be carried in carts made of bamboo. In more modern times this kanji equates to a master, an accomplished leader, a role model; someone whose role in life is to pass their wisdom and knowledge on to others. This kind of teaching is the meaning of HAN.

Putting the Two Kanji Together

AHAN therefore translates to mean Asia and America-East and West working together, sharing in positive discovery and development. DOING-WORKING together, and through this journey of discovery, finding a way towards an even better world. Our AHAN activities around the world will be explained in more detail in today's program.

Thank you for reading all of this! There are so many people at this event today and we wish we were able to acknowledge every single person who has been part of and supported Nippon Kan through these many years. Unfortunately time will not allow this, so we hope you will accept our thanks and enjoy what we have prepared for you today. If you have more questions about Nippon Kan today, our staff will be wearing green ribbons. Please feel free to ask them any questions that you might have. This information and much more

information will be available on our website at www.nippon-kan.org.



