

**JAPANESE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS HONORS  
PRESIDENT OF FRIENDS OF THE JAPANESE HOUSE AND GARDEN  
*Medford, NJ resident Yuichi Ozawa will be honored for historic preservation work***

**PHILADELPHIA** – August 20, 2012 – The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan will award a 2012 Foreign Minister's Commendation to Yuichi Ozawa of Medford, NJ, President of the Friends of Japanese House and Garden (FJHG) on August 27, 2012 at Shofuso Japanese House and Garden. FJHG administers and operates the Japanese House and Garden in West Philadelphia, which is in the jurisdiction of the Consulate General of Japan in New York.

Since this year marks the 100th Anniversary of the gift of *sakura*, or cherry blossom trees, from Japan to the United States, the Minister for Foreign Affairs decided to confer this award on individuals and organizations involved in the promotion of mutual understanding and friendship between Japan and the United States through *sakura*.

The Foreign Minister's Commendation is awarded to individuals and organizations for outstanding achievements in international fields to acknowledge their contribution to the promotion of friendly relations between Japan and other countries. Other 2012 recipients include Yuriko Kikuchi, teacher at the Martha Graham School of Contemporary Dance; The Brooklyn Botanic Garden; and the Japan America Society of Greater Philadelphia.

Ozawa will be awarded this commendation in a private ceremony on August 27 at the Japanese House. Japanese consular officials, local government representatives, FJHG board members and other supporters will attend.



FJHG Board President Yuichi Ozawa, Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter, FJHG ED Kim Andrews, Japanese Deputy Consul General Fumiyo Iwai, and Philadelphia Parks and Recreation Deputy Commissioner Mark Focht break open a sake barrel for good luck at the Sakura Pavilion grand opening, March 31, 2012. Photo by FJHG.

In his tenure as president of FJHG since 2004, Ozawa has focused on preserving the historic structure. He was a primary force behind the Japanese House's restoration projects in both 2007 and 2010. The 2007 project was a complete restoration, and the 2010 project was focused on maintenance for the hinoki cypress bark roof. Under Ozawa's direction, FJHG installed 20 new *fusuma* murals, titled "Waterfall", created and donated by internationally renowned contemporary Japanese artist, Hiroshi Senju. *Fusuma* are interior sliding paper doors.

In addition, Ozawa wrote and published *The Story of Shofuso*, which documents the history of the Japanese House and the history of Japan-U.S. cultural exchange programs by the Government of Japan after World War II. Under the leadership of Ozawa, FJHG has engaged in outreach activities related to Japan such as tea ceremony and Japanese classical dance. In addition, in 2012, FJHG received funding from the Heritage Philadelphia Program of the Pew Center for Arts & Heritage to partner with the City of Philadelphia and restore two of four remaining buildings from the 1876 International Centennial Exposition known as the Sakura Pavilion.

In addition to his role as President of FJHG, Ozawa holds positions on the Boards of Directors of the Japan-America Society of Greater Philadelphia, the Japanese Association of Philadelphia and the Japanese School in Philadelphia, all of which promote Japanese culture in the greater Philadelphia area

Executive Director Kim Andrews states, **"Ozawa-san's legacy at the Japanese House is one of preservation. He led the effort to restore the historic structure by leading multiple capital initiatives, as well as through his own labor. Ozawa-san may be the only historic site board president who has worked on the top of the house with Japanese roofers, which he did during our hinoki bark roof restoration in 2011. His passion for preservation has driven his tireless actions."**



Ozawa, middle, with two Japanese roofers,  
July 2010

Shofuso Japanese House and Garden is a traditional-style Japanese house and nationally-ranked garden in Philadelphia's West Fairmount Park that reflects the history of Japanese culture in Philadelphia, from the 1876 Centennial Exposition to the installation of its contemporary paintings in 2007. Shofuso's Sakura Pavilion is two restored 1876 brick buildings with a renovated flagstone terrace and is year-round space for programming, classes, meetings, events, and exhibitions. Shofuso was named *Best Hidden Tourist Attraction* by Best of Philly 2012. Shofuso is administered by the Friends of the Japanese House and Garden (FJHG), a private nonprofit organization, which has administered, operated, funded, and preserved the city-owned site since 1982.

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