

A mishmash of family fun and news

By Steve Mark POSTED: Dec 28, 2013

Traditional fare, taiko to usher in year at shrine



Ring in the Year of the Horse at the Hawaii Kotohira-Jinsha Hawaii Dazaifu Tenmangu shrine in Kalihi.

The shrine, which dates to 1920, is expecting a large crowd for the annual Hatsumode new year celebration. Previous celebrations have drawn crowds of 10,000 or more.

"Hatsumode, literally, actually means first visit to a Shinto Shrine," said Irene Takizawa of the shrine. "It's a national

occurrence that happens on Jan. 1 every year. Basically, you go to a shrine and get blessed and bring home a souvenir from the shrine."

The shrine also will serve ozoni mochi soup and taruzake, a special sake brewed and served in a traditional cedar barrel.

"It's not the cheap stuff," Takizawa said with a laugh. "It has a distinct cedar flavor."

Festivities begin at midnight Jan. 1 and run until 5 p.m. The ozoni mochi soup, which signifies good health, will begin to be served at 10 a.m.

Taiko performances by Dragon Beat school and lion dances will also mark the occasion.

The Year of the Horse, or Umadoshi, is supposed to be "a very positive year, a very productive year," Takizawa said, adding that the shrine will be offering horse-themed amulets to visitors.

The shrine is at 1239 Olomea Street