

## 2017 Sapporo Asian Winter Games

## 2017冬季アジア札幌大会

This month, Hokkaido's capital city, Sapporo and Tokachi's very own Obihiro will be hosting the 2017 Asian Winter Games! Although most of the events will take place in Sapporo, Obihiro will hold the adrenaline-filled speed-skating events.



The 2017 Sapporo Asian Winter Games mascot, Ezomon speed-skating!

The games will last from February 19th until the 26th. Obihiro will host speed-skating races from February 20th until the 23rd. All of the events in Obihiro are FREE, so please feel free to watch the best and fastest

Obihiro is home to the newest of two permanent indoor speed-skating rinks in Japan, the Meiji Hokkaido Tokachi Oval 明治北海道十勝オーバル (the other rink is located in Nagano). Being less than 10 years old, hosting the 2017 Asian Winter Games will be the Oval's largest event yet.

speed-skaters from all over Asia!

### Location:

Meiji Hokkaido Tokachi Oval  
明治北海道十勝オーバル  
Obihiro City Minami Machi 7 Sen 56-7  
(behind the Ice Arena in Obihiro no Mori)

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## CIR Blog

## 国際交流員ブログ

As you probably know, Obihiro City is home to 4 Coordinators for international relations, or better known as "CIRs." Our current CIRs hail from China, Thailand, Brazil and America. While they all work together with their Japanese counterparts to get the job done, they each have their own thoughts and adventures outside of work!



Check out the official blog for the CIRs of Obihiro City! Topics range from cultural differences to weekend adventures! Unfortunately, all of the posts are written in Japanese, but the content is worth the read!

Scan for easy access! →



Please visit our blog at:

<https://obihirocir.wordpress.com/>

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# Events at TIRC and in Tokachi and Obihiro

When	What	Where/Contact
2/4 (Sat) 19:00-21:00	<b>International Potluck Night (America)</b> Meet local and international residents while enjoying a dish from around the world. This time, you can enjoy some special American cookies and get ready for Valentine's Day.	Tokachi International Relations Center 森の交流館・十勝 0155-34-0122 tirc@city.obihoro.hokkaido.jp
2/8 (Wed) 19:00-21:00	<b>International Mini-Volleyball Night</b> Meet new friends from around the world while enjoying a fun and easy sport.	
2/11 - 12 (Sat-Sun) 10:00-15:00	<b>International Festa in Tokachi 2017</b> Experience international exchange and cooperation through various activities. Join English conversation lessons for kids, watch free films, have JICA tours and enjoy special activities. TIRC and JICA Hokkaido (Obihiro) Entrance: Free of charge Organized by Tokachi International Association	
2/11, 2/25 (Sat) 16:00-18:00	<b>Japanese Conversation and Learning Table</b> Improve your Japanese language skills in a friendly environment.	
1/21 - 2/26 (Sat-Sun)	<b>Tokachigawa Swan Festival "Sairinka"</b> 十勝川白鳥まつり「彩凜華」 Come and enjoy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a fantasy show of lights and sounds</li> <li>• snow rafting</li> <li>• walking in the forest of lights, including a stamp rally</li> <li>• a tunnel of beautiful lights &amp; a "zoo" of lights</li> <li>• a winter playground (slide, frozen bubbles etc.)</li> <li>• resting at the warm ice promenade with Moor Choc-o-lait (chocolate and milk drink), Moor Pork Sausages, etc.</li> </ul> And many more events and activities will be held!	Tokachi Gaoka Park 十勝が丘公園  音更町十勝川温泉観光協会 0155-32-6633 <a href="http://www.tokachigawa.net/">http://www.tokachigawa.net/</a>
1/28 - 3/20 (Sat - Mon)	<b>Lake Shikaribetsu Kotan (Village)</b> しかりべつ湖コタン "Kotan" is the Ainu word for "village." Seen only in the coldest time of year, you can come and experience an entire village made of snow and ice. Try dipping in a hot spring made of ice! There are free buses running from Obihiro Station to Lake Shikaribetsu! Please refer to the homepage for more information.	Lake Shikaribetsu 然別湖  しかりべつ湖コタン実行委員会 0156-69-8181 <a href="http://www.nature-center.jp/kotan/index.html">http://www.nature-center.jp/kotan/index.html</a>
2/3 - 5 (Fri - Sun)	<b>54th Obihiro Ice Festival</b> 第54回おびひろ氷まつり This year's festival concept is 「Smile Tokachi」. Ice and snow sculptures, a slide, a ice/snow sculpture building competition are just a few of the many activities going on at festival. The festival will take place in 4 locations: Midorigaoka Park, Hirokoji, Yume no Kita Plaza and Obihiro Banei Horse Track	Midorigaoka Park, Hirokoji, Yume no Kita Plaza and Obihiro Banei Horse Track  帯広のまつり推進委員会 0155-22-8600
2/4 - 5	<b>36th Shibare Festival</b> 第36回しばれフェスティバル Come and watch participants test their bodies against the cold! Along with the "cold test" there will be fireworks, live performances, attractions and more! Please visit the festival homepage for more information.	Rikubetsu Uenbetsu Event Grounds イベント広場（陸別町ウエンベツ） 0156-27-2141 ,0156-27-3990

## Culture: Valentine's Day in Japan

*This month, American CIR, Elaine, chimes in to talk about Valentine's Day in Japan and how it differs from what she experienced back home in the states.*

The origins of Valentine's Day isn't clear, but it is generally agreed that its namesake is of a saint named Valentine (there are multiple "Saint Valentines") and that it is rooted in Christianity. In both the west and Japan, Valentine's Day has very much become a holiday for lovers, friends and sweets!

### Only Women?

Hands down, the most noticeable difference between Valentine's Day in Japan and America is that in Japan **only women give gifts**.

Most readers have probably heard of "White Day" which occurs 1 month after Valentine's Day when men who have received gifts on February 14th reciprocate with white-colored gifts on March 14th. Traditionally, couples in America give

## 日本のバレンタインデー

gifts to each other on Valentine's Day. So there is no need for White Day!

### I have to give to EVERYONE?

Of course, there is no rule that you HAVE to give something to everyone in your office, but there seems to be a pressure for women to do so. This reminds me of elementary schools, where students would be asked to bring enough candy for all of their classmates.

### And there are different types??

As an adult, Valentine's Day gifts would normally only pertain to your partner, but in Japan it seems to be a gift-giving event from women to all! If there's someone you have your eye on, you give them 本命チョコ *honmei choko* which could be hand-made or special chocolates. Good friends get 友チョコ *tomo choko*, literally "friend chocolate." And everyone else gets 義理チョコ *giri choko* or "obligatory chocolate," which are given because they have to be!

Single or taken, Japanese Valentine's Day can get complicated! Enjoy the holiday of love, and men, don't forget White Day next month!

## International Festa in TOKACHI 2017

Following their recent 20th anniversary, the Tokachi International Association, Obihiro City and JICA Obihiro will be teaming up again to hold the International Festa in TOKACHI 2017 on **February 11th and 12th** from 10 am to 3 pm.

There will be a variety of activities for all ages including: learning in English for children, JICA tours and presentations, free movie showings, a Fair-trade corner and more! Activities will be going on at both the Tokachi

## 国際フェスターin とかち 2017

International Relations Center and JICA Obihiro.



# Movies At Cinema Taiyo, in Obihiro

(Nishi 3, Minami 11)  
Tel: (0155) 20-1525

Times and movies are subject to change! (for space reasons not all movies are listed)  
To confirm, call or check online at: [http://www.taiyogroup.jp/cinema/theater/\\_obihiro/movie.shtml](http://www.taiyogroup.jp/cinema/theater/_obihiro/movie.shtml)

Title	Language	Dates
Rogue One: A Star Wars Story	3D Japanese 2D English	Until 17th
Resident Evil: The Final Chapter (バイオハザード Biohazard)	2D Dubbed English	Until 23rd
The Consultant	Eng Subtitles	All month
Doctor Strange	English	All month
La La Land	Eng Subtitles	From 24th

## Events Continued

When	What	Where/Contact
2/4 (Sat)	<b>Snow Light Night</b> 雪あかりナイト Ice candles will light the roads leading to Michi no Eki Honbetsu. There will be a jumbo slide for children and their families to enjoy together and hot food for sale to keep everyone warm while	Michi no Eki Stella Honbetsu Ginga Road N P O 法人 銀河ほんべつ 0156-22-5819
2/5 (Sun) 10:00-15:00	<b>Children's Hall Winter Festival</b> 児童会館 冬まつり In line with the 54th Obihiro Ice Festival, the Children's Hall (Jidou Kaikan) will be holding its own Winter Festival.	Obihiro Children's Hall 帯広市児童会館 0155-24-2434
2/14 (Tues)	<b>27th Ice Candle Night</b> 第27回氷灯夜 On the evening of Valentine's Day in Memuro Town, about 5000 ice candles light up the night. An evening of fun will be prepare for of course couples, but also for families and all.	Memuro Park 芽室公園内 芽室町観光物産協会 0155-66-6522
12/2-3/19 10:00-11:00, 14:00-15:00	<b>Nature Center Back Yard Tour</b> 自然館バックヤードツアー This event will be held between December 2nd and March 19th. Come and see parts of the Nature Center which are normally only accessible by staff members!	Higashi-Taisetsu Nature Center ひがし大雪自然館 01564-4-2323 <a href="http://www.ht-shizenkan.com">www.ht-shizenkan.com</a>
2/19 (Sun) 10:00-12:30	<b>Observing Nature in Winter ~Animal Footprints~</b> 冬の自然観察会 ~動物の足跡編~ Using snowshoes, participants will trek in the area around the Nature Center in hopes of finding footprints and other things left behind by nature.	Higashi-Taisetsu Nature Center ひがし大雪自然館 01564-4-2323 <a href="http://www.ht-shizenkan.com">www.ht-shizenkan.com</a>
2/19 (Sun) 10:30-13:00	<b>34th Churui Nauman All Hokkaido Sled Race</b> 第34回忠類ナウマン全道そり大会 Watch sleds made of cardboard show off their speed and designs.	Churui Hakugindai Ski Area 忠類白銀台スキー場 01558-8-2111

**Obihiro Pioneer** can be found at the following locations: Obihiro City Hall, Tokachi International Relations Center, Obihiro University International Center, Obihiro Tourism and Convention Center inside the Obihiro JR Station, Obihiro Public Library, Tokachi Plaza, Cinema Taiyo, Joy English Academy and online at [www.city.obihiro.hokkaido.jp](http://www.city.obihiro.hokkaido.jp) (click on "Information for Foreigners")

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