



Obihiro Pioneer

Tourism and Goodwill Exchange Section Newsletter

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The Rabbit On the Moon

月のウサギ



Once upon a time, a rabbit, a fox and a monkey lived happily together. One day, the three friends saw an old man fallen over on the road. "Help...something to eat...anything...", said the old man in a hoarse voice. The three animals quickly went to find food to help him.

The agile monkey brought him fruit from atop the trees. The clever fox brought him a fish from the river to eat. However, the rabbit could not find any food for the old man. "Although I am not very useful, I can still help. If you would like, please have me", he said as he jumped into a burning fire to cook himself.

The old man was actually the moon god. He greatly respected the honorable actions of the little rabbit and pulled him out. For his noble heart, he made him live forever and took him to the moon to live with him and lived happily ever after.

If you grew up in an East Asian culture, you may have heard this or a similar story before. This is the story of 月のウサギ (*tsuki no usagi*), or "rabbit on the moon". The tale has various origins from ancient China and Buddhist text, however the story has changed over time in different cultures. The previous story is one of the more predominant Japanese interpretations. In Western cultures, it's often said that the shadows on the moon make it seem like a man's face, hence the "man on the moon". In Japan, it is said to look like there is a rabbit on the moon pounding mochi! What do you see?

This September was the Japanese lunar autumn holiday of *tsukimi*, also drawing origins from ancient Chinese culture. In the past, Japanese people would celebrate the moon during the harvest season and with days of good food and family gathering. People would often write poetry while drinking sake from a 盃 (*sakazuki*), an old sake-drinking tableware that looks like a small, deep plate. In modern times, people don't really celebrate the day so much, but there are a couple of ways that people celebrate this day.



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The Rabbit On the Moon

月のウサギ

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Tsukimi dango in a traditional 15-stack

You've probably seen rabbit-themed goods at local stores. One simple way people maintain the tsukimi traditions is by eating 月見団子. This is in reference to the mochi connection with the moon, and is said to give people health and strength. Another thing people do is decorate with ススキ (*susuki*), or Japanese pampas grass. In ancient times, it was said to represent rice plants and the harvest, and the imagery and symbolism of it has continued on to this day. Oftentimes, you'll see decorations like this throughout stores.



The rabbit-moon connection is found littered throughout Japanese pop culture as well. Two examples that come to mind are Sailor Moon and Naruto. Have you noticed that Sailor Moon's name is Tsukino Usagi? If you know these words in Japanese, you'll see "moon" in her family name, while her first name is literally "rabbit". In Naruto, one of the main villains is called Otsutsuki Kaguya, who if you watch the show, will learn of her connection to the moon and her final form that has the appearance of a rabbit. Next year, try celebrating with some *tsukimi dango* and see if you can see some rabbits making it on the moon!

How to Play Koi Koi

こいこいの遊び方



Hanafuda "flower cards", Japan's original playing cards. I'm sure you seen these bright and unique designs in various places throughout Japan. Their creation has a long and interesting history, but long story short, card games were brought to Japan from Europe and were then banned due to gambling. People kept inventing their own cards until eventually the first *hanafuda* set was created. It was then popularized and mass distributed throughout Japan. There are a number of games that can be played with a set of these cards, the two most popular being *koi koi* and *hana awase*. Today, I will introduce the rules so you can take part in this fun game!

About the Cards

Hanafuda has 12 suits of 4 cards each. Each suit represents a month (January–December) and is recognized by the flower depicted on the card. There are 24 cards with only the flower on them called **kasu**, 10 cards with a banner (3 blue, 3 red with black text) called **tansaku**, 5 special "light" cards (crane, cherry blossom curtain, the sun, a phoenix, and a man with an umbrella) called **kō**, and the rest are animal/object cards called **tane**. The goal of the game is to make sets with these cards and score the most points.



Rules/Flow

- 1) The dealer gives each player 8 cards and places 8 cards face up on the table and the deck face down.
- 2) The first player takes a card in his hand that matches the month (same flower design) of another card on the table and takes both cards.
- 3) The same player flips the top card of the deck. If it matches any of the cards on the table, take both cards.
- 4) The next player goes.
- 5) The first player to collect a *yaku* (set of cards) can choose to finish the game and add up their points from the *yaku* they build, or they can say *koi koi* and let the game continue to try and make a bigger *yaku*. If you finish, only you get points. If you *koi koi* and the other player makes a *yaku*, only that player gets points and they are doubled.
- 6) Play another round, this time the previous winner goes first. Have fun!

Yaku

<i>Kasu</i>	Collect 10+ <i>kasu</i>	1 + 1 for each one above 10
<i>Tane</i>	Collect 5+ <i>tane</i>	1 + 1 for each one above 5
<i>Tan</i>	Collect 5+ <i>tansaku</i>	1 + 1 for each one above 5
<i>Ino-shika-chō</i>	Collect the boar, deer, and butterfly	5
<i>Aotan/Akatan</i>	Collect all 3 blue or text <i>tansaku</i>	6
<i>Sankō</i>	Collect 3 lights	6
<i>Shikō</i>	Collect 4 lights	8
<i>Ameiri Shikō</i>	Collect 4 lights, one of which is the man with the umbrella	10
<i>Gokō</i>	Collect all 5 lights	15

Movies @ Cinema Taiyo, Obihiro

Not all movies are listed. Times and movies are subject to change. To confirm, call or check online at: www.taiyogroup.jp/movie/obihiro			
Title	Genre	Lang	Dates
Old <i>Ōrudo</i>	horror	EN	Until 7 th
Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings <i>Shan Chī Ten Ringu no Densetsu</i>	action	EN/JP	Until 7 th
No Time to Die <i>007 Nō Taimu Tu Dai</i>	action	EN	All month
The Suicide Squad <i>Za Sūsaido Sukuwaddo Gokuakutō, Shūketsu</i>	action	EN	From 9 th Until 21 st
The Last Duel <i>Saigo no Kettō Saiban</i>	historical drama	EN	From 15 th
Ron's Gone Wrong <i>Ron Boku no Ponkotsu Bot</i>	animation	JP	From 22 nd

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KEY: JP = Japanese voice EN = English voice with Japanese subtitles

Events in Tokachi

Please be aware that these and other events may be affected by COVID-19. To find out if these events are still running, please contact the respective organizers or check out their webpages online.

When	What	Where/Contact
From 10/9 Until 12/19 9:30-17:00	Obihiro Art Museum—GeGeGe no Kitaro Artist Shigeru Mizuki Exhibit 水木しげる 魂の漫画展 Shigeru Mizuki (1922-2015) is well known in Japan for his famous manga Gegege no Kitaro. His representative artworks, drawings, and panels will be put on display at the art museum. Fee: 1200 yen/adult, 700 yen/high school students, 400 yen/middle school students, free for ages below.	Obihiro Art Museum—Main Showroom 北海道立帯広美術館 0155-22-6963 www.artmuseum.pref.hokkaido.lg.jp/obj/
10/9 10/23 (Sat) 16:00-17:30	Japanese Conversation and Learning Table 日本語講座 Improve your Japanese language skills in a friendly environment. Fee: Free of Charge	Tokachi International Relations Center 森の交流館・十勝 0155-34-0122 tirc@city.obihiro.hokkaido.jp
10/13 (Wed) 19:00-21:00	International Sports Night 国際スポーツ・ナイト Meet new friends from around the world while enjoying a variety of fun and easy sports. Organized by the Tokachi International Association. Fee: Free (no registration required) Notes: Bring a pair of indoor shoes and clothes that are easy to move in.	Tokachi International Relations Center 森の交流館・十勝 0155-34-0122 tirc@city.obihiro.hokkaido.jp
10/30 (Sat) 14:30-16:30	Mori no Pumpkin Carving 森のパンプキンカーヴィング We will make Jack-o-Lanterns to be displayed during the Mori no Halloween 2021 event. Please come with clothes that you do not mind getting dirty. Fee: Free of charge Participants: Middle school children and below and their parents/guardians. Limited to 10 groups (decided by raffle)	Tokachi International Relations Center 森の交流館・十勝 0155-34-0122 tirc@city.obihiro.hokkaido.jp
11/7 (Sun) 10:00-12:30 13:30-15:30 *changed from 10/31	Mori no Halloween 2021 森のハロウィーン2021 Have fun at our Halloween event with a trick or treat stamp rally, photo booth, and crafts! Fee: Free. Participants: Children 10 or under need a parent/guardian. Notes: Limited to 500 people. Registration can be done from the QR code. Please come during the time period you are assigned to.	Tokachi International Relations Center 森の交流館・十勝 0155-34-0122 tirc@city.obihiro.hokkaido.jp 

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 (search for "Obihiro Pioneer").

Obihiro Pioneer is a newsletter published monthly by the Obihiro City Tourism and Goodwill Exchange Section for residents of the Tokachi District and related parties. The contents of this newsletter do not necessarily represent the official views or opinions of the Tourism and Goodwill Exchange Section or the City of Obihiro. Questions? Contact the Editing Team at:
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