

What's Happening in Obihiro?

English Newsletter

From America with Love: The 4th of July

Wonderful people of Obihiro, I Greg, your new CIR, would like to, as part of my own self-introduction, inform you all of a very fun holiday in A m e r i c a .

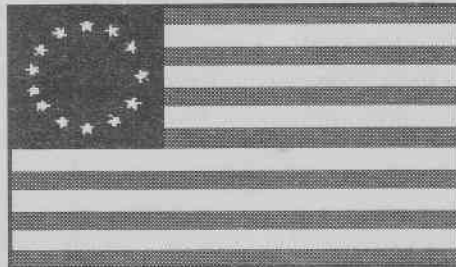
The Fourth of July is celebrated on, you guessed it, July 4th. The Fourth of July is the day Americans celebrate their independence from Britain. On July 4th, 1776, in Philadelphia Pennsylvania, a bunch of rebellious colonists signed the Declaration of Independence. In other words, they wrote a nasty note to the king of England telling him that they didn't want to be under his t h u m b a n y l o n g e r .

All of the signers were celebrities of the new world. Some of the big shots who scribbled their autographs d o w n w e r e :

John Hancock: Signed his name really big so that King George could read it without his monocle.

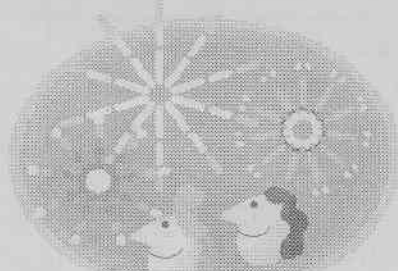
Benjamin Franklin: Skilled diplomat and all-around ladies man.

Samuel Adams: Who was actually an unsuccessful brewer of beer, but his namesake lives on.



Now that you know a little about the history of the Fourth, now I'll tell you about how us modern Americans jubilate our freedom. Since the holiday is smack dab in the middle of summer, almost all Fourth of July activities occur outside.

In many towns, children spends countless hours decorating their bikes with red white and blue ribbons and streamers and lots of little American flags. Then they all line up and ride around their neighborhood in one big group.



Many Americans get together with friends and have 4th of July parties. They grill burgers and hotdogs and drink beer and soda.

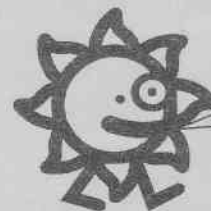
Many towns and cities use the 4th as an excuse to hold fun community events such as pie baking contests a n d c a r s h o w s .

One staple of 4th of July celebrations is the parade. In a 4th of July Parade, all of the local public organizations, such as the fire department and the police department, show off their biggest fire trucks and fastest police cars and my hometown even had a tank visit from the National Guard!

The biggest event of the day occurs at night. In big cities like Milwaukee, the city puts on huge fireworks displays for the whole city to watch, but even small towns, like my hometown of 7,000 people, can muster up enough funds to put on a splendid show of colorful noise, fire and sulphur. We do this because the fireworks represent the battles that American colonists had to fight against the British to w i n o u r f r e e d o m .

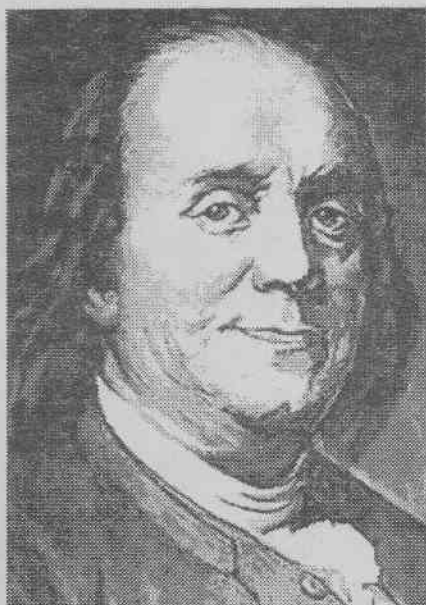
Many people fly American flags all over their house and lawn all day. Also, when night comes, people light off their own fireworks, and children play with sparklers (short metal wires with powder on them that shoots out little sparks when lit on fire).

In America, there are people of countless cultures with countless different holidays that they celebrate. However, the Fourth of July is one special holiday where all Americans can come together and celebrate their freedom and the creation of their country together as Americans.

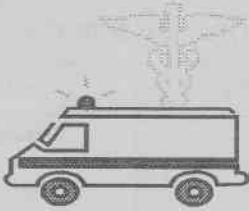


Happy Fourth!

Hello sun!



When	What	Where/Contact #
7/1 (Sat.) 17:00-21:30	The 35th Whitesnake Goddess Festival: Visit the god of wealth, music, eloquence and water! See dance performances of an ancient ainu folktale done on land and water! Then finish off the night with floating candles. (cost: FREE!!!!!!)	然別湖畔 Shikaribetsukohan 01566-6-2311
7/2 (Sun) 10:00-15:00	Sekai no Tomodachi: A "Global Friends" festival with food and performances from all around the globe. There's going to be arm wrestling and other fun stuff to do, so definitely come on over with the kids!	森の交流館・十勝 Tokachi International Center 0155-34-0122
7/8 (Sat) 19:00-21:00	Tokachi Saxophone Festival : Come see local saxophone players toot their own horns! Entrance costs only 500 yen.	とかちプラザ Tokachi Plaza, Rainbow Hall Mr. Iga 090-3393-4738
7/9 (Sun) 9:00-15:30	Int'l Tractor BAMBA: Tractor Drag Racing! Parade at 9, races start around 10:30, and the closing ceremony is at 15:30. Be there! (Sarabetsu is about 32km south of Obihiro on Highway 236. You should see the dirt race field from the road; on your right when headed south.	更別村ふるさと館周辺 Furusato Kan, Sarabetsumura 0155-52-2010
Mid July to Mid August (Closed Tues) 11:00-19:00	Soba Workshop : Come to Shintoku to learn how to make soba noodles like a pro! (Cost:¥2500) Head west on Highway 38 to get to Shintoku from Obihiro.	上川郡新得町基線102 Shintoku Soba Kan 0156-64-5888
7/16 (Sun) 15:00 to 15:00 the next day.	Tokachi 24hr. Race: Super fast cars. Cute race girls. 24 hours of hot racing action! 40km south of Obihiro (south of the airport) Tickets:"Pair ticket" for two people ¥8000 if ordered beforehand, Single ticket: ¥5000 at the door. There will be a¥1200 bus from ObihiroJR Station	Tokachi International Speedway 0155-52-3910
7/16 (Sun) 13:00-21:00	Makubetsu Summer Festa: All day there will be performances by high school students, a big raffle, games, a free market, and a beer party! The evening will be finished off with 3000 fireworks! (at 20:00)	幕別運動公園特設会場 Makubetsu Undo Koen (park) 0155-54-6606 (20min. East of Obihiro)
7/17 (Mon) 18:30-19:00	House Jacks Concert: The rock band without instruments! (acapella) Tickets ¥3000 at the door, ¥2500 preordered.	音更町文化センター Otofuke Town Culture Center 0155-31-5215
7/17 (Mon) 13:00-14:30	Sword-Dance Performance: Welcome to the world of sword and dance. Iaido Sword masters of the 8 th Dan and students will be performing Come get a slice of the action! (FREE)	とかちプラザ Tokachi Plaza, Rainbow Hall 0155-23-5170
7/17 (Mon) 11:00-21:00	Summer Festival in Shikaoui: This year they are having their Tanabata festival and their fireworks display(20:00) on the same day. Join the fun and celebrate the coming of summer!	然別川公園 Shikaribetsukawa Koen (park) 01566-6-3780
7/23 (Sun) 9:00-?	Rekifune River Gold Rush: I ain't sayin' you's a gold-digga, but you should definitely get on down to sift for some bling bling chillin' in the river yo! You have to RSVP so <i>rush</i> to your phone now!	砂金掘体験地 (あい川地区) Taiki, Aikawachi ku 01558-6-2111



Obihiro Survival Guide: National Health Insurance

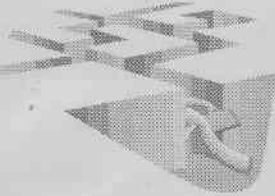


Welcome to the first edition of The Obihiro Survival Guide! In this section of WHIO we will discuss important issues that foreigners will have to face while living in Obihiro (and in Japan in general). If you have any suggestions for new and crucial survival guide topics, feel free to email me at: international@city.obihiro.hokkaido.jp

As you can see, this month's topic will be a very important one: National Health Insurance (NHI).

One of the most difficult experiences you can have is being sick or injured in a foreign country, especially if you can't speak the language, and even more so if you don't have insurance.

First, I am going to tell you who NHI applies to.



You have to be unqualified as a worker and not be working for a company that already offers insurance. You also have to be someone who is planning to stay in Japan for 1 year or more, and you have to have your alien registration card. If you're only planning to be here for less than a year, you won't be allowed to apply for NHI.



Wondering what NHI can do for you? NHI covers your medical expenses at any hospital in Japan! It even covers your expenses at the dentist, prescriptions, and some funeral expenses. The usual co-pay is 30% and then the government covers the remaining 70%! If you get a major injury or surgery, the most you will have to pay is about ¥35400 per month in co-pay. You also have to pay for your own meals, but even so, NHI can really save you even in long-term treatment situations.

What you need:

- ☺ Alien Registration Card: You can get this on the 1st floor of the Obihiro City Hall.
- ☺ Some type of evidence showing that you will be legally staying in Japan for more than a year. (this could be your work visa, or student visa, etc)

What you don't need:

- ☺ A hanko stamp. You can just sign the necessary forms.
- ☺ Income information from your home country. NHI fees are calculated by your income from the previous year. Unless you were working in Japan the previous year, all foreigners start out with "0" for income.

One complicated scenario you might find yourself in is if you give birth in Japan. I can at least clear up some details about how NHI deals with this. Children born in Japan (to foreigners) can have NHI coverage start from the moment of birth. The only requirement is that one of the parents be already in the NHI plan. You can also receive lump sums for childbearing, childbirth, and child care. The NHI office is on the first floor of Obihiro City Hall. It is the department immediately to your left after you come in the front door.



Living in Japan can be one of the most exciting experiences of your life. It can also be one of the most challenging. I can speak Japanese, yet I still get help from friends and other kind people in complicated situations. Hopefully this month's guide has cleared up some of your questions about the National Health Insurance system here in Japan.

I don't mean to get all sappy in my first issue of WHIO, but I hope that everyone reading this who has been frustrated time and time again, can see those frustrations as challenges instead. And remember, there's always help for you here at the International Relations Section.

The Survival Guide is going to be a series of articles that will hopefully make your life a little clearer and a little less stressful. I hope you're all looking forward to next month's issue!

Times are subject to change. To confirm, call or check online at:

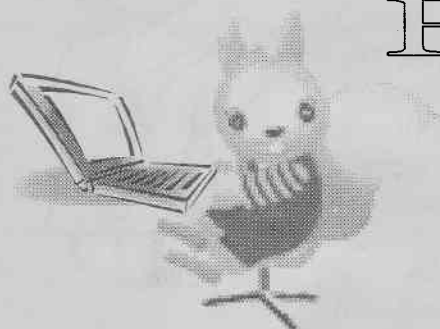
<http://www.taiyogroup.jp/cinema/index.html>

This July At Cinema Taiyo Obihiro

(Nishi 3, Minami 7)Tel: (0155) 20-1525

Title	Language	Starts	Ends
The Davinci Code	English w/subtitles (E)	July1	July28
The Davinci Code	Japanese Voiceover (JV)	July1	July7
Mizuchi	Japanese (J)	July1	July7
Futou Fukutsu	J	July1	July7
Mission Impossible 3 (Special Showing 7/1 and 7/2)	E	July8	July30
Mission Impossible 3	JV	July8	July21
Cars	JV-CG Animation	July1	Aug
Kiraware Matsuko no Isyou (PG-12)	J	July1	July7
Inside Man	E	July1	July7
Limit of Love (Umizaru)	J	July1	July7
Trick 2	J	July1	July14
Chakushin Ari Final	J	July1	July28
Balto no Rakuen	J	July1	July14
Poseidon	E	July1	July21
Pirates of the Caribbean	E	July22	Aug
Pirates of the Caribbean	JV	July22	Aug
Brave Story	J-Animation	July8	Aug
Nihon Chibotsu	J	July15	Aug
Pokemon	J-Animation	July15	Aug
Gedo Senki	J	July 29	Aug

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What's Happening in Obihiro?

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

online at www.city.obihoro.hokkaido.jp

"WHIO?" Is a newsletter published monthly by the Obihiro International Relations 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 International Relations Section or the City of Obihiro. Questions? Tel (0155) 24-4111 (ext. 1173) or send e-mail to WHIO Editing Team at international@city.obihoro.hokkaido.jp.