

Farewell Hector (ヘクターさん、お疲れ様でした)



Obihiro CIR, Hector Atom Posadas, will be finishing up his contract with the city of Obihiro on August 1st. We asked him a few questions before he leaves:

OP: What was your favorite thing about Obihiro?

Hector: *I'd hate to sound hackneyed, but the best thing in Obihiro for me was the people. Sure, there are a lot of individuals who have horrible driving etiquette, and people who are either blatantly or unconsciously bigoted or prejudiced, but the same can be said for a lot of places. The memorable ones were the people who welcomed me into their homes, who were there for me in good times and bad, and basically made me feel that Obihiro is my second hometown. Of course, all the delicious food around and beautiful nature nearby is an added bonus.*

OP: What did you learn from working in Japan?

Hector: *Firstly, I improved my Japanese language skills a lot, as it became my primary language here. That's why when Japanese people ask me what's the best way to learn a language, I always tell them that you have put yourself in an environment where you have to use that language in order to live any meaningful life. But more importantly, I learned more about the world, as this job has allowed me to meet people from many different countries and help them share their culture to the Japanese.*

OP: What will you be doing once you're done working for Obihiro City?

Hector: *I have decided to stay in Japan for the long term. I'm actually still looking for employment at the time of writing. Hopefully I can find something in Obihiro or Tokachi, since I've already made a lot of friends here and it would be a bit sad to leave. If that doesn't work out, I will most likely go somewhere else, but I would prefer to stay in Hokkaido since I've grown to like this island a lot. Someone once told me that I should be a Japanese TV personality, so you might see me at the small screen soon (but don't count on it).*

OP: Do you have any parting words for our readers?

Hector: *Firstly, I'd like to thank everyone who perused through these monthly four pages for the past five years. I hope I was able to provide something useful in your daily life, whether it was information about a local event, Japanese culture, or even material for English reading practice. Some of them took a lot of research to write up. I'd also like to thank everyone who joined and helped out at all our events. You are an indispensable part of Japan and Obihiro's internationalization efforts, so I hope you keep at it as much as you can.*

Parting is an inevitable part of life. For the past five years, I have bid farewell to many international students and good friends. Although my own impermanence was always in the back of my mind, I never really thought about it in any detail. In any case, if I do end up staying in Obihiro and you meet me somewhere, please do say hello. Don't worry, I'm not one to forget faces. As for this newsletter, you can probably expect some or even a lot of changes. Change can be a good thing. それじゃ。

We thank Hector for his hard work over the last 5 years and will miss him greatly. Good luck Mr. Hector.

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Events at TIRC and in Tokachi and Obihiro

| When | What | Where/Contact |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| 8/1 (Sat) 19:00-21:00 | Hector's Farewell Talk ヘクターさん帯広の思い出を語る Outgoing CIR Hector Atom Posadas will talk about his memories and experiences in Obihiro for the past 5 years. | Tokachi International Relations Center 森の交流館・十勝 0155-34-0122 tirc@city.obihoro.hokkaido.jp |
| 8/8 and 8/22 (Sat) 16:00-18:00 | Japanese Conversation and Learning Table Improve your Japanese language skills in a friendly environment. Japanese volunteers will be there to help you. | |
| 8/12 (Wed) 19:00-21:00 | International Mini-Volley Night 国際ミニバレーナイト Meet friends from all over the world while enjoying a fun and easy sport! | |
| 8/29 (Sat) 19:00-21:00 | International Potluck Night ポットラックナイト Bring a dish or drink to share and enjoy world food recipes while meeting people from around the world. | |
| 8/1-8/4 (Sat-Tue) | 61st Obihiro Hirokoji Tanabata Festival 第61回おびひろ広小路七夕まつり Enjoy Tanabata decorations, various summer festival stalls and attractions. | Obihiro Hirokoji Arcade 帯広広小路アーケード 0155-23-5675 |
| 8/1 (Sat) 9:30- | 60th Tokachi Harbor Festival 第60回十勝港まつり Watch the only seaside fireworks show in Tokachi. There will also be food bazaars and other competitions. | Hiroo Town Tokachi Harbor 広尾町十勝港第4埠頭 0155-82-0177 www.town.hiroo.lg.jp |
| 8/1 (Sat) | 23rd Star Festival 第23回スターフェスティバル The Ginga-dori in Honbetsu will be a pedestrian mall with many food stands, shops, and other attractions. | Honbetsu Town Ginga-dori 本別町喜4丁目銀河通り 0156-22-2023 |
| 8/2 (Sun) | 26th Rekifune River Festival 第26回歴舟川清流まつり Enjoy games and fun events, and a 20 m flame tower and a fireworks show in the evening. | Taiki Bridge (along Route 236) 国道236号沿い大樹橋上流河川敷 01558-6-2114 |
| 8/2 (Sun) | 33rd Doshin Off-road Race in Rikubetsu 第33回道新オフロードレースin陸別 Watch custom buggies and ATVs compete in an intense off-road race. Entrance is 1,200 yen for adults. | Rikubetsu Circuit リクベツサーキット 0156-27-2141 |
| 8/7-8/9 (Fri-Sun) | 42nd Hokkaido Balloon Festival 第42回北海道バルーンフェスティバル Watch hot air balloons race across the blue skies of Tokachi. There will also be food stands and other attractions. | Kamishihoro Aviation Park 上士幌航空公園 01564-2-2111 www.kamishihoro.jp/sp/balloonfestival |
| 8/8 (Sat) 15:00-20:30 | Otofuke Summer Festival 夏まつり納涼花火大会 Enjoy stage shows, a beer garden, and a 1,000-shot fireworks show in the evening. | Otofuke Town Shindori Kaikan 音更町新通会館特設会場 0155-42-2246 |
| 8/8 (Sat) 14:00- | Toyokoro Summer Festival とよころ夏まつり Enjoy a ranger show, andon lamps, games, and a fireworks show in the evening. | Toyokoro Town Erumukan 豊頃町える夢館駐車場 015-574-2206 www.toyokoro.jp/tourism/event/ |
| 8/9 (Sun) | Pyoutan Waterfall Play Day ピョウタンの滝で遊んDay! Enjoy river rafting and other activities in this water-themed event. | 中札内村札内川園地 Nakasatsunai Satsunai River Park 0155-67-2495 nakasatsunai.blog.fc2.com |
| 8/9-8/16 (Sun-Sun) | 10th 3,000-Sunflower Maze 第10回ひまわり3千坪迷路 Enjoy a maze inside a 1.5ha sunflower field. There will also be food stands, pony and tractor riding, and more. | Honbetsu Town Biribetsu Higashinaka 本別町美里別東中 090-3891-4633 |
| 8/13 (Thu) 19:30-21:00 | 65th Kachimai Fireworks 第65回勝毎花火大会 See one of the biggest fireworks shows in Japan, with a fusion of music, light, and 20,000 shots of fireworks. | Tokachi Riverside Special Event Ground十勝川 河川敷特設会場 0155-22-7555 |
| 8/13 (Thu) | Rikubetsu Summer Festival りくべつ夏まつり Enjoy a Bon dance competition, a prize raffle, and more. | Rikubetsu Station Event Ground 陸別駅前多目的広場 0156-27-3161 |
| 8/14 (Fri) | Churui Furusato Bon Dance 忠類ふるさと盆踊り大会 A Bon dance for everyone with food stands, prize raffle, and mochi throwing. | Churui Fureai Center Fukuju Parking ふれあいセンター福寿前駐車場 01558-8-2111 |

So long and thanks for all the fish (さようならニタ)



Obihiro CIR, Josh Neta, will be finishing up his contract with the city of Obihiro on August 5th. We sat down and asked him a few questions before he leaves:

OP: What was your favorite thing about Obihiro?

Josh: *That would have to be the food. I love Tonkatsu, Butadon, Ramen, and Jingsukan. My*

favorite place to eat was Jingsukan Hokkaido. I will miss that place the most when I go back to the US because as far as I know we don't have anything like that there.

OP: What did you learn from working in Japan?

Josh: *The biggest thing was improving my Japanese. You can only get so far studying in another country. Besides that I think I gained a certain amount of patience. The way things are done here is different than in the US, and for some things I appreciated it, but for other things it was frustrating. But that helped me to grow as a person.*

OP: What will you be doing once you're done working for Obihiro City?

Josh: *I'll be heading back to the US. Before coming to Obihiro I worked as a consultant creating computer software. I will be returning to that world. While this job was fun, ultimately I get along best with computers and spending time in a quiet office doing deep thinking, so I'll be glad to get back to doing that.*

OP: Do you have any parting words for our readers?

Josh: *Thanks for a great 5 years. I hope that everyone here continues to push the internationalization of Japan.*

We wish Josh the best of luck in his future endeavors.

Bon Dance (盆踊り)

Want to experience a traditional Japanese Bon dance? Come join us in downtown Obihiro on the evening of August 15th! We will join the Bon dance competition of the Obihiro Heigen Festival as the "Friends of the World" team. This group will be composed of Obihiro University international students, JICA participants, AFS exchange students, sister city visitors, and other international and local volunteers. Meetup time is 5:00 PM at the Obihiro City Hall 10th floor meeting rooms. You can borrow a yukata or bring your own, and volunteers can help you put it on. To sign up, please contact the Tokachi International Relations Center at tirc@city.obihiro.hokkaido.jp. Please mention your name, nationality, sex, and if you need to borrow a yukata. Let's dance the summer heat away!



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



| Title | Language | Dates |
|----------------------------------|------------------|-------------|
| Avengers: Age of Ultron | Japanese/English | Ends 21st |
| Terminator Genisys | Japanese/English | Ends 21st |
| Jurassic World | Undecided | Starts 5th |
| Mission: Impossible—Rogue Nation | Undecided | Starts 7th |
| Ted 2 | Undecided (R15+) | Starts 28th |

Events Continued

| When | What | Where/Contact |
|------------------------------|--|---|
| 8/14-8/16 (Fri-Sun) | 68th Obihiro Heigen Festival 第68回帯広平原まつり One of the biggest summer festivals in Tokachi, with a Yumefuruya omikoshi event, a Bon dance competition, Japanese drums, street performances, and more. | Obihiro West 2 South 7 to 11 and Hirokoji 帯広市西2条南7丁目～11丁目 ・広小路 0155-22-8600 |
| 8/14 (Fri) | 56th Shintoku Summer Festival 第56回ふるさとサマーフェスティバル Enjoy Japanese drums, a Bon dance, mochi throwing, and trout catching. | Shintoku Town Nagomi Welfare Center 保健福祉センターなごみ前駐車場 0156-64-5324 |
| 8/14 (Fri) | Honbetsu Summer Festival ほんべつ夏まつり Enjoy a Bon dance competition with costumes. | Honbetsu Town Hall Parking Lot 本別町役場前駐車場 0156-22-2529 |
| 8/15 (Sat) | 36th Ashoro Bon Dance and Fireworks 第36回足寄ふるさと盆踊り・花火大会 Enjoy a Bon dance with prizes, a prize raffle, and a fireworks show. | Ashoro Chomin Center 足寄町民センター前 0156-25-2141 |
| 8/15 (Sat) 13:00- | Urahoro Furusato Summer Festival 浦幌町ふるさとの夏まつり Enjoy a Bon dance competition, games, and other attractions. | Urahoro Town Cosmic Hall 浦幌町コスミックホール前 015-576-2186 |
| 8/16 (Sun) 9:00- | Tokachi Summer Festival and HKS Hypermeeting 十勝夏祭り&HKSハイパーミーティング A summer festival on Hokkaido's largest racing circuit, with various competitions and racing shows. | Tokachi Speedway 十勝スピードウェイ 0155-52-3910 tokachi.msf.ne.jp |
| 8/16 (Sun) | Shihoro 7,000 Person Festival しほろ7000人のまつり Enjoy Japanese drums, dance performances, a vegetable market, and more. | Shihoro Town Community Square 士幌町コミュニティ広場周辺 01564-5-5212 |
| 8/17 (Mon) | 49th Memuro Town Bon Dance 第49回芽室町納涼盆踊り大会 Enjoy a Bon dance competition and other attractions. | Memuro Station Event Ground めむろ駅前広場 0155-62-9736 |
| 8/17 (Mon) | Makubetsu Town Bon Dance 幕別町盆踊り大会 Enjoy a Bon dance competition, food stands, and a prize raffle. | Makubetsu Town Hall 幕別町役場前通り 0155-54-2703 |
| 8/22 (Sun) 17:00- | Shihoro Beef Festival しほろ牛肉祭 Enjoy local Shihoro beef yakiniku, stage performances, and a fireworks show. | Shihoro Town Community Square 士幌町コミュニティ広場 01564-5-2614 www.shihoro.jp/tourism/ |
| 8/23 (Sun) 10:00-14:30 | "Bakkan" Straw Bale Festival 麦感祭 Enjoy wheat-based foods, straw bale rolling, tractor riding, and more. | Otofuke Town Takenaka Farm 音更町たけなかファーム 0155-67-6305 |
| 8/23 (Sun) | Honbetsu Meat Festival 2015 ほんべつ肉まつり2015 Enjoy a barbecue of locally produced beef, stage shows and a prize raffle. | Yoshitsune no Sato Honbetsu Park 義経の里本別公園 090-8271-0262 |
| 8/29 (Sat) | 26th Doshin Fireworks 第26回道新十勝川花火大会 Enjoy the fireworks show that marks the beginning of the end of the Obihiro summer. | Tokachi Riverside Special Event Ground 十勝川河川敷特設会場 0155-24-2154 |

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 (click on "Information for Foreigners")

"Obihiro Pioneer" is a newsletter published monthly by the Obihiro International and Domestic 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 and Domestic Relations Section or the City of Obihiro. Questions? Tel (0155) 65-4133 or send e-mail to the Editing Team at international@city.obihiro.hokkaido.jp.