

Multicultural Festival 2015



Event coordinator Gan showing off this year's photo booth props with a big smile!

Every year the Tokachi International Relations Center (TIRC 森の交流館・十勝) holds a multicultural festival to share the different cultures of our international community here in Tokachi. As always, the Multicultural Festival will include a fashion show, using models wearing various traditional wear, and various performances. Performers, regardless of race/background, will go on stage to try to get the most votes from the audience.

This year's theme is "Let's Make the World Smile!" Following the theme, this year's festival will include a

"photo booth," where we will encourage visitors to take pictures of their smiles and share it via social media to the world! Fun picture props will be available to make your picture and experience more memorable.

Participate!

To make this year's Multicultural Festival a success, we need your help! Along with a photo booth, we are planning to have a gallery to show the smiles of people from around the world. Please send us your smiles to tirc@city.obihiro.hokkaido.jp

We're also looking for performers to share their culture/talent and smiles on stage! Performers will compete for the chance to win prizes. Participants will be asked to perform on stage for approximately 10 minutes. Although monetary compensation will not be provided, we will do our best to assist in obtaining performance materials and light snacks will be provided. Persons interested in participating are asked to contact event coordinator Gan.

Event: 9th Annual Multicultural Festival

Location: Tokachi International Relations Center

森の交流館・十勝 (Obihiro West 20 South 6-1-2)

Time: Saturday, November 28th 4:00 PM–6:00 PM

Participants: Everyone and anyone!

Admission: Free! No registration required to watch

Contact: TIRC Coordinator Gan (Bongkoch Namwong)

Tel: 0155-34-0122 Email: tirc@city.obihiro.hokkaido.jp

41st Annual Wine Party

Obihiro Committee for International Friendship will be holding its annual wine party on

Saturday, December 5th 18:00 – 20:00 in the **Tokachi Noukyouren Building**. Many JICA participants and Obihiro University of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine students are expected to attend the event, making it a great opportunity to meet members of the international community in Obihiro. **Tickets are required for the wine party**. All ages are welcome, but children 15 and under must be accompanied by an adult. No smoking is allowed in the venue.

Please plan your transportation ahead of time if you are going to drink alcohol.



Admission Cost:

Adults: 2500円

JICA /University Students: 1500円

Grade School Students: 500円

Pre-school and under: Free

For more information, ticket purchase orders, and inquiries please contact:

Obihiro City International and Domestic Relations Section 0155-65-4133 or

Tokachi International Relations Center 0155-34-0122

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Events at TIRC and in Tokachi and Obihiro

When	What	Where/Contact
11/7 (Sat) 10:00/10:30/ 11:00/ 11:30/13:00/ 13:50	Winter Tea Ceremony 森の茶会～冬～ Experience the traditional Japanese way of serving tea. Sessions 1-4 is for tea ceremony, sessions 5-6 is for tea-serving etiquette. Register by phone or email.	Tokachi International Relations Center 森の交流館・十勝 0155-34-0122 tirc@city.obihoro.hokkaido.jp
11/11 (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!	
11/14 (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.	
11/14 (Sat) 19:00-21:00	52nd International Talk 第52回インターナショナル・トーク Learn more about the world and exchange ideas with other participants. This month's talk will be about Thailand.	
11/21 (Sat) 10:00-11:30	32nd Kids Playground 第32回キッズ・プレイグラウンド Come with your children to learn and play while meeting local families. This month, you can enjoy the Christmas themed games, stories and much more!	
11/28 (Sat) 16:00-18:00	9th Multicultural Festival 第9回国際文化祭 Enjoy dance, song, music, and fashion from around the world. You can vote for your favorite performance and win prizes! There will also be a photo gallery and a world costumes and handicrafts exhibit.	
9/1 (Tues) Every Tuesday until 11/17 *Excluding holidays*	Learn Japanese! 日本語講座 Free classes will be held by Obihiro City for foreign residents needing help in Japanese. Morning conversation (10:00-12:00) and evening beginners' classes (18:00-20:00) are available.	Obihiro City Hall International and Domestic Relations Section 帯広市市民活動部親善交流課 0155-65-4133 international@city.obihoro.hokkaido.jp
10/31-11/4 (Sat-Wed)	46th Obihiro Chrysanthemum Festival 第46回帯広菊まつり See art made of nearly 3000 flowers and enjoy other autumn events.	Tokachi Plaza とかちプラザ 0155-22-8600
11/1 (Sun)	Food Valley Tokachi Marathon 2015 2015 フードバレーとかちマラソン The last official half-marathon in Hokkaido for the season. Come and support runners of the three courses.	Obihiro Downtown to Obihiro no Mori 中心市街地～帯広の森 0155-65-4210
11/1-3/31 (Sun-Thu)	Winter Fest in Ecopark ウインタフェスinエコパ Enjoy snowshoe walking, snow raft tours, a foot spa, and other fun winter activities.	Tokachi Ecology Park 十勝エコロジーパーク 0155-32-6780 www.tokachi-ecopark.jp
11/8 (Sun)	6th Taiki Citizens Thanksgiving Festival 第6回大樹町民物産感謝祭 Local produce and seafood will be on sale. There will also be cheese from the Yukijirushi Megmilk factory.	Michi no Eki Cosmall Taiki 道の駅コスモール大樹 01558-6-2114

Culture: Thai's Loi Krathong Festival

Fall is here, with winter following soon after. In Hokkaido we look forward to seeing autumn leaves and hot-pot parties around the kotatsu with friends. This month we hear from one of Obihiro's newest coordinators for international relations, Ms. Bongkoch "Gan" Namwong about her home country's fall festival: "Loi Krathong"



Winter is coming. It makes a South East Asian girl like me feel a little bit worried. There is no winter in Thailand. We have only summer, rainy and dry season. The weather in November is just around 20 degrees (C). It is cool in the morning and evening, but it is still hot in the day time. November is a great period to visit Thailand, especially northern Thailand.

I was born in Chiangmai, a city in the north of Thailand. Chiangmai is a very nice city. In November, there is a very big and famous festival, called "Loi Krathong Festival (Thai: ลอยกระทง, IPA: [lɔːj kràʔ tʰɔŋ])." The literal translation of "Loi Krathong" is "to float a basket" We make baskets, called "krathong," by using a sliced banana tree trunk as a base and decorate it with banana leaves, flowers together with a candle and incense sticks.



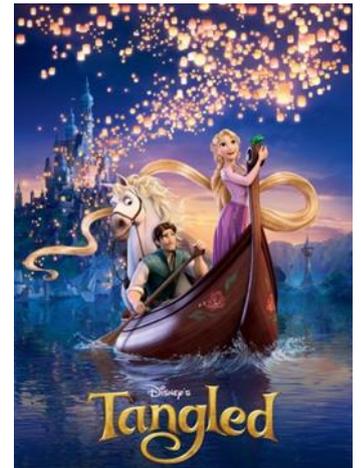
A typical Krathong basket made from decorated with orchid flowers, banana leaves, and incense

Sometimes we place a small coin into the krathong

as an offering to the river spirits

Thai people celebrate the *Loi Krathong* festival on the night of the full moon in November every year. We float the *krathongs* on a river, canal, or a pond to pay respect to the spirits of water together with making a wish for good luck. Moreover, government offices, corporations, and other organizations launch large decorated *krathongs* and parades. There are also competitions for the best *krathong*. A beauty contest is a regular feature and fireworks have become common in recent years.

In northern Thailand, *Loi Krathong* festival is particularly special. It is known as "Yi Peng." During the festival, people will decorate their houses, gardens, temples with candles and many kinds of lanterns. The most fantastic part is the thousands of sky lanterns called "*Khom Loi*," literally "floating lanterns," are launched into the sky like a scene of the festival in "Tangled," the Walt Disney animation movie.



Khom loi are made from a thin-light paper, stretched over a bamboo or wire frame, to which a candle or fuel cell is attached. When the fuel cell is lit, the resulting hot air is trapped inside the lantern



and creates enough lift for the *khom loi* to float up into the sky.

However, because *khom loi* can cause damage to important places, households in the areas, and can be a hazard to passing aircraft, they are increasingly subject to governmental restrictions. Anyway, we try hard to maintain both this beautiful cultural practice and the safety of people and the environment. We are waiting for you to come and experience the wonder of our culture, the *Loi Krathong* festival.



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
Pan	Undecided	All Month
My Love Story (俺物語)	Japanese	All Month
Heroine Shikkaku	Japanese	From 7th
The Man from U.N.C.L.E. (Code Name UNCLE)	English	From 14th
Arpeggio of Blue Steel: Ars Nova Cadenza	Japanese	From 21st
Transporter Refueled (Transporter Ignition)	English	Until 27th
Attack on Titan: End of the World	PG 12 Japanese	Until 20th
Bakuman.	Japanese	All Month



Living Tokachi: Staying Active, Even in Winter!

The sun is setting earlier and the nights are getting colder here in Tokachi. Although most outdoor activities have come to a stop, that doesn't mean your activities have to end too! With less light and lower temperatures, many of us are susceptible to SAD or, **Seasonal Affective Disorder**. SAD symptoms include difficulty waking up in the morning, nausea, oversleeping, overeating, lack of energy, and social withdrawal. Serious cases can lead to depression. But don't let all this get you down! SAD can be easily treated with regular physical exercise, which is this month's LT topic. Maintaining a consistent exercise routine throughout the year will keep you from getting SAD and putting on the extra winter weight. But exercising outside is cold and working out at home annoys your neighbors. Make use of the exercise facilities in your town! Public gyms and pools are subsidized by their local governments, keeping prices low (approx. 200Y a visit, with special prices for multiple visit tickets). It's also a great opportunity to meet people in your community.

If working out on your own isn't your cup of tea, or you just don't have the experience/knowledge to safely work out alone, join a sports club or circle! Even if you weren't a star athlete in college, there are activities for everyone and anyone. For example, there is Mini-Volley (ミニバレー) which has similar rules as regular volleyball, but uses a



larger beach ball-like ball, making it easier to hit.

* The TIRC holds monthly Mini Volley Nights! *
Most "Dosanko," or Hokkaido locals, learn to enjoy winter from a young age. This doesn't mean it's too late for you! Tokachi is known to produce national and international level athletes in winter sports. Take this opportunity to learn from the best. Built just 6 years ago, Tokachi has one of Japan's only 2 speed skating rinks, the Hokkaido Meiji Tokachi Oval, which is located in Obihiro's forest.



Speed skating rink, Hokkaido Meiji Tokachi Oval

Stay warm and active this winter. Don't let SAD get you down and enjoy Tokachi's (long and cold) winter!
Find a public gym near you :
Tokachi Gymnasium Homepage (Shortened URL)
<http://goo.gl/j7jmo6>

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.