

Obihiro Pioneer

International and Domestic Relations Section Newsletter

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Welcome Ishin Tou! トウさん、ようこそ!

This past April, we welcomed a new Coordinator for International Relations from China! Ms. Ishin Tou graciously allowed us to ask her a few questions about herself.



fascinated with Japan. I enjoy travelling, and have travelled extensively in Japan. Although I lived in Tokyo as a grad student, I visited smaller and more rural areas. Remembering those trips, I wanted to do more than work at a bank. I wanted to learn about Japan and teach people about my culture as well as take my knowledge and experiences of Japan back to China one day.

Obihiro Pioneer: Ms. Tou, welcome to Obihiro! Please tell us a bit about yourself.

Tou: *Thank you for your time. My name is Ishin Tou from Shanghai, China. I majored in Japanese language while in university in Shanghai, then went to graduate school in Tokyo for 2 years at Hosei University. After finishing my studies I returned to China and worked for a bank until I came to Obihiro.*

OP: Do you have any hobbies?

T: *I really enjoy watching anime and reading manga! When I was a kid, I wanted to be a manga author and would draw my favorite characters all of the time. My favorite genre is shonen (action-based, aimed at young boys), but the very first anime I saw was "Sailor Moon," which was playing on television in China.*

OP: Is manga and anime the reason you wanted to come to Japan?

T: *Well, I have always liked Japanese culture. My father is actually fluent in Japanese and worked in Tokyo when I was in elementary school. We would visit him in Japan during vacations and I became more and more*

OP: What kind of experiences would you like to have, now that you're here in Hokkaido?

T: *Skiing! I've never tried, but growing up in Shanghai, I never had many chances to try winter sports. Although, I am a little concerned about winter...I have traveled to Hokkaido during winter once before, but I have never lived anywhere with a winter as long or as cold as Obihiro! Hopefully, I can try some winter sports and learn to love the winter.*

OP: Any last comments?

T: *(At the time of this article) It has been barely a week since coming to Obihiro, so there are still many things, both at work and home, that I am not used to yet, but I hope to quickly adapt and become a great asset to the citizens of Obihiro!*

Summer is almost here, so there will be plenty of time to prepare for the winter! We wish Ms. Tou the best as she begins her journey in Obihiro!

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Events (pg 2 & 4)



Tokachi Hanabi Spots (pg 3)

Spring Tea Ceremony 2016 森の茶会~春~2016



Experience traditional Japanese Tea ceremony at the Tokachi International Relations Center's tea room this spring!
Place: Tokachi International

Relations Center, West 20, South 6-1-2

Date/Time: May 21st, 10:00-14:30

•Morning sessions (4x): Tea Ceremony

•Afternoon sessions (2x) : Tea Making

Participants: Tokachi Foreign Residents & Obihiro citizens, 15 and older

Fees: FREE for foreign residents, 300 yen for a tea ceremony experience, 500 yen to experience making tea and learning etiquette.

Contact/Reserve: Please call the TIRC office to reserve your spot! Reservations can be made from May 1st to the 20th.
Tel: (0155) 34-0122



Movies (pg 4)

Events at TIRC and in Tokachi and Obihiro

When	What	Where/Contact
5/11 (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! Free of charge!	Tokachi International Relations Center 森の交流館・十勝 0155-34-0122 tirc@city.obihiro.hokkaido.jp
5/14, 28 (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.	
5/14 (Sat) 11:00-13:00 Sign up period: 5/1(Sun) ~5/11(Wed), 9:00~17:00	Gapao Rice Thai Cooking Lesson 国際交流員による「タイ料理教室(ガパオ・ライス)」 This year's first international cooking lesson from an Obihiro CIR! Let's learn how to make the famous Thai dish, "Gapao rice" and "Spicy egg salad" while learning more about Thailand. This is a chance to interact with the Thai CIR of Obihiro City. Fee: 500 yen/person (open to Obihiro citizens only) To sign up, please fill out a registration form and pay the required fee at the TIRC.	
5/21 (Sat) 10:00-11:30	35th Kids Playground 第35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 Mongolian storytelling, crafts and dance.	
5/21 (Sat) 10:00/10:30/ 11:00/ 11:30/13:00/ 13:50 Sign up period: 5/1(Sun)- 5/20(Fri)	Spring Tea Ceremony 森の茶会～春～ Come and experience the traditional Japanese way of serving tea. AM Sessions 1-4 Tea Ceremony 10:00/10:30/11:00/11:30 PM Sessions 5-6 Tea Serving Etiquette 13:00/13:50 Participants: Tokachi foreign residents: first 50 people / free :Obihiro citizen: first 10 people / with charge *Ages 15 and older Tea Ceremony: 300 yen per person Tea Serving Etiquette: 500 yen per person Signup period: 5/1 (Sun)~5/20 (Fri) Tel: 0155-34-0122	
5/28 (Sat) 19:00-21:00	55th International Talk 第55回インターナショナル・トーク Learn more about the countries of the world and exchange ideas with other participants. This month's guest is from China's Uyghur ethnic group and is a current international student at Obihiro University. Come and learn about Uyghur's culture, history, costume, and more.	
5/5(Thu) 13:00-15:00	サケの子どもをみおくろう Baby Salmon Farewell For elementary students and under (up to 50 people, children 3 years old and younger must be accompanied) Experience releasing salmon raised in Ecology Park. Please contact	Tokachi Ecology Park 十勝エコロジーパーク 公園管理事務室 0155-32-6780
5/5 (Thu)	第26回歴舟川清流鯉のぼりミニイベント 26th Rekifune River Koi Kate-Flying Mini Event Children can enjoy eating soba, udon, and more for free. There will also be activities including a bouncy dome and memorial picture-taking.	Taiki Bridge River Bank 大樹橋上流河川敷 大樹町観光協会事務局 01558-6-2114
5/8 (Sun)	第31回おびひろ桜まつり 31st Obihiro Sakura (Cherry Blossom) Festival Enjoy looking at the park's sakura while listening to live music or participating in the karaoke competition. There will also be a lottery event held!	Obihiro Midori Gaoka (Green Park) 緑ヶ丘公園 帯広観光社交組合 0155-22-3906

Recommended 9 Sakura Viewing “Hanami” Spots in Tokachi

“Hanami” is a Japanese word which means, flower viewing. “Hana (花)” means flowers, and “Mi(見)” means watch/view. Although “hana” is the word for flower, “Hanami” is generally used for Sakura (cherry blossom). In the Kanto area, the Cherry blossom or Sakura season has already finished but in Hokkaido, it has just started.

This time will introduce recommended Hanami spots in Tokachi and the Sakura flowering forecast for Hokkaido.

Tokachi Area Recommended Hanami Spots:

(Source: <https://www.rankingshare.jp/rank/nfkvamns1x>)

Number 1 : Green Park (Obihiro city)

Green Park is a large park in Obihiro, where one side of the park is covered by the green grass. In the past, the longest bench in Japan was in Green Park. Visitors can enjoy walking, playing sports, or barbecuing in the park.



Source: <http://www.kitakaido.com/tokachi/>



http://www.kitakaido.com/tokachi/obihiro/obihiro_11.html

Number 2 : Kiyomi Park (Ikeda Town)

Kiyomi park is a small park which is about a 5 minute drive from the center of Ikeda Town. It is a famous Hanami spot of

Ikeda Town. Since there are not many visitors, so you can enjoy hanami privately.

Number 3 : Memuro Park (Memuro Town)

The highlight of Memuro Park is a water-slide which is very popular among kids. Children can have fun on the water-slide, while parents are enjoy the Hanami. This park is close to the station and expressway, so it is easy to access even for first-time visitors.



http://jaga.sakura.ne.jp/dj_detail.php?id=271

Number 4 : Sakura Trees Row (Shihoro Town)

Nearly 14 km long, cherry blossom trees line the Tokachi-Shihoro 241 National Highway. These Sakura trees that line both sides of the highway perfectly match to the splendid scenery of Tokachi. Driving through this road during the Sakura season will definitely

put you in a good mood!

Number 5 : Honbetsu Park (Honbetsu Town)

Honbetsu Park is widely known by Tokachi people as the Yoshitsune no Sato (the Village of Yoshitsune). In the park, there are many facilities such as a large

slide, go-carts, boats, and other athletic facilities that children can enjoy. Visitors can enjoy viewing the blooming Sakura trees on one side of the park. Moreover, there is space for throwing an outdoor barbecue party with friends and family.



<http://www.mytokachi.jp/dti/guide/656>

Number 6 : Suzuran Park (Otofuke Town)

Between the Sakura flowers and the magnificent illuminations at night, Suzuran Park is the perfect night Sakura viewing spot in Otofuke Town. During the Sakura season, Sakura trees will be lit up beautifully, making for a romantic atmosphere. Naturally, this is a famous dating spot for local couples.



<http://www.tokachigawa.net/sign/seieng/features/suzuranPark/index.html>



<http://photozou.jp/photo/show/>

Number 7 : Shimizu Park (Shimizu town)

When there is no snow, Shimizu Park is a great place to enjoy camping and barbecue. But when the Sakura season comes, this park becomes the perfect place for nature lovers.

Number 8 : Tokachi Shrine (Hiroo Town)

Tokachi Shrine is said to be the oldest shrine in the Tokachi area, with a history of more than 300 years. This is rare for land from the Hokkaido’s colonization days. Unlike the other spots, the shrine’s main visitors tend to be older. This place is recommended to people who prefer enjoying the elegance of Hanami peacefully.



<http://www.town.hiroo.hokkaido.jp/kankou/>



<http://sakura.way-nifty.com/tsuredure/2012/05/>

Number 9 : Tokachi Ikusei Ranch (Taiki Town)

Tokachi Ikusei Ranch is the place for those who want to enjoy viewing the

Sakura trees in an open space. It takes about an hour drive from Obihiro City.

Sakura in the Tokachi area is scheduled to be in full bloom during the first half of Golden Week (May 1–7)! Take advantage of the string of national holidays and visit some of the spots we’ve recommended!

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
Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice	2D English	Until 6th
Captain America: Civil War	English	All Month
Zootopia	Subbed Eng	All Month
The Huntsman: Winter's War	TBD	From 27th

Events Continued

When	What	Where/Contact
5/8(Sun) 10:00-14:00	第58回本別山溪つじ祭り 58th Honbetsu 「Tsutsuji」Festival Come watch the flowers of nearly 16,000 Hokkaido purple rose trees (tsutsuji) and 2000 hill cherry trees. Come and enjoy a variety of activities, including a jumbo pot, which will be used to make pork soup!	義経の里本別公園 本別町企画振興課(本別町観光協会事務局) 0156-22-2141 http://www.town.honbetsu.hokkaido.jp/
5/15(Sun) 10:00-15:00	17th Wool Challenge in Tokachi 第17回 ウールチャレンジin 十勝 Sheep's wool, crafts, and fleece will be up for sale. Guests can also learn how to knit, for free! Participate in the 「Wool Challenge」 and try to knit the longest scarf!	Bimantei (Ramen Shop) 美蔓亭 ウールチャレンジin十勝実行委員会 美蔓亭 0156-62-5033
5/22 (Sun) 予定	さらべつ すももの里まつり Sarabetsu Sumomo Peach "Village" Festival Enjoy looking at nearly a 1000 blooming Sumomo peach trees. With a sweet smell filling the air, you can purchase products including the peach. There will be a food and drink corner, along with other activities.	Sarabetsu Sumomo Peach "Village" Sarabetsu Tourism Association 更別村観光協会 0155-52-2211
5/22 (Sun)	Greenary and Flower Festa 2016 みどりと花のフェスタ2016 Enjoy a flea market and experience wood-working. Events about nature will also be held.	Greenary and Flower Center Obihiro City Greenary Section みどりと花のセンター 帯広市みどりの課
5/22 (Sun)	2016 Karikachi Trail Running 2016狩勝トレイルランニング Formerly a train-track made a hundred years ago, will be the course for this event. Once considered one of Japan's best views from a train window, this course will take you on a spectacular race through the mountains.	Karikachi Takahara Eco Railcar (Former station) 狩勝高原エコトロコ旧新内駅前 旧狩勝線を楽しむ会 0156-64-4948
5/29 (Sun)	35th Ashoro Hometown Flower Festival 第35回足寄ふるさと花まつり Welcome Ashoro's spring at the flower festival which will include a stage show, a lottery and more!	Ashoro Town Hall Parking Lot 足寄町役場駐車場 足寄町役場経済課林業商工観光室 0156-25-2141

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.