

Free Japanese Class at Obihiro City Hall 日本語講座

Free Japanese classes will be held weekly, starting tentatively on **May 8th**. Classes will be held on **every Wednesday** at Obihiro City Hall.

There will be 2 evening classes on **Wednesdays**, 「**Beginner Level I**」 and 「**Beginner Level II**」.

「**Beginner Level I**」 will focus on basic Japanese phrases and greetings, whereas 「**Beginner Level II**」 will focus on basic Japanese grammar and conversation.



All classes are run by the Tokachi International Association and taught by local volunteer Japanese language teachers.

Registration has begun and will last until **Apr 19th**, so sign up now!

The classes are scheduled from **May 8th to July 10th** for a total of 10 sessions, but lesson dates may be changed to accommodate the Japanese language teachers' schedule.

Contact the following to register for the Japanese class:

Obihiro City Hall
International and Domestic
Relations Section (3rd Floor)
West 5 South 7
Tel: 0155-65-4133
Email:
international@city.obihiro.hokkaido.jp

Japanese Class Information:

Venue: Obihiro City Hall
(West 5 South 7),
10th floor Meeting Room

Date: Every Wednesday,
18:30 ~ 20:00
May 8th~Jul 10th (tentative)

Class Levels:

「**Beginner Level I**」
For beginners! No prior understanding
of Japanese needed.

「**Beginner Level II**」
For upper beginner/lower intermediate
learners.

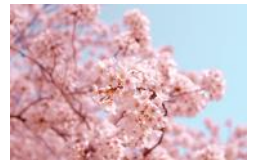
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Culture Corner
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Photo Credit: JJ Harrison, Wikimedia Commons



Songkran Festival,
TIRC Mini Volleyball
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Movies,
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Culture Corner (カルチャーコーナー)



April is a new start for many Japanese people. This is due to the fact that unlike many countries, Japan's fiscal year begins in April.

The change in fiscal year brings along change in a new environment for many people. Students start a new semester in school, new hires start work at their job and working adults get transferred to new departments.

Obihiro Pioneer wish our readers good luck for another year of their endeavor, be it in school or at work. If you're new to the Tokachi region and to this newsletter, welcome! We hope you enjoy your stay here.

If you follow the local weather news, you will probably know that everyone is keeping an eye out for the blooming of cherry blossoms. As is tradition, in this issue of Obihiro Pioneer, we will recommend famous places in Hokkaido for cherry blossom viewing.

	City/Town & Place Name	Number of Trees	Full Bloom Date
Southern Hokkaido Area			
	Matsumae City, Matsumae Park <small>出典: https://weathernews.jp/s/sakura/spot/1/</small>	10,000	5/1
	Hakodate City, Goryokaku Park <small>出典: https://weathernews.jp/s/sakura/spot/2/</small>	1,600	4/30
	Noboribetsu City, Sakura Namiki Road <small>出典: https://weathernews.jp/s/sakura/spot/1404/</small>	2,000	5/5
	Shin-Hidaka Town, Shizunai Nijukken Road <small>出典: https://weathernews.jp/s/sakura/spot/3/</small>	3,000	5/4
Central Hokkaido Area			
	Sapporo City, Moerenuma Park <small>出典: https://sp.jorudan.co.jp/hanami/spot_9.html</small>	3,500	5/9
	Sapporo City, Hokkaido-jingu <small>出典: https://weathernews.jp/s/sakura/spot/4/</small>	1,400	4/30
	Otaru City, Otaru Park <small>出典: https://sp.jorudan.co.jp/hanami/spot_1007.html</small>	1,000	5/10
	Bibai City, Tomei Park <small>出典: https://sp.jorudan.co.jp/hanami/spot_8.html</small>	2,000	5/12

	City/Town & Place Name	Number of Trees	Full Bloom Date
Northern Hokkaido Area			
	Asahikawa City, Asahiyama Park <small>出典: https://weathernews.jp/s/sakura/spot/1204/</small>	2,400	5/4
	Furano City, Asahigaoka Park <small>出典: https://weathernews.jp/s/sakura/spot/5/</small>	3,000	5/5
Eastern Hokkaido Area			
	Obihiro City, Midorigaoka Park <small>出典: https://weathernews.jp/s/sakura/spot/2001/</small>	780	5/3

Do note that due to the unpredictability of nature, the expected full bloom dates can deviate by a week or two.

We recommend you keep tabs on the local weather news for up-to-date information. There are also several Japanese sites that you can check out, such as

<http://sakura.weathermap.jp/>
<http://www.tenki.jp/sakura/expectation.html>

Happy cherry blossom viewing!

In this column, we introduce local event information, cultural topics, helpful hints and pretty much anything of interest. We also welcome readers' input, so if you have something you want to share, please feel free to let us know via email to "international@city.obihiko.hokkaido.jp".

Songkran Festival: How Thailand celebrates its Traditional New Year タイの新年：ソングクラン

In this issue of Obihiro Pioneer, we will take a look at Thailand's Songkran Festival, Thailand's traditional new year which is celebrated in April.

The word "Songkran" in Sanskrit means "astrological passage" and it signals the change into a new year. The traditional Thai New Year days were originally determined by astrology-based calculations, but since 2018 have been fixed as 12th to 16 April by the Thai cabinet.

During this period, many Thai people return to their hometown to meet their families; they visit Buddhist temples to perform good deeds such as providing food, flowers and daily necessities for the monks and visit elderly family members to ask for their blessings. It is tradition to pour water on Buddha images to cleanse one's sins and bad luck.

Water is also used to cool off oneself in hot and humid Thailand, where temperatures soar to as high as 40°C in April.



After the end of traditional rituals, festivities ensue. Songkran Festival is known as "Water Festival" to tourists, as it is associated with colorfully dressed Thai locals

and tourists alike having water gun fights on the streets. Some find different means of getting others wet, including spraying passerby with a hose.



If you visit Thailand during the Songkran Festival, you absolutely cannot avoid getting drenched! So get ready your water gun and soak in the atmosphere!

Photo Credit (in order of appearance):
Tevaprapas, Wikimedia Commons
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Events

When	What	Where/Contact
4/10 (Wed) 19:00-21:00	International Mini-Volleyball Night Meet new friends from around the world while enjoying a fun and easy sport. Organized by Tokachi International Association	Tokachi International Relations Center 森の交流館・十勝 0155-34-0122 tirc@city.obihiko.hokkaido.jp
4/13, 4/27 (Sat) 16:00-18:00	Japanese Conversation and Learning Table Improve your Japanese language skills in a friendly environment. TIRC Winter Garden Fee: Free of charge Organized by Tokachi International Association	
4/20 (Sat) 19:00-21:00	International Potluck Night (Mongolia) Meet local and international residents while enjoying a dish from around the world. This time, our guest from Mongolia will introduce Mongolian fried dumplings, "Khuushuur". TIRC Kitchen Fee: Free of charge (no registration required) Please bring a dish or drink to share. Organized by the Committee for Improvement of the City	

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
Shazam!	TBC	From 19th
Avengers: Endgame	2D Sub/ 2D Dub	From 26th
Dumbo	Jpn Dub	All Month
Captain Marvel	Jpn Sub	Until 25th

Events Continued

When	What	Where/Contact
4/21 (Sun) <i>tentative</i>	Michi no Eki Pia 21 Shihoro Renewal Celebration This year marks the second anniversary of Michi no Eki Pia 21 Shihoro's new location. As such, Michi no Eki Pia will be holding a second anniversary event to celebrate the occasion.	Michi no Eki Pia 21 Shihoro 道の駅ピア21しほろ 01564-5-3940 http://shihoroinfo.com
4/27 (Sat)	Naitai Terrace (Naitai Terrace Reopening) Naitai Terrace, which seats upon the peak of Japan's largest public farm, will be reopened! You can view the whole of Tokachi from the café-observatory of Naitai Terrace.	Karch 株式会社karch 01564-7-7777
4/28 (Sun)	Fish Day Every month in Hiroo town (twice in December!), there is "Fish Day", during which fish and other ingredients taken from the sea are used to make healthy dishes native to the north. A variety of products are on sale for the event.	Hiroo Town Fisheries Cooperative Food Division 広尾漁業協同組合食品部 01558-2-3202 http://www.pref.hokkaido.lg.jp/sr/ske/osazu/oz06gok/

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.