

MURORAN

TIMES

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Muroran City Office 1-2 Saiwai-cho, Muroran,
Hokkaido 051-8511 JAPAN <0143-22-1111>

News and Topics

Efficient Fuel Cell

A fuel cell, which is made from hydrogen and oxygen and generates electricity, is a clean energy system. This is because it emits nothing but water as a by-product. There are various types, depending on the electrical chemical actions. Now in Muroran, the fuel cell with the highest efficiency and the quickest start worldwide is under development.

Some corporations in Muroran such as the Muroran Plant of the Japan Steel Works, Ltd, Muroran Plant of the Nippon Steel Corporation, the Muroran Refinery of Nippon Petroleum Refining Company, Ltd, and Muroran Institute of Technology (Muroran IT) have researched and developed the technology related to hydrogen energy. Therefore, there has been a high interest in hydrogen energy, and this situation led to the development of the fuel cell.

In 2003 more than 20 companies and Muroran IT started a project called “Hydrogen Energy and the Fuel Cell”. They researched mainly the practical use of fuel cells in the home. Many lectures have been given relating to this topic. Then, in 2006 under the cooperation of 11 companies and Muroran IT, a new project called for the completion of the fuel cell next spring. Though conventional fuel cells take 15 minutes to start, the new one with the highest efficiency will just take with in 5 minutes to do so.

むろらんこうぎょうだいがく おお
室蘭工業大学と多くの企業がプロジェクトチームをつ
くり、これまで以上に高性能な燃料電池を開発中
です。

Separate Collection of Plastic Trash

One year has passed since Muroran city office started a separate collection of plastic trash in

October of last year. Though the amount has been growing gradually, it is still only 60% of the amount early presumed. And many non-plastic items have been mingled with it.

The plastic items eligible for collection are shown in the lower chart. After being collected on the fixed day, this plastic waste is pressed and packed for transport to a waste treatment center in Muroran Works of Nippon Steel Corporation or in Sapporo to recycle into oil, cokes, gas, etc. Would you cooperate with separate collection of plastics for reuse?

This list shows the objects that should be thrown away in the plastic trash that will be used for recycling:

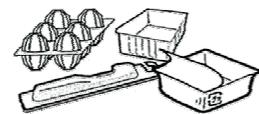
*Mark of plastic trash



*Bags or plastic film from sweets, frozen foods, rice, etc.



*Packages for eggs, vegetables, tofu, toothbrushes, commodity goods, detergent refill packs, etc.



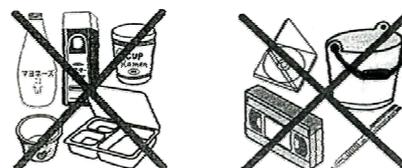
*Plastic bottles for detergent, shampoo, etc.



*Plastic lids for plastic bottles or glass bottles.



Note: Plastic packages of lunch boxes (Bento), noodles, puddings, ice cream, mayonnaise, sauce and oil are categorized as “Burnable trash”. CDs and DVDs, videotapes, plastic buckets, plastic writing materials and plastic toys also go into the “Burnable trash”. If they are attached with metal, they should be put in the “Non-burnable trash”.



プラスチック製の容器や包装を一般のゴミと分けて
 収集し、リサイクルに活用していますが、間違う人が
 まだ多いようです。

Muroran Yakitori and Curry Ramen Win Popularity

The first yakitori (barbecued chicken) festival named "YAKITOLYMPIC" was held on September 29th and 30th in Fukushima City, Fukushima Prefecture. Twenty yakitori shops from seven cities in the country which are all famous for yakitori participated in the festival.

The seven cities are Muroran, Bibai (Hokkaido), Imabari (Ehime Pr.), Higashimatu-yama (Saitama Pr.) and Fukushima(Fukushima Pr.).

A large number of yakitori fans from all over the country gathered and enjoyed the festival.

The shop "Ippei," representing Muroran, participated and by popular vote, which was held during the festival, won the gold medal.

Ippei's yakitori was so popular among the yakitori fans at the festival that 8000 sticks were digested.

The second festival will be held in Muroran next year.

On the other specialty of Muroran, Curry Ramen, was featured in the "Hokkaido Ramen Festival 2007 in Sapporo" which was held from September 22nd to 24th in Sapporo. Fifteen ramen shops in Hokkaido participated in the festival.

The shop representing Muroran, "Rantantei" in Wanishi-cho, offered curry ramen, and a long line formed in front of the shop. Two thousand bowls of the ramen were sold out in three days.

The popularity of Muroran curry ramen continues to rise.

室蘭やきとりやカレーラーメンが全国的なイベント
 などでも人気が高まっています。

Information and Invitations

Nakajima Sports Center Skate Rink open

[Opening Date] November 1 (Thur)

[Hours open] Weekdays: 12:00noon ~ 6:00p.m.

Saturdays, Sundays, holidays: 10:00a.m. ~6:00p.m.

[Day closed] Mondays *But when Monday is a holiday, the next day is closed.

[Admission Fee] under school aged children are free

	One time/ person	Coupon ticket:6 times
adult	400 yen	2,000 yen
over 65 years	300 yen	1,500 yen
high school student	200 yen	1,000 yen
schoolchildren	100 yen	500 yen

[More Information] Nakajima Sports Center
 (Tel: 0143-45-0800)

Muroran Plastic Model Association Model Exhibition

[Date] November 10(Sat), 11(Sun) 10:00a.m. ~

[Place] Muroran Culture (*Bunka*) Center

[More Information] Mr.Uno(Tel:0143-86-7179)

Let's Have Fun with the Personal Computer

[Date] November 11(Sun) 10:00a.m. ~3:00p.m.

[Place] NTT East Corp. Hokkaido Muroran branch

(1-18-6 Higashi-machi)

[Admission Fee] free

[Contents] Consultation regarding the personal computer, operational support for handicapped people, and editing video and digital camera images, etc.

[Application] on that day

[More Information] NPO corporation Senior Net Iburu :Mr.Kudo (Tel:0143-45-2726)

Exhibition of Paintings Owned by Muroran City

The work (oil painting and Japanese pictures) of the late Ms.Kikuko Nishimura who came from Muroran will be exhibited.

[Date] November 16 (Fri) ~ 19 (Mon) 10:00a.m. ~5:00p.m. (4:00p.m.: November 19)

[More Information] Lifelong learning section at Muroran City Office (Tel: 0143-22-5094)

Oldies Charity Music Festival

[Date] November 18(Sun) 5:00p.m. ~

[Place] *Houraiden* 蓬峯殿(Nakajima-cho)

[Contents] Six bands that enjoy Muroan oldies sounds will perform.

[Ticket] 3,000 yen: including hors-d'oeuvre and a drink. You can get the ticket at *Houraiden* and Elm Music Shop.

[More Information] Mr. Kobayashi
(Tel:090-1388-6056)

Making Traditional kites

[Date] November 23(Fri) 10:00a.m. ~ 12:00noon

[Place] Muroan Historical Museum

[Limit] first 20 people

[Admission Fee] 500 yen

[Application] by telephone from November 1 until November 22

[Entrance Fee] 300 yen (under junior high school age and over 70: free)

[More Information] Muroan Historical Museum
(Tel:0143-59-4922)

Citizen's Exchange Bowling Tournament

[Date] November 23 (Fri)

10:00a.m. ~ 12:00noon.

[Conditions] citizens over 18 year old citizen
(Excluding high school students)

[Place] Muroan Ground Bowl (*Higashi-machi*)

[Admission Fee] 1,000 yen

[Limit] first 100 people.

[Application] Please apply directly at Muroan Gymnasium, Irie Swimming Pool, Irie track and field sports office. Please pay the participation fee and fill out the application form at that time.

[More Information] Muroan Gymnasium (Tel: 0143-44-7521)



Japanese Cooking 192

Salty Pickled Chinese Cabbage はくさい あさづ 白菜の浅漬け

- Ingredients (serve four) -

Chinese cabbage 600 g

Salt (3% of Chinese cabbage's weight)

konbu(kelp) 5cm×3pieces

Dried red peppers 2 pieces



<Directions> [Preparation]

- (1) Tear off the leaves from the Chinese cabbage one by one, make cuts into the bottom of the stems, and cut into pieces.
- (2) Sprinkle salt all over the Chinese cabbage.
- (3) Wipe both sides of the konbu with a wet cloth.
- (4) Remove the seeds from the red chill peppers with scissors.
Soak them in water until soft.

[How to make pickles]

- (1) Prepare a large bowl for pickling, place the Chinese cabbage into the bowl, and then spread konbu and red chill peppers on top.
- (2) Cover with 5 or 6 plates (about 500 ~ 600g) to apply pressure.
Wrap the whole thing in cling film and leave for 3or4 hours, or over night. (Adjust the pickling time according to taste.)
- (3) Squeeze any excess water out of the Chinese cabbage and cut into bite-size pieces.

Letter



Your Worship the Mayor of Muroan

As passengers on the Sapphire Princess we wish to take this opportunity to express our thanks and appreciation for the excellent hospitality shown to all of us on our visit a few days ago to your fine city. All the staff and students [from Kaisei-gakuin High School] were very helpful and friendly. Their final dance performance and the departure festivities were very exciting and proved to be a memorable end to our visit. We have sent a separate email to the school to thank them all.

Of particular note are the fine efforts of the city staff and officials to organize the shuttles and literature which proved most helpful to us.

We were most impressed and want to thank you and

your staff and the people of Muroran for leaving us with lasting good memories of our visit.

With sincerest thanks,

D.Griffin / D.Turner
passengers of Sapphire Princess

About Japan

Puzzling Features of Weddings and

Funerals in Japan

<Why do Japanese calendars designate certain days as good or bad days for holding weddings?>

The Japanese calendar not only indicates the day of the week but also, in small print, certain days such as *tomobiki*, *butsumetsu*, and *senpu*. The fortune, whether good or bad for a particular day, is indicated to enable one to choose the best day to hold auspicious events.

This type of fortune telling is based on *rokuyo*. *Rokuyo*, a form of astrology, was brought to Japan from China and has had a wide following among the people since the end of the Edo Period.

Rokuyo occurs in the following order:

Sensho (先勝) – lucky in the morning but unlucky in the afternoon.

Tomobiki (友引) – lucky in the morning and at night, but unlucky in the afternoon. Funerals are avoided on this day because the characters are written as “pulling a friend (toward death)”.

Senpu (先負) – unlucky in the morning but lucky in the afternoon

Butsumetsu (仏滅) – unlucky all day.

Taian (大安) - lucky all day. When it comes to holding weddings, this is the day.

Shakko (赤口) – lucky only at twelve noon.

Puzzling Behavior of the Japanese

<Why can't the Japanese clearly say “no”?>

When the Japanese wish to turn down a favor asked of them, they believe that a flat refusal will hurt the feeling of the other, so they come up with vague responses such as: “I see, I’ll think about it” or “I’ll give it serious thought” or “I’ll see what I can do.”

With each other, the Japanese implicitly know to what extent a request will be considered or turned down by the other by facial expressions and how it is expressed in words. However, failing to say “no” from the outset when the answer is decidedly “no” causes non-Japanese to place undue expectations on a positive outcome.

They then sometimes feel deceived or betrayed when met with a refusal. This arises from the restraint displayed by the Japanese of showing discretion to the other person to maintain harmony. In business negotiations, non-Japanese may take this as being indecisive.

Although the reticence of the Japanese plays a role, the reason why they are perceived as non-decisive also stems from the decision-making process which is followed by many Japanese companies. Because it is difficult for personnel in charge of the actual negotiations to make snap decisions, decision-making as a rule is largely based on consultation within the company. After a thorough discussion, it is then brought to management which hands down the final “yes” or “no” decision. (Quotation from “Talking About Japan”)

Cinema Guide

Muroran Gekijo (Higashi-machi)

1. THE BRAVE ONE
2. HERO (Japanese)
3. ALWAYS 続・三丁目の夕日 (Japanese)
4. クローズ ZERO (Japanese)



About the Muroran Times

The Muroran Times is designed to bring information about local events to the international community of Muroran. Staff: Mitani Yoichi, Ishizawa Yuko, Yamashita Mayumi, Tagashira Kazui, Nomura Ikuko, Nakamura Mari, English advisor: Jane Takizawa.