



KUMORICON

THE PORTLAND-VANCOUVER ANIME CONVENTION NEWSLETTER

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Staff and Attendees Gear Up For Biggest Kumoricon Yet

With a year's planning coming to a close, Kumoricon 2007 prepares to kick off its fifth annual convention this Friday evening in our new hotel. This year's venue provides the advantage of space—a large exhibitors hall, spacious panel rooms, and two large lobbies plus two full floors of programming.

Attendees will notice the biggest change at the very first thing they do—checking in. Kumoricon's new registration system, which centers on mailing out attendee badges, promises to reduce lines to a minimum. Mailing out badges to those who pre-register eliminates the largest time component in checking in: locating the badge to give to the attendee. This year, all that is needed to check in is scanning the bar code printed on each badge, and handing a lanyard to the attendee. The computerized registration system takes care of the rest. For attendees registering at the door, we've made improvements to

our registration procedures which we predict will keep the at-the-door registration line no more than an hour long at its busiest times.

Kumoricon begins several "firsts" this year: a Maid Squad to assist and direct attendees in line for registration and events; cosplay chess, where 32 cosplaying pieces act out moves as directed by two chessmasters playing the game; a manga reading library open for all of Kumoricon hours where attendees can drop in any time to check out a volume to read; and several large LCD TVs in our gaming room to support HD graphics on our latest-generation consoles.

Previous Kumoricon traditions return, including three always-running video rooms, an always-open gaming room, the creation station, three dances, the karaoke room, and the ever-shrouded in mystery Random Panel (of Doom). ☺



Mini-con cosplayers



Mini-con staff prepares to take registrations

Mini-Con One-Day Event Proves a Success

In a move signaling its growth and increasing popularity, Kumoricon hosted its first major event outside of the annual convention itself.

Mini-con, held on August 11, introduced our attendees to the hotel layout, gave our staff a practice run on procedures and logistics in preparation for Kumoricon, and let the hotel staff see what we were all about.

Featuring a subset of our gaming equipment, a karaoke room, a

viewing room, a general hangout room where we also held our second-to-last monthly general meeting, and even a few vendors, the event ran for nearly 12 hours in total.

In true con form, we took registrations and gave entry stamps and Mini-con staff badges. Attendees could donate a manga volume in lieu of a portion of the fee, or two manga volumes in place of all of it, which will be added to the Kumoricon manga library. Between

registration fees and the value of the manga, and after subtracting costs in running the event, the Mini-con event was profitable on its own!

Kumoricon will be listening to its attendees and staff to gauge interest in future mid-year events. Thanks to our growing popularity, this and future similar events are possible. Thank you to our wonderful staff and volunteers for making it happen! ☺



Know Your Pocky—Summer Pocky Flavors

Summer Pocky Surprise!

by Tom Munkres

Many surprises greeted me today when I arrived at Uwajimaya in Beaverton. I had the day off and a fresh paycheck in the bank ready for frivolous spending. The plan was to get some fresh Pocky for my Memorial Day festivities. What I ended up finding blew me away.



Pocky Club table at Mini-con

Last week Glico's website showed this year's summer specials, Coconut (which they sell every year) and Tahitian Vanilla. Also, the Bitter and White Mousse flavors had been replaced by two

new flavors that I thought to be based on European desserts (turns out I was half right. One is Tiramisu and the other is Mango; I don't know Japanese). That is plenty of change for a Pocky gourmand like myself.

When I came to the snack aisle I was glad to see that the Pocky selection had taken back the pair of shelves on which it was lacking the last time I had visited. At Sakura Fest the Pocky section had shrunk to three shelves. Imagine! *Only* three! Even if there were no cheerful Hawaiian prints or hula girls to greet me on the boxes, it was a good selection. Since the two summer flavors weren't there, I reviewed the choices I would have to make do with.

Goka (5 fruit), Kurogo (black 5), Men's (dark chocolate), Chocolate Mousse (a thicker and smoother chocolate), Green Mousse (green tea), Regular Chocolate, Regular in the Value Pack (which is a great buy if you aren't hoarding the boxes like I am), Giant Chocolate (still

no more Giant Strawberry, pity), Almond Crush (in the neat new hexagonal box), Chocolate Crush (my current favorite; imagine cookie bits instead of almond bits), Strawberry Cream (in the tiny boxes you can get anywhere), Strawberry Crush...wait, **original** recipe!?

I first saw a lone box at the back, behind the Fran. Then after grabbing it I double-checked, and sure enough! The whole bottom shelf was **Original Recipe** Strawberry Chunk. Not a single one of the New Recipe boxes in sight!

The easiest way to explain how I felt right then might be lost on some of our younger readers. It was like finding a case of Coca Cola Classic after having to drink New Coke for a few months. For those of you who don't get it, let me put my feelings a different way. If the summer flavors had not been released before the next newsletter deadline, this ENTIRE ARTICLE would have been about the recipe change.

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Forum Upgrade Improves Kumoricon Online Systems

Many attendees noticed a change in appearance to the Kumoricon online forums in July. This is because we changed the software that operates the forums to provide many new features.

Now, you can log in without needing to read every new post in one sitting, because the forum remembers which threads you have and haven't read, even if you log out or leave. New notification options will email you the full text of private messages, or, if you enable the option, the full text of new posts in threads that you have posted in or selected to monitor. For those of you on fast connections, there is a link to view long threads all on one page.

Controversial was our change to no longer count posts in our popular "spam" area toward a user's post

count, providing a more accurate picture of who is active in the more moderated areas of the forum.

Although the forum is popular with our attendees year-round, it is only the most well-known of the several information sources on the web site. Attendees are also encouraged to watch the calendar which sits on the right side-bar of every page, as it lists the full dates and times of Kumoricon meetings, promotional events, and other activities far in advance. Coming soon, the calendar will feature more listings of local anime clubs. Events will be marked to indicate whether they are official Kumoricon events, or events put on by others.

Anyone can subscribe to our front page news using an RSS reader such as Google Reader to stay informed of

Kumoricon happenings year-round. The gallery, which is continually expanded, contains photos and art from past Kumoricons and promotional events.

Finally, don't miss our schedule. For the first time in 2007, detailed schedule and event information has been posted more than a day or two before the con. As an added bonus, the schedule will be updated in real time *during* the convention! Fire up your laptops and web-enabled mobile phones—if an event is canceled or moved, you'll be the first to know!

Be informed.

Visit www.kumoricon.org!



Know Your Pocky—Summer Pocky Flavors (cont.)

continued from opposite

Since that is not the case, I'll try and keep it brief. Old Recipe had shorter sticks with large chunks of freeze-dried strawberry. New Recipe is longer and thinner with only a few speckles of actual berry. This means you got more Pocky per pack but they weren't as yummy. The only other difference of note is that the new recipe has less cholesterol. If you want to tell them apart on the shelves, the boxes do have different labels. The New Recipe box has a lot of green leaves at the top, with strawberries right on the vine (though some of the strawberries they show aren't even ripe, eww!)

When I showed these differences to Pocky Club back at Sakura Fest, they were outraged and totally against the new direction Glico had chosen for their most popular flavor. Hopefully with this newfound supply of Original Recipe Strawberry Chunk we can all make the transition to the new recipe as smoothly as possible. The fewer hard feelings for the maker of our favorite snack, the better.

After recovering from my happy shock, I

began piling boxes into my basket. As I grabbed for the two new Mousse flavors, a bit of color behind the support beam caught my eye. You can find the Pocky at the Beaverton Uwajimaya in aisle 3, on the left just past the support pillar—and sometimes behind it—as was the case today.

The box I saw was small and bore the Mousse design like its neighbors on that shelf, but it was pink. Very pink! I had never seen a pink Pocky Mousse box in person or online. I pushed the Chocolate boxes out of the way and eased out one of the two boxes I had revealed. BERRY said the front of the box. I double-checked the English slap-on nutrition label, Strawberry. YES! Strawberry Mousse Pocky Finally existed. The new pink inner packaging and the orange from the Mango would be so cute!

I eyed the other box in the shadows. Surely I wouldn't be limited to only two boxes of this new find! Crossing my fingers I walked to the other side of the pillar and pushed aside the green bags of chips. I was rewarded for my diligence. An entire 10-pack of Berry Mousse sat behind the pillar, out of view of the

Pocky-buying public. The Kami of Pocky smiled upon me today.

I'll be writing up my reviews of all THREE new flavors when I have a chance to share them with the other Club members. They'll all be made available on the forums and the Pocky Club website. I don't suggest waiting to hear what they taste like from us, though—go to your local import store and buy some for yourself! From all of us at Pocky Club, thanks for reading. See you at Kumoricon!

Uwajimaya Website

<http://uwajimaya.com/upb/index.html>

Strawberry Pocky Comparison Pics

courtesy of Patrick King (AKA

Mr_Mustash)

http://s130.photobucket.com/albums/p270/Mr_Mustash/

Current Pocky Flavor Line Up

<http://pocky.jp/products/index.html>

Pocky Club Website

<http://pockyclub.elite-otaku.net> 🙋

Voice Acting Guest of Honor – Sean Schemmel



Sean Schemmel gets paid to stand in a sound proof padded room and make wacky voices all day—with good reason. He's good at it. Ever since he was discovered doing so at an undisclosed mental institution, Sean has been gainfully employed as a voice actor for some of the top anime titles in history. He is most noted as the voice of Goku in the internationally acclaimed anime series **Dragon Ball Z**, **Dragon Ball**, and **Dragon Ball GT**. Other notable roles include Amidamaru and Rio in **Shaman King**, Tetsugyu in **Giant Robo**, and Onsokumaru in **Ninja Nonsense**. Current projects include Dr. Vellian Crowler in **Yu-Gi-Oh! GX**, Chortles in **Viva Pinata**, Maxxor in **Chaotic**, and Gonard in **Animation**

Collectives' hugely popular **Kappa Mikey** (www.kappamikey.com). Sean has also adapted for English and directed the following anime series: **Space Pirate Mito**, **Sadamitsu: The Destroyer**, **Midori Days**, and **Ah! My Goddess**. Sean currently resides in New Jersey, and in his spare time enjoys playing the French Horn, writing electronic music and moving heavy objects with his mind. 🙋

See our previous newsletter, or the web site, for announcements and bios of our other guests of honor:

- The Slants
- Kirk Thornton
- Applegeeks
- A-Key Kyo

Kumoricon and Backspace have teamed up to put on a special party the Thursday night before the con!

Backspace, Portland's entertainment hub, presents a night of nerdcore, with performances by three local artists featuring techno and hip hop set to otaku and Japanese themes. While there, check out previews of Kumoricon content playing on a large screen along with open Wii gaming—plus the usual LAN gaming and cafe at Backspace.



Ultraklystron

Nerdcore Hip-Hop
Otaku Rhymes

The kick-off party has free admission and is open to the public!



RAI

Nerdcore/Electro
in Japanese

Thursday, August 30
8:00pm to midnight



Gradual Meltdown

Wii-Mote/Guitar Hero-controlled techno

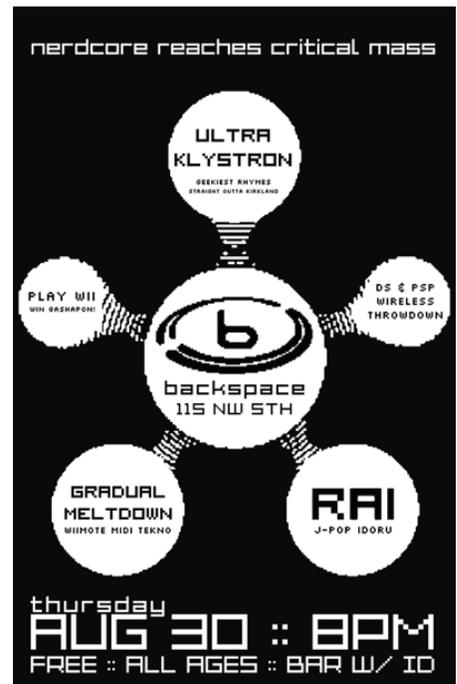
Pre-Registration

Online pre-registration for Kumoricon has already closed, but we're offering a final opportunity to pre-register for a discount! At the kickoff party only, 8:00 to 10:00pm

\$35 for the weekend



Backspace, in downtown Portland—featuring LAN gaming, video games, and a café. Open late every night.



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