

旭川 ASAHIKAWA Info

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Hokkaido News Top 5



April 2015

Compiled by TAKADA Nobuhiro

February 26

- A capsule hotel “Lodge Moiwa 834,” which opened in “Niseko Moiwa Ski Resort” this winter, is attracting many tourists from abroad. Backpackers from Australia and Scandinavian countries prefer staying at the hotel for about 10,000 yen/night—quite a contrast from many high-end accommodations nearby. Although a “capsule hotel” in Japan is known for a small capsule-like space to sleep, Lodge Moiwa 834 provides somewhat larger space of 1.3 meters in width and 2 meters in height.

February 27

- Asahikawa City is suffering from a consistent depopulation. The number of children born last year was 2,360, a record-low and 100 less from the previous year. The number of deaths was 3,994, 100 more than the last year. In short, the City saw a decrease of 1,634 in its population, before even factoring in the social effects; the difference between the number of residents moving out and moving in was 216 last year. As of January 1, 2015, Asahikawa City has a population of 347,207.

March 1

- According to an associate professor in meteorology at Hokkaido University, Masaharu INATSU, ten bomb cyclones, which are extremely powerful low-pressure meteorological conditions, hit or approached Hokkaido from last December to February. The number is a record-high in 15 years, according to currently available data. Explosive low-pressure conditions seemed to have run more closely to the eastern part of Hokkaido this winter due to a strong warmer air mass from the Pacific Ocean.

March 3

- 33 departure and arrival flights at New Chitose Airport were affected by seven deer breaking into the area of taxiway around 7:00 am. Three flights to be landing at New Chitose changed their destinations to Hakodate, Asahikawa, and Haneda, and thirty flights were delayed up to 2 hours and 40 minutes. The deer are thought to have jumped over chain-linked fences around the airport, which are two meters high but in reality were much lower due to deep and hardened snow.

March 18

- A staff member of Nayoro City Astronomical Observatory succeeded in getting pictures of the Northern Lights in the night sky at 3:33am for the first time in ten years. Katsuhito NAKAJIMA, the staff member, used a wide lens camera in long exposure mode to take photos of the Northern Lights, which are invisible to the naked eye. A research institute of Nagoya University’s Solar-Terrestrial Environment Laboratory in Rikubetsu near Obihiro observed the Northern Lights as well.



For further information or to register for events contact:

Asahikawa International Committee (SASAKI Mai, Kim LACEY, or SAITO Emmy)

Location:

International/City Affairs Division, Comprehensive Policy Dept.

Address:

Asahikawa International Center
Feeeal Asahikawa 7F, 1-jo-dori 8
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Special Thanks to KAWAI Tatsuo, Proofreader & Advisor

Asappi's Hide-and-Seek**あさっぴーのかくれんぼ**

Asahikawa City's official mascot, Asappi, is hiding in 8 different places throughout Kaimono Koen. Once you find it, you can get a stamp on a designated paper. Collect all of them, then submit your stamped paper for a drawing and wait. You might be the lucky winner of a secret grand prize!

Date: now to April 12th (Sunday)

Venue: Asahikawa Heiwa-dori Kaimono Koen (from Miyashita-dori to 6-jo Kaimono Koen)

Where to Get a Designated Paper: Any participating stores in Asahikawa Heiwa-dori Shopping Street Promotion Association, including the new Aeon Mall by the station

Fee: Free

For Further Information Contact: 0166-26-0815

**Hiroshi ABE's Original Picture Exhibition: From Kenji MIYAZAWA's Asahikawa****あべ弘士 原画展 宮沢賢治「旭川。」より**

Kenji MIYAZAWA is a famous Japanese poet in the early Showa period. He wrote a poem called "Asahikawa" during his short visit to the city. This exhibition is the illustrated version of MIYAZAWA's piece by an Asahikawa-native illustrator, Hiroshi ABE. Enjoy this collaboration of MIYAZAWA's poem and ABE's beautiful illustrations. There will also be a special recital of the poem on the 11th (Saturday) from 2pm.

Date: now to April 18th (Saturday), except on Mondays and Tuesdays

Time: 10:00 am to 6:00 pm (admission is until 5:30 pm)

Venue: Gallery PuruPuru of Kawauso Club Office (7-jo 8-chome)

Admission: Free

For Further Information Contact: 0166-73-8289 or email purupuru@snow.plala.or.jp

**SCANDAL World Tour 2015: Hello World in Asahikawa, Hokkaido****SCANDAL World Tour 2015「Hello World」北海道旭川**

SCANDAL is an all-female Japanese rock band from Osaka with a considerable international fanbase. They have performed abroad numerous times and participated in theme songs for many popular anime, including *Bleach* and *Fullmetal Alchemist: Brotherhood*. As part of their World Tour 2015 of visiting 9 countries and 37 cities, they are coming to Asahikawa. Tickets are still available! [as of March 25th]

Date: April 5th (Sunday)

Time: Doors 5:00 pm, Show 6:00 pm

Venue: Asahikawa City Civic Culture Hall (7-jo 9-chome)

Admission: ¥5,400

Ticket Offices: Ticket Pia/7-Eleven (P-code: 245-266), Lawson Ticket (L-code: 12104)

*Tickets can also be purchased online via e+ at: eplus.jp

**2015 Powerful Live Comedy****2015爆笑! パワフルライブ**

Nippon Elekitel Rengo (日本エレキテル連合), a popular female Japanese comic duo, is coming to Asahikawa with other comedians whom you might recall seeing on TV perhaps. The duo is known for their signature phrase, "dame yo, dame dame," which was selected as one of the nation's top buzzwords of last year. You might not want to miss this opportunity if you are interested in Japanese comedy.

Date: April 11th (Saturday)

Time: 1st Live: Doors 11:00 am, Show 11:30 am

2nd Live: Doors 2:30 pm, Show 3:00 pm

Venue: Asahikawa Civic Culture Hall (7-jo 9-chome)

Admission: ¥3,800 (At the door: ¥4,300)

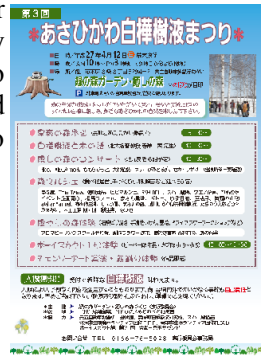
Ticket Offices: Ticket Pia (P-code: 442-114), Lawson Ticket (L-code: 13248) *Tickets can also be purchased online via Adash Tickets at: www.adash.jp/owarai2015-0411.html



3rd Asahikawa White Birch Sap Festival 第3回旭川白樺樹液まつり

Are you looking for something fun to do with your family and friends for the weekend? Now that spring is here, Green Forest Garden is hosting their 3rd White Birch Sap Festival. After tasting a bit of fresh white birch sap at the reception, you can start off with a short stroll by the garden if you are dressed warm enough. There will be many programs for everyone to enjoy, including Healing Garden's Concert, a white birch story time, various activities related to nature, and, of course, food and drinks to keep you warm. This would be a good way to celebrate the coming of spring.

Date: April 12th (Sunday)
Time: 10:00 am to 3:00 pm (admission starts from 9:30 am)
Venue: Green Forest Garden *midori no mori* (Suehiro 8-jo 8-chome)
Fee: Free
Things to Bring: Warm clothes and long boots are recommended.
For Further Information Contact: 0166-76-5028 (Executive Committee)



24th Kyokugei Vaudeville Show: Ichinosuke SHUMPUTEI & Shiko KATSURA's Rakugo Performance 第24回旭芸寄席春風亭一之輔・桂枝光二人会

KATSURA, who is known for being one of the leading proponents of reviving popularity of rakugo in Hokkaido, will be back in Asahikawa to perform with Ichinosuke SHUMPUTEI. If you would like to find out more about traditional Japanese comedy and story-telling, this might be a good start.

Date: April 15th (Wednesday)
Time: Doors 6:00 pm Show 6:30 pm
Venue: Asahikawa Civic Culture Hall (7-jo 9-chome)
Admission: ¥2,000
Ticket Offices: Gyokkodo Asahikawa, Takasago Brewery, Junkobo, Children's Fukido, Dokushaku Sanshiro, ULU (Tokiwa-dori 3-chome), Lawson Ticket (L-code: 12932)
For Further Information Contact: 080-7000-6403



Ancient Egyptian Art & Magic 古代エジプト美術の世界展

This exhibition brings to life one of the greatest civilizations in the history of the world, spotlighting mummy cases and sacred works in diverse media, tomb and temple reliefs, papyrus fragments, alabaster vessels, and rare objects comprised of precious stones, to name a few. The works displayed demonstrate the delicate craftsmanship and spiritual qualities of ancient Egypt. This exhibition was made possible by treasures from the Fondation Gandur pour l'Art in Geneva, Switzerland. A 30-minute special commentary on the exhibition will take place on April 25th (Saturday) from 2:00 pm, free of charge and open to public.

Date: April 17th (Friday) to June 21st (Sunday), except on Mondays
Time: 9:30 am to 5:00 pm (admission is until 4:30 pm)
Venue: Hokkaido Asahikawa Museum of Art (inside Tokiwa Park)
Admission: General—¥1,100, High School Students—¥600, Middle School Students—¥300, Elementary School and Under—Free
Ticket Offices: Hokkaido Asahikawa Museum of Arts, Hokkaido Shimbun Regional Branch Offices, Asahikawa Fukido Stores, 7-Eleven (7-Code: 034-915), Lawson Ticket (L-code: 12640)
For Further Information Contact: 0166-25-2577 (Hokkaido Asahikawa Museum of Arts)
Official Website of the Exhibition: <http://event.hokkaido-np.co.jp/egypt> (Japanese only)



EVENTS IN ASAHIKAWA FOR APRIL



Hello Asahikawa!

Name: Lexie Seward

Hometown: Bloomington, Illinois, U.S.A.

Interviewed: March 3rd, 2015 by AIC

AIC: *First of all, what are you doing in Asahikawa?*

Lexie: I am here through The Sister Cities Ambassador scholarship program. I have been in Japan for around 7 months now and I will stay in Asahikawa, Japan until June 15th. I stay with a host family and attend Asahikawa Commercial High School, where I am currently a second year student.

AIC: *I see. So, where are you originally from? What is your hometown like in comparison to Asahikawa?*

Lexie: I am originally from Bloomington, Illinois. To be honest Asahikawa and Bloomington/Normal are quite similar! I believe Asahikawa is bigger, but both cities have an amazing community of people backing it. Both cities have a lot of fun things to do! For example, in Bloomington/Normal you can go to the movies, State Farm Park, and The Pepsi Ice Center. While in Asahikawa, you can go to karaoke, Aeon Mall, and attend seasonal festivals. Both cities also have many restaurants, but my favorite is a sushi restaurant in Aeon. I could eat there every day!!

AIC: *I am glad you are enjoying Asahikawa. Is this your first time in Japan? What was your first impression of the country?*

Lexie: Yes, this is my first time in Japan, and only my second time out of the States. My first time out of the States was when I went to Costa Rica with my Spanish class in 2013-2014. My first impression of Japan was one of a clean, safe, and friendly environment. And I have continued to see Japan in the same light. I have had an amazing time here in Japan, and I will definitely miss this place when I return home.

AIC: *Could you please tell us what your daily schedule looks like as a high school student in Japan? Is it much different from back home?*

Lexie: Most days I wake up at 5:30 am and catch the 7:30 bus to school. And then after school I go to volleyball practice which usually ends around 6:30 –7:00 pm every day except Mondays. On the weekends I usually sleep in and hang out with friends from school. My schedule in America was a little different due to the fact that I had a car and would drive my sister to school everyday. But I still woke up at 5:30 in America because I took morning classes that started in 7 am. I guess you can say I am a morning person! In America I usually also had volleyball practice from 4:00 pm to 8:00 pm three days a week, and tournaments on the weekend. So besides the fact that I am in Japan, my everyday life isn't all that much different.

AIC: *Looking back at your life as an exchange student in Japan so far, what has been the most rewarding moment?*

Lexie: I think the most rewarding thing for me as an exchange student was when my homeroom teacher said I was the best exchange student that any of the teachers can remember meeting. And that really meant a lot to me, because I have been working really hard to improve my Japanese skills as well as do my best in representing my country. So, to be validated of my job well done really meant a lot to me.

Hello Asahikawa!

Lexie Seward Interview (Part 2) Continued from Page 4

AIC: *But I am sure there were some frustrations or challenges you've faced as well. Do you mind sharing your experience?*

Lexie: Hahaha, I don't even know where to start. From the slippery snow, to the language barrier and cultural differences, I've had a lot of embarrassing moments. But I think the most frustrating moments come from the language barrier. For example, when I first walked into my host family's house, I said I hated it (嫌い、kirai), instead of saying it was beautiful (きれい、kirei.) Let's just say that wasn't the best way to start off a good relationship! I have also called a baby scary (怖い、kawai) instead of cute (可愛い、kawaii), and the list goes on and on. But I haven't made those mistakes since, so I definitely learned my lesson.

AIC: *Haha, you already have plenty of funny stories to share with your family and friends. How do you keep in touch with them from Japan?*

Lexie: I stay in contact with my friends and family by using Skype and LINE. LINE has been a life savor as far as keeping in touch with my family and friends. I keep in touch with my family on a weekly basis and my friends on a monthly one. It is sometimes hard to set up "talking time" with people because of the time difference of around 14 hours. But I have used Skype several times to help me talk with college coaches and complete college interviews.

AIC: *Technology always comes in handy when you are away from home. Here is a random question for you — what is your favorite Japanese word?*

Lexie: My favorite Japanese word is お疲れ様でした, because for the longest time I thought my friends were saying ごちそうさまでした, and I never knew there was a difference until I started using that word outside of the dinner table, and they would all just laugh! Until one day one of my friends finally corrected me. And now I use that word all the time despite the fact that my friends still joke about it.

AIC: *Now that you mention it, the two phrases can sound pretty similar, I guess. Wow! Well, let us slowly wrap up this interview. Is there anything you would like to do in particular before going back to the States?*

Lexie: This is a hard question because I've already done so much, from visiting Tokyo, Kyoto, and Osaka during my class trip, to wearing a kimono and visiting temples, and making origami animals with my host family! I feel like I have experienced a lot, and I can't wait for my sister to experience those things as well. My sister is coming to visit me soon, and will be staying with my host family for two weeks. Before I leave to go back home I would love to see a traditional Japanese dance performance or learn about 刀鍛冶.



Hello Asahikawa!



A picture of Kinkakuji taken by Lexie during her school trip to Kyoto

Lexie Seward Interview (Part 3) Continued from Page 5

AIC: *Lastly, what are your goals and plans for the future?*

Lexie: I have already been accepted to Hope College in Michigan where I will be playing with the NCAA III National Championship team. In college, I plan to major in either international business or political science with a minor in Japanese. After college, I want to volunteer in the Peace Corps for two years, and then hopefully work for the government or become an executive for an international company. But I know wherever I end up I will be able to use the skills I have learned here in Japan to help me succeed in my future endeavors.

AIC: *Enjoy the remaining time here in Asahikawa and thank you for your time today.*

Lexie: Thank you.

*You can read more about Lexie's adventure in Japan on her blog:
<http://myjapaneseexperience101.wordpress.com>*

★ *Movies ~ April* ★

*The 1st day of every month is "Movie Day" in Asahikawa. Admission (tax included) is ¥1,100 for Adults, ¥800 for Senior High School Students and Under at all theaters.

*<Aeon Cinema Only> Every Monday is "Happy Monday." Admission is ¥1,100 (tax included) for all.

★ **Aeon Cinema:** Miyashita-dori 7-chome / ☎ 74 - 6411
URL: cinema.aeoncinema.com/wm/asahikawa (Japanese)

Now Showing

- Ansatsukyoshitsu (Japanese)
- Night at the Museum: Secret of the Tomb (English)
- Kazetatsu Lion (Japanese)
- Into the Woods (English)
- Precure the Movie (Japanese/Animation)
- Strobe Edge (Japanese)
- Solomon no Gisho Part1 (Japanese)
- Doraemon the Movie (Japanese/Animation)
- Kuchibiru ni Utawo (Japanese)
- American Sniper (English)
- Makuga Agarū (Japanese)
- Kiseiju Part1 (Japanese/PG12) until 4/3

Coming Soon

- April Fools (Japanese) 4/1
- Jinuyo Saraba (Japanese) 4/4
- Birdman ~The Unexpected Virtue of Ignorance~ (English/PG12) 4/4
- Boyhood (English/PG12) 4/4 - 4/17
- Solomon no Gisho Part2 (Japanese) 4/11
- Fast & Furious 7 (English) 4/17
- Crayon Shinchan the Movie (Japanese/Animation) 4/18
- Dragon Ball the Movie (Japanese/Animation) 4/18
- Detective Conan the Movie (Japanese/Animation) 4/18
- Kiseiju Part2 (Japanese/PG12) 4/25
- Ryuzo to Nananin no Kobuntachi (Japanese) 4/25
- Ouhi no Yakata (Japanese) 4/25
- Cinderella (English) 4/25



Movies ~ April

(Continued from Page 6)

*<Cineplex 7 Asahikawa and Dinos Cinemas Only> Every Wednesday is “Ladies’ Day.” Admission is ¥1,100 (tax included) for women at all theaters.

*<Dinos Cinemas Only> Every Thursday is “Men’s Day.” Admission is ¥1,100 (tax included) for men.

★ **Cineplex 7 Asahikawa:** Nagayama 12-jo 3-chome Western Powers Nagayama / ☎ 49 – 1000

URL: www.unitedcinemas.jp/asahikawa/daily.php (Japanese)

Directions: Take Dohoku Bus No. 66, 72 or 665 at Bus stop No. 18 in front of Feeeal Asahikawa (1-jo-dori 8-chome). Get off at “Nagayama 10 (ju)-jo 3 (san)-chome.”

Now Showing

- Ansatsukyoshitsu (Japanese)
- Night at the Museum: Secret of the Tomb (English)
- Kazetatsu Lion (Japanese)
- Into the Woods (English)
- Precure the Movie (Japanese/Animation)
- Strobe Edge (Japanese)
- Solomon no Gisho Part1 (Japanese)
- Doraemon the Movie (Japanese/Animation)
- Kuchibiru ni Utawo (Japanese)
- American Sniper (English)
- Terrace House Closing Door (Japanese)
- Big Hero 6 (English)

Coming Soon

- April Fools (Japanese) 4/1
- Jinuyo Saraba (Japanese) 4/4
- Solomon no Gisho Part2 (Japanese) 4/11
- Fast & Furious 7 (English) 4/17
- Crayon Shinchan the Movie (Japanese/Animation) 4/18
- Dragon Ball the Movie (Japanese/Animation) 4/18
- Detective Conan the Movie (Japanese/Animation) 4/18
- Kiseiju Part2 (Japanese/PG12) 4/25
- Ryuzo to Nananin no Kobuntachi (Japanese) 4/25
- Ouhi no Yakata (Japanese) 4/25
- Cinderella (English) 4/25

★ **Dinos Cinemas:** Taisetsu-dori 5-chome / ☎ 21 – 1233

URL: cinema.sugai-dinos.jp/pc/asahikawa/schedule.php (Japanese)

Directions: Take Dohoku Bus No. 61, 62, 67 or 667 at Bus stop No. 18 in front of Feeeal Asahikawa (1-jo-dori 8-chome). Get off at “Nippon Seishi Mae.”

Now Showing

- Big Hero 6 (English)
- Ansatsukyoshitsu (Japanese)
- Night at the Museum: Secret of the Tomb (English)
- Strobe Edge (Japanese)
- Into the Woods (English)
- Kazetatsu Lion (Japanese)
- Solomon no Gisho Part1 (Japanese)
- Doraemon the Movie (Japanese/Animation)
- Kamen Rider the Movie (Japanese/Animation)
- American Sniper (English)
- Joker Game (Japanese)

Coming Soon

- Begin Again (English) 4/4
- Solomon no Gisho Part2 (Japanese) 4/11
- Fast & Furious 7 (English) 4/17
- Crayon Shinchan the Movie (Japanese/Animation) 4/18
- Dragon Ball the Movie (Japanese/Animation) 4/18
- Detective Conan the Movie (Japanese/Animation) 4/18
- Kiseiju Part2 (Japanese/PG12) 4/25
- Ryuzo to Nananin no Kobuntachi (Japanese) 4/25
- Ouhi no Yakata (Japanese) 4/25
- Cinderella (English) 4/25

Movie schedules change often. Please call the theater for confirmation and details.

Become an AIC Volunteer!

Are you currently living in the Asahikawa area and interested in being part of Asahikawa's international community? Would you like to promote international and cross-cultural understanding in the region? If so, apply to become an AIC Volunteer.

We have many programs for you to participate which can fit any schedule, such as being a volunteer guide, event planning volunteer, or even a homestay volunteer. Japanese ability is helpful, but not required. Come help share Asahikawa with the world as an AIC volunteer.

For more details, please visit us or contact us at:

Asahikawa International Committee
Asahikawa International Center
Feeeal Asahikawa 7F
1-jo-dori 8-chome, Asahikawa 070-0031
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E-mail: cir_kokusai@city.asahikawa.hokkaido.jp



Calling All Writers

Would you like to contribute to the Asahikawa Info by sharing local information or a story with an English speaking community in the area? We would love to hear from you if you think you could submit an one-time article or commit to write regularly. We are also looking forward to hearing any comments or suggestions.

If you are interested in writing for the upcoming newsletters, please contact the AIC to receive more information.

FUN FRIDAYS

Interesting activities, such as quizzes, discussions, songs, games, handcrafts and many more, all in English! Come meet new people, relax, and relate on Fun Fridays!

Dates: April 10th&24th, May 8th&22nd, June 12th&26th

*Fun Fridays are held only on the 2nd Friday of every month for the evening session (2 hours)

Time: 1:00-2:00pm & 6:30-8:30pm

Location: Asahikawa International Center, Common Meeting Room (1)
(Feeeal Asahikawa 7F 1-jo-dori 8-chome)

Charge: ¥1,500 for 3 months (Free for volunteer leaders)

The AIC offers many services to make your life in Asahikawa more enjoyable. Here are just a few:

Volunteer Guide: Volunteers are registered to help translate and interpret.

Event Volunteer: The AIC plans many exciting events throughout the year, such as Friendship Parties.

Homestay: Families are registered to welcome you into their homes for an overnight stay or just for an afternoon visit.



The Asahikawa International Center (Feeeal Asahikawa 7F 1-jo-dori 8-chome) has free wifi available for public use free of charge. Registration for a user card is needed, if you are residing in Asahikawa. Please feel free to come by anytime, as well as check out some of the other services and activities available at the Asahikawa International Center .

Spread the Word...

Contribute to the AIC newsletter and share any interesting information you may have with other readers. You may write on any topic including, items to buy or sell, offers for culture/language exchanges, or write an essay about your life in Asahikawa or your hometown. The article should not be profit related! Please send your submissions to us at the AIC.



Asahikawa International Committee

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****The opinions expressed in the essays are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Asahikawa International Committee or the City of Asahikawa.****