

旭川 ASAHIKAWA Info

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Hokkaido News Top 5



March 2013

Compiled by TAKADA Nobuhiro

January 27

Members of an NPO (Non-Profit Organization) which aims to realize wheelchair-accessible tourism examined whether the Asahikawa Winter Festival grounds were accessible to wheelchairs. The wheelchair users gave advice to the festival staff to remove barriers such as small differences in ground levels and narrow corners to turn. They decided to check the grounds four times and suggest alternative measures if the best solution was not possible for some reason.

February 2

An earthquake hit the eastern part of Hokkaido late at night. The earthquake's epicenter was in a central part of the Tokachi area, and seismic intensity meters registered readings of intensity five (strong) in Kushiro, Nemuro, and Urahoro. 12 people in the Tokachi and Kushiro areas were slightly injured, and about 840 households in the same area suffered from power outages.

February 10

Japan's national women's ice hockey team won a match against Denmark in Slovakia, making it through the final round for the Sochi Winter Olympics. 15 out of the 20 hockey players on the national team are from Hokkaido, with nine from Tomakomai and six from Kushiro.

February 11

A water outage affected 11,600 households in Abashiri, about 60 percent of households in the city, from the afternoon on February 11 through the morning on February 12. The water outage continued for up to 18 hours. An aqueduct between a reservoir area and a water purifying plant had broken and water leaked from the gap.

February 13

The Sapporo Snow Festival from February 5-11 attracted 2,367,000 tourists, including visitors from Taiwan, Hong Kong and Thailand this year. It was the third-highest attendance in history due to favorable conditions such as good weather and the three-day holiday weekend. The Asahikawa Winter Festival drew 871,000 visitors from February 6-11, up 28 percent from the previous year.



**ASAHIKAWA
INTERNATIONAL
COMMITTEE**

For further information or to register for events contact:

Asahikawa International Committee
(SASAKI Mai, Kenton KNOP, or SAITO Emmy)

Location:

International Affairs Division, Civic and Community Services Dept.

Address:

Asahikawa International Center
Feeeal Asahikawa 7F, 1-jo-dori 8-
chome, Asahikawa 070-0031

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Special Thanks to KAWAI Tatsuo, Proofreader & Advisor

KAWABATA NARIMICHI VIOLIN RECITAL 川島成道ヴァイオリン・リサイタル

The phenomenal solo violinist KAWABATA Narimichi is returning to Asahikawa for the first time in 6 years to present an unforgettable night of beautiful music. Accompanying him on piano is the distinguished concert pianist YAMAGUCHI Kensei. Pieces to be performed include *Méditation* from Massenet's opera *Thaïs* and KAWABATA's signature piece, Gounoud's *Ave Maria*. All admirers of classical music owe it to themselves to witness this gifted violinist in concert.

Date: March 5th (Tuesday)

Time: Doors 6:30pm, Show 7:00pm

Venue: Asahikawa Taisetsu Crystal Hall (Kagura 3-jo 7-chome)

Admission: Advance: ¥4,000, On 3/5: ¥4,500

Ticket Offices: Gyokkodo, Taisetsu Crystal Hall, Lawson Ticket, FM Rivere

For Further Information Contact: 011-721-6607 (Ongakusha Best Support)



CA ET LA CONCERT— TWO HEARTS SINGING THE SONGS OF “HERE AND THERE” サエラ・コンサート—“あちらこちら”の歌心、重ね合わせて

The musical duo Ca et la, which is French for “here and there,” is composed of two friends, vocalist KIKUCHI Yuriko and pianist TAKAHASHI Tomoko. Their sound, which is influenced by the traditional music of their native Tsugaru region in Aomori and also has elements of popular ballads and other genres, aims to be the kind of refined entertainment that adults will enjoy, but has also proven to have a wide appeal among audiences of all ages.

Date: March 7th (Thursday)

Time: Show 6:30pm

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

Admission: All Seats ¥4,500 (¥3,800 for Min-On Members)

Ticket Offices: Ticket Pia, Gyokkodo

For Further Information Contact: 0166-57-0244 (Min-On Asahikawa)



TAISETSU CRYSTAL HALL WINTER CONCERT 旭川市大雪クリスタルホール自主文化事業・ウィンターコンサート

This concert with 14 different solo and group performances, ranging from solo guitarists to instrumental ensembles and choral music, will have something for everyone to enjoy. Don't miss this showcase of some of the great talents here in the Asahikawa area.

Date: March 10th (Sunday)

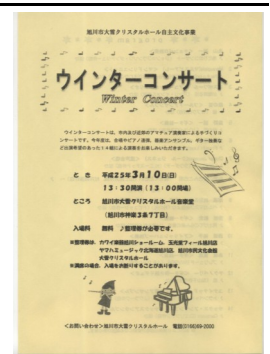
Time: Doors 1:00pm, Show 1:30pm

Venue: Asahikawa Taisetsu Crystal Hall (Kagura 3-jo 7-chome)

Admission: Free (Tickets Required)

Ticket Offices: Gyokkodo, Yamaha Music, Taisetsu Crystal Hall, Civic Culture Hall

For Further Information Contact: 0166-69-2000 (Taisetsu Crystal Hall)



46TH ASAHIKAWA YOUTH WIND ORCHESTRA PERIODICAL CONCERT 旭川市青少年吹奏楽団・第46回定期演奏会

The Asahikawa Youth Wind Orchestra will present a concert with a variety of selections, such as a medley of singing legend MISORA Hibari's hit songs, the timeless favorite “Over the Rainbow,” and classical pieces taken from works such as Kabalevsky's *The Comedians*. Special guest performers include the Asahikawa *Nanakamado* Youth Choir and two winners of the Japan Baton Twirling Hokkaido Championship.

Date: March 10th (Sunday)

Time: Doors 2:00pm, Show 2:30pm

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

Admission: General: ¥800, High School Students and Younger: ¥500

Ticket Offices: Yamaha Music, Civic Culture Hall, Taisetsu Crystal Hall

For Further Information Contact: 080-2873-7700 (HATAYAMA)



STAGE PERFORMANCE—“HOGIUTA” ODE TO JOY

演劇「寿歌」—劇団東京乾電池

This stage production about two traveling performers struggling to survive and find meaning in a world ravaged by nuclear war features the acting of husband-and-wife team EMOTO Akira and TSUNOGAE Kazue. EMOTO's Tokyo Battery Theater Company presents this powerful play, which shook the foundations of the theater world upon its debut in the 1980s and is regarded as a modern classic.

Date: March 16th (Saturday)

Time: Doors 6:30pm, Show 7:00pm

Venue: Takasu Melody Hall (Takasu 2-jo 4-chome)

Admission: All Seats: ¥3,000

Ticket Offices: Gyokkodo, Yamaha Music, Taisetsu Crystal Hall, Takasu Melody Hall

For Tickets and Further Information Contact: 0166-87-2500 (Takasu Melody Hall)



17TH ASAHIKAWA RYOUN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL WIND ORCHESTRA PERIODICAL CONCERT

旭川凌雲高等学校吹奏楽局・第17回定期演奏会

With the theme of “Connecting Hearts Through Sound,” this concert from the Ryouun Senior High School Wind Orchestra is sure to provide a moving experience for listeners. A special piece commissioned for the school’s 30th anniversary by composer FUKUSHIMA Hirokazu and Hokkaido’s own *Soran-bushi* folk music are some of the selections to be performed.

Date: March 16th (Saturday) and March 17th (Sunday)

Time: 3/16: Doors 5:00pm, Show 5:30pm, 3/17: Doors 1:00pm, Show 1:30pm

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

Admission: Designated Seats (Sat. Only): ¥1,500, Open Seating: ¥1,000, High School Students and Younger: ¥500

Ticket Offices: Lawson Ticket, Gyokkodo, Civic Culture Hall, Yamaha Music, Coach & Four, Taisetsu Crystal Hall

For Further Information Contact: 090-3776-7423 (Asahikawa Ryouun High School)



13TH ASAHIKAWA CIVIC WIND ORCHESTRA PERIODICAL CONCERT

旭川シビックウインドオーケストラ・第13回定期演奏会

The Asahikawa Civic Wind Orchestra will present a concert in two parts. Part One leads off with classical pieces such as March No. 1 from Elgar’s *Pomp and Circumstance* and Bach’s *Tocatta and Fugue in D Minor*. Part Two will feature more contemporary favorites, such as the popular theme from the TV show *Jonetsu Tairiku* (Continent of Passion) and a medley of hit songs from 2012.

Date: March 20th (Wednesday/Holiday)

Time: Doors 1:30pm, Show 2:00pm

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

Admission: Advance: ¥800, On 3/20: ¥1,000, Elementary Students and Younger: Free

Ticket Offices: Yamaha Music, Coach & Four, Civic Culture Hall, Takasu Melody Hall

For Further Information Contact: 0166-25-7331 (Civic Culture Hall)



MIFFY CHILDREN’S MUSICAL “AUNTIE ALICE’S PARTY”

ミッフィーこどもミュージカル「アリスおばさんのパーティー」

In this musical featuring characters from the classic “Miffy” series of children’s stories, Miffy’s Auntie Alice invites Miffy and her friends to her home for a party, where they learn the importance of kindness and friendship toward others. The second half of the program is a concert with many fun songs for members of the audience to sing and play along with.

Date: March 30th (Saturday)

Time: 1st Show: Doors 10:00am, Show 10:30am, 2nd Show: Doors 1:00pm, Show 1:30pm

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

Admission: Advance: ¥2,000, On 3/30: ¥2,500

Ticket Offices: Lawson Ticket, Ticket Pia, 7-Eleven, E+ (<http://eplus.jp>)

For Further Information Contact: 011-214-5261 (UHB Activities Division)



EVENTS IN ASAHIKAWA FOR MARCH



Hello Asahikawa!

Name: Brandon Isobe

Hometown: Honolulu, Hawaii, U.S.A.

Interviewed: February 23rd, 2013 by AIC

AIC: *Please tell us about where you're from.*

Brandon : I was born and raised in Honolulu, Hawaii and lived there until I was about 18, when I went to school in New York.

AIC: *What got you interested in coming to Japan?*

Brandon : My interest in Japan mostly came from being Japanese-American, and so I wanted to learn more about the Japanese side. I'm a fifth-generation Japanese-American, so my parents, grandparents, and even great-grandparents don't speak any Japanese. Only the culture and food were passed down, and some dialect expressions like *hanabatta*, which means a runny nose. That is really Hawaiian slang. I wanted to learn more about my roots, so that's where my interest started. I moved to Tokyo in 2010 right after graduation to work on building iPad applications, but the opportunities to learn more Japanese were limited, so that's why I came to Asahikawa.

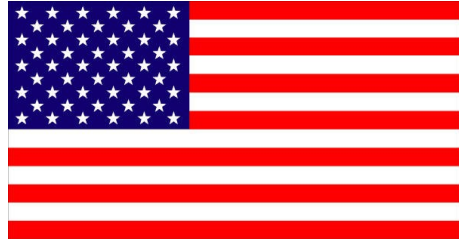
AIC: *Tell us about your work in Asahikawa.*

Brandon : My work here is doing online trading, not in stocks, but food goods. My company actually has a store in Shanghai, and we're shipping Hokkaido-made products like milk candies and cookies. All of the goods are made locally and we're shipping them to Shanghai to a department store where they're selling them. The store there is a high-level store like Seibu here in Japan. Probably the biggest thing that's selling now is *tare* (flavoring sauce), like Yoshinoya-brand *gyudon* (beef bowl) *tare*. That's really popular in China, so they're selling that now, but one of the big reasons I joined the company is because I eventually want to set up something in Hawaii. Hawaii is like a hub because there are so many people coming through from all over the world. So there is a business chance there, and eventually after a few years I want to return home, but now I'm working on learning the business. Seeing how the whole trading business works and then after that, going on my own.

AIC: *Did you learn more about your family's history in Japan?*

Brandon : I was able to learn a lot about Japanese culture and my roots while living in Tokyo. I went to visit my very distant relatives. I made a family tree, but it was really difficult to start the initial contact because my Japanese ability was really limited, so I had to rely on my Japanese teacher. I and my relatives were very far removed, something like four or five generations, which is crazy to think about. Initially it was kind of awkward, but I was able to set up meetings with my relatives in Kumamoto and Yamanashi prefectures and met with them. They were pretty reserved, but they became more open after having a meal together, and one of them came to Tokyo to meet with me again, which was cool.

Helo Asahikawa!



Brandon Isobe Interview Part Two

Brandon : The whole thing with my family in Hawaii started because back then the second son in the family didn't have any land, while the first son got all of the family's land, which there wasn't much of to begin with. So similar to that, many second and third sons in Japan went to Hawaii and Brazil to find work. It was difficult for those first-generation immigrants, and they tried really hard to make a living. That was back during the Meiji period, over 100 years ago now. I think the first generation of my family emigrated to Hawaii in 1899. But being fifth-generation, actually a lot of people in Japan don't know what that is. They think I might be mixed or half-Japanese, but my family's first generation moved to Hawaii and got married to other Japanese-Americans and that was the same for each generation after, so there really was no mixing. It's kind of rare, even in Hawaii. Practically everyone is of mixed descent in Hawaii.

AIC: *What have been your impressions of Asahikawa so far?*

Brandon : It's cold! Being from Hawaii, and sure, I lived in New York, but the cold there was nothing like this. I'm still a Hawaii guy, so in that regard it's pretty difficult for me. It's only been six months since I came here, but it's been good. I'm getting used to the culture and the people.

AIC: *What do you like to do in your free time?*

Brandon : Yesterday I went to play golf. I'd love to be able to play golf all the time, but the weather doesn't allow that. I started boxing when I first came to Asahikawa, and I bought a snowboard but haven't used it yet. Work and trying to work out keep me busy.

AIC: *What are your plans for the future?*

Brandon : I want to get into the import/export business. Initially I was thinking about the seafood business. The market for Japanese goods in Hawaii is pretty saturated with all the Japanese people living there, but I think there are still chances to do business there, such as restaurants like ramen shops. So, basically my plan is to go into business once I return home.

AIC: *Thank you for your time, Brandon! We wish you the best in the future!*

Brandon : You're welcome!

Life In Japan



White Day By: SAKURABA Satoshi

Japan has a unique custom in March. This custom is called “White Day.” It has become widely accepted that women give a present (generally, something sweet) on St. Valentine’s Day. On the other hand, men who received presents from women on St. Valentine’s Day give a present in return to those women on White Day. As a matter of fact, I learned recently that outside Japan men also give presents to women on St. Valentine’s Day.

On White Day, men give women candies, marshmallows, cookies and other sweets. Originally, the gifts given to women were often something white. Recently, this custom has spread in Korea, Taiwan, a part of China and other countries in East Asia. Because this custom was created by Japanese confectionary companies to promote their sweets and make more sales, it is not common in countries outside Asia.

Needless to say, the gifts suitable for White Day are not limited to the things mentioned above. I always give handmade apple pies for gifts in return for gifts from women (it is a bit sad that the gifts I received are all “friendship chocolates”). The trick to making delicious apple pies is to buy slightly sour apples and adjust the taste by adding lemon juice. The reasons why I make apple pies for return gifts are because most people would feel happy receiving handmade sweets, and I merely like apple pies (perhaps, the latter would be the main reason).

Incidentally, April 14th is called “Black Day” in Korea. On this day, unattached men and women eat *zhajiangmian* (a Chinese dish of ground pork over wheat noodles). This custom is not common in Japan. Besides those customs, many unique food-related customs can be found around the world.

Life in Asahikawa

Kirenjaku
By: KITAMURA Tadao



March is the month everybody in Asahikawa has been looking forward to. You may see lots of snow still remaining here and there in shady spots of the town, but when you are very quiet for a while and listen carefully, you will surely hear the faint note of a prelude of spring approaching near. However, compared to other parts of this archipelago, spring comes much slower to us here.

The sunshine gets brighter day by day, and the snow becomes less deep. Tidings on cherry blossoms set out racing from southern prefectures.

The two heroines featured often during early spring in Japan are the *ume*, or plum blossoms, and the *uguisu*.

The *uguisu* is a Japanese bush warbler, a pretty bird that tells the coming of spring. An *uguisu* perching on a twig with plum blossoms is a very familiar rural scene of early spring in Japan.

Things go differently here in Asahikawa, Hokkaido. A bird featured at the beginning of spring in Asahikawa is the *kirenjaku*, which is the Japanese name for *Bombycillia garrulous*, or waxwing. It is formally designated as the bird of the city. It is a very pretty bird with a light brown-colored body about 19.5cm long, with a characteristically long crest feather on top, and yellow tip on the tail.

The *kirenjaku* is a winter bird that comes from the north in the previous autumn and spends the winter in the mountains surrounding the town. First, it picks the berries of mistletoe and other plants in the woods and then, in early spring when daylight begins to recover its warmth, comes down to the town to feed on red clusters of rowan fruits hanging on roadside trees. There is nothing else to say but that it is admirable when a big bevy of *kirenjaku* swoops down from the sky to a certain rowan tree, and in a moment, eats all of the fruits and then flies away.

The rowan tree, *nanakamado* is the city's official tree, with fantastic red fruit clusters that adorn the snowy streets of Asahikawa in winter.

The red fruits of the *nanakamado*, symbol of winter, have now been taken away by a bevy of *kirenjaku*, nymphs of spring.

On a day in this month, if you put some pieces of fruit, like apples or oranges, etc., on a small table outside of your window, you might see several kinds of cute birds gathering to eat these fruits. One of them could be a *kirenjaku*. Also, thrushes, bulbuls, great tits and sparrows could gather. Crows are uninvited guests for your dinner.

Watching birds is one of the joys of people who live in this snowy town. One day you may see a very big flock of birds flying swiftly in the sky; it may be a flock of *kirenjaku* migrating to another region after eating up all the rowan fruits.

For the people who love winter sports, March is the month which they are very reluctant to part with. For both the ambitious athlete and someone who just wants to have fun, the Vasaloppet Ski Competition, an authorized international Nordic distance race, is the last big chance to participate in the ski season in Asahikawa.



Local Literature

ISHIKAWA Takuboku and Asahikawa

By: Kenton KNOP

Asahikawa is proud to be a city with connections to several famous literary figures. For instance, it is the birthplace of the renowned novelists INOUE Yasushi and MIURA Ayako, and is also home to the NISHIKAWA Tetsuro Museum of Literary. Asahikawa's literary history is nearly as old as the city itself, with one particular early brush with fame that would hint at its future prominence in the world of modern Japanese literature.

ISHIKAWA Takuboku (1886-1912) is regarded as one of Japan's foremost poets during the Meiji period. Born in Iwate Prefecture, in 1907 he moved to Hokkaido to work as a newspaper reporter and substitute teacher in an elementary school in Hakodate. Later that year, however, there was a large fire in the city and his school was burnt down. Following a short stint as a reporter for a newspaper in Otaru, he successfully applied for a position with the *Kushiro Shimbun*. He began his journey by train from Otaru to Kushiro on December 19th, 1908 and stayed the night in Asahikawa on the 20th. Ishikawa's lodging was at the Miyakoshiya Inn, which was located in front of Asahikawa Station. He left the following morning to finish his journey to Kushiro. However, that short stay in Asahikawa stood out in his memory, and in October 1910 he composed four poems about his time in the city that went on to be included in his first poetry collection *Ichiaku no Suna* (A Handful of Sand).

名のみ知りて 縁もゆかりもなき土地の/ 宿屋安けし/ 我が家のごと

Na nomi shirite en mo yukari mo naki tochi no / yadoya yasukeshi / waga ie no goto

In this foreign land I know only by name
This peaceful inn
Is like my home

伴なりしかの代議士の/ 口あける青き寝顔を/ かなしと思ひき

Tsure narishi kano daigishi no / kuchi akeru aoki negao wo / kanashi to omohiki

That council member accompanying me
His blue face sleeping with its mouth open
Strikes me as sad

今夜こそ思ふ存分 泣いてみむと/ 泊まりし宿屋の/ 茶のぬるさかな

Konya koso omou zombun naite mimu to / tomarishi yadoya no / cha no nurusa kana

Thinking I would cry my heart out this evening
Was it the lukewarm tea
At the inn where I stayed?

Local Literature

ISHIKAWA Takuboku and Asahikawa Part Two

水蒸気/列車の窓に花のごと 凍てしを染むる/あかつきの色

Suijoki / ressha no mado ni hana no goto iteshi wo somuru / akatsuki no iro

Steam

Like a flower on the train's window

It freezes and is dyed the color of dawn

On the occasion of the centenary of ISHIKAWA's death in 2012, the "Society to Establish a Memorial to ISHIKAWA Takuboku in Asahikawa" collected donations and succeeded in constructing a memorial statue in the Asahikawa Tourism and Local Products Information Center in JR Asahikawa Station. The statue depicts ISHIKAWA looking out the window of his train departing Asahikawa on that cold morning, and there is even space on the seat next to him where you can take a photograph together! Around the statue are several plaques that present the poems he wrote and also provide some background regarding his time in Asahikawa. For those who would like to retrace some of ISHIKAWA's steps in the city, there is a historical marker at the former location of the Miyakoshiya Inn where he stayed located just outside the B Building of the Asahikawa Seibu department store.

With such a unique tribute to a literary giant located near the city's center, anyone with an interest in Japanese literature or Asahikawa's early history is highly recommended to make a visit. The Asahikawa that ISHIKAWA witnessed over 100 years ago might exist only in a handful of photographs today, but the land and the warmth of its people remains the same. One hopes that the city will continue to provide inspiration for generations of artists to come.



Statue at JR Asahikawa Station



Takuboku and Me



Historical Marker Outside Seibu

Hello Wild Flowers

Wandering Among The Wildflowers Around Asahikawa

By: Hitoshi KUDOH

Signor Rossi and Mr Aoi are strolling on the snow-covered Arashiyama hillside. Signor Rossi is from Domodossola, northern Italy. They do not need to wade in the snow, which would be up to their chests. The crust of the frozen snow is hard enough as a rock in this season of the year. They turn to the sun-bathing southern side.

Suddenly Signor Rossi shouts, “Dai un’occhiata a questi!”

“What’s happened?” asks Mr Aoi. “Guarda i ramoscelli rossi!” says Signor Rossi. “You mean these red twigs?” asks Mr Aoi again. “Sì, sì. Esattamente. Ecco i fiori del salice!” affirms Signor Rossi. “Right. They are catkins of a willow. The flowers of the willow,” agrees Mr Aoi.

“Evviva! È tornata la primavera! L’ho trovato - la primavera!” cries the Italian.

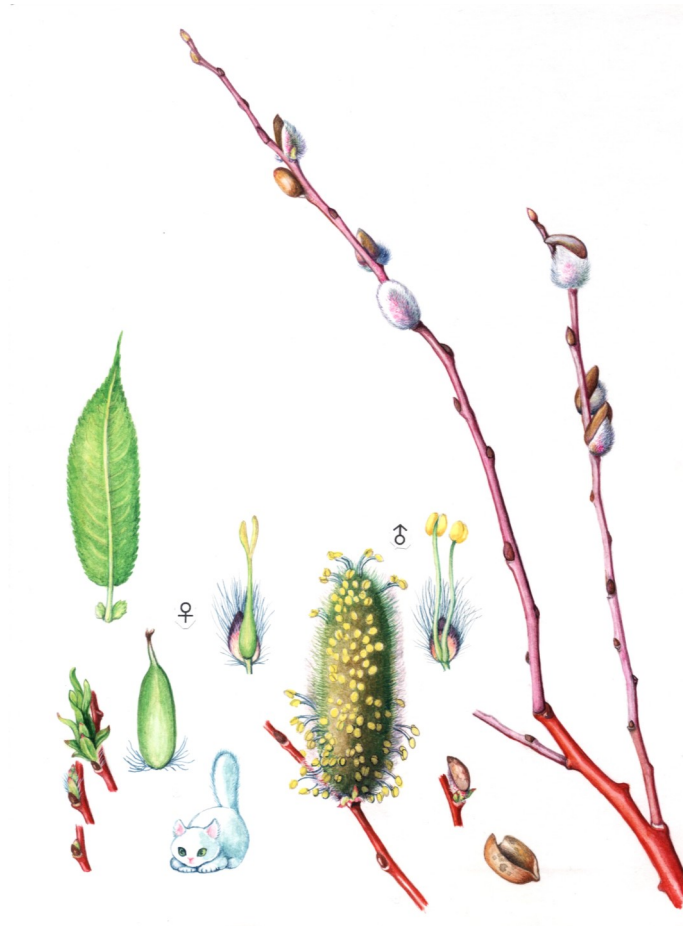
“No, no. WE have found Spring TOGETHER,” adds Mr Aoi.

EZO-YANAGI (蝦夷柳) *Salix rorida* Family: Salicaceae

Common name: Japanese Northern Willow

Description: A deciduous, dioecious perennial. Young twig is bright red. In late winter, fuzzy flowers appear out of their capsules. Alternate leaves sprout after the flowers. They are lanceolate, shiny green with whitish backsides.

15~20m.



Water Colour Painting of an
Ezo-yanagi
By Hitoshi KUDOH



Movies ~ March



*Every Wednesday is "Ladies' Day." Admission is ¥1,000 (tax included) for women at all theaters.

*<Dinos Cinemas Only> Every Thursday is "Men's Day." Admission is ¥1,000 (tax included) for men.

*The 1st day of every month is "Movie Day" in Asahikawa. Admission (tax included) is ¥1,000 for Adults, ¥800 for Senior High School Students and Under at all theaters.

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

URL: <http://www.kadokawa-cineplex.co.jp/asahikawa/> (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

- Les Miserables (English)
- Ted (English/Japanese Dub) (15+)
- Tokyo Kazoku (Japanese)
- Life of Pi (English/Japanese Dub 3D)
- Strawberry Night (Japanese)
- Jack Reacher (English)
- Kiiroi Zo (Japanese)
- No-Otoko (Japanese)
- A Good Day to Die Hard (English/Japanese Dub)
- Yokomichi Yonosuke (Japanese)
- Sogen no Isu (Japanese)
- Reunion (Japanese)
- Flight (English)

Coming Soon

- Su-chan Mai-chan Sawako-san (Japanese) 3/2
- Oz: The Great and Powerful (English) 3/8
- Doraemon: Nobita no Himitsu Dogu Hakubutsukan (Japanese/Animation) 3/9
- Precure All-Stars New Stage 2 Kokoro no Tomodachi (Japanese/Animation) 3/16
- Daijyobu 3-gumi (Japanese) 3/23
- Bokutachi no Kokan Nikki (Japanese) 3/23

★ **Dinos Cinemas:** Taisetsu-dori 5-chome / ☎ 21 – 1218

URL: http://www.geodinos.jp/cinema/asa_schedule.php?StoreID=5 (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

- ONE PIECE FILM Z (Japanese/Animation)
- Les Miserables (English)
- Tokyo Kazoku (Japanese)
- Life of Pi (English/Japanese Dub 3D)
- Jack Reacher (English)
- No-Otoko (Japanese)
- A Good Day to Die Hard (English/Japanese Dub)
- Yokomichi Yonosuke (Japanese)
- Flight (English)
- Django Unchained (English)

Coming Soon

- Oz: The Great and Powerful (English) 3/8
- Cloud Atlas (English) 3/15
- Platina Data (Japanese) 3/16
- Himawari to Koinu no Nanoka-kan (Japanese) 3/16
- The Man Who Became King (Korean/Japanese Sub) 3/16
- Jack the Giant Slayer (English) 3/22
- Aibo X Day (Japanese) 3/23
- Bokutachi no Kokan Nikki (Japanese) 3/23
- Wreck-It Ralph (English/Animation) 3/23
- Dragon Ball Z: Battle of Gods (Japanese/Animation) 3/30
- Fune wo Amu (Japanese) 4/13
- Lincoln (English) 4/19
- Detective Conan: Private Eye in the Distant Sea (Japanese/Animation) 4/20
- Wara no Tate (Japanese) 4/26
- Jackie Cogan (English) 4/26
- The Last Stand (English) 4/27
- Library Wars (Japanese) 4/27

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

The 33rd Vasaloppet Japan

It's time again for the biggest cross-country skiing event of the year! The 33rd Vasaloppet Japan continues Asahikawa's proud skiing tradition with men's and women's cross-country ski events beginning with 45km, 30km, 15km, and team sprint races on a challenging course at Tomizawa on Saturday, March 9th. Sunday, March 10th will have 10km and 5km walking ski events that will provide an enjoyable tour around the Kitasaito area, plus the Miniloppet, a 1km race that families with small children can enjoy together. Come cheer on the competitors and don't miss special guest Olympic cross-country skier NATSUMI Madoka, various mascot characters from the northern Hokkaido area such as Asahikawa's own "Asappy" at the Kitasaito course, and finally a live show from Asahikawa-born comedy duo LAUGH→TICKET!

Date & Time: Tomizawa: March 9th (Saturday) starting at 9:30am

Kitasaito: March 10th (Sunday) starting at 10:00am

Course Locations: Tomizawa (near Kamui no Mori Park) and Kitasaito (near Asahikawa Science Center)

Cost: Free



Last Chance - Penguin March

If you haven't yet visited the Asahiyama Zoo during the winter to see the penguins march, from now until **March 15th** is your last chance! The penguin march show takes place **every day** at **11:00am** and **2:30pm**, lasting approximately 30 minutes. Admission for adults is ¥800, and junior high school students and younger are free. Don't miss this opportunity to see one of the Asahiyama Zoo's most popular attractions!

Winter Zoo Hours: 10:30am to 3:30pm (entry until 3:00pm)

Access: Asahikawa Denki Kido Bus #41, 42, or 47 at Bus Stop 5 (behind Seibu), Fare ¥400 One Way

Fun Fridays

Leaders coordinate a variety of interesting activities such as games, discussions, introductions, and quizzes. Meet new people, relax, relate, and communicate through English.

Dates: March 8th

Time: 1:00 ~ 3:00pm & 6:30 ~ 8:30pm, 2nd Friday of the month

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.

Why not become a volunteer and help plan these events?

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

For further information or to register, please contact AIC.

Center Computers: The Asahikawa International Center (Feeeal Asahikawa 7F 1-jo-dori 8-chome) has two computers available for public use free of charge. There is a time limit for use and prior registration is necessary. Please feel free to come by and use it 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.



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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.****