

# 旭川 ASAHIKAWA Info

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## Hokkaido News Top 5



May 2013

Compiled by TAKADA Nobuhiro

### March 25

Electricity to the JR Hakodate Line was cut between Shiroishi Station and Soen Station in Sapporo due to a faulty transformer around 8:40am. 196 trains were canceled and the transformer trouble affected about 45,000 commuters during the rush hour. JR Hokkaido resumed service around 11:10am after taking emergency measures.

### March 26

The Daisetsu Mountains Tourism Federation posted the "Asahikawa Oishii Map" (URL <http://goo.gl/maps/dhsVZ>) online. The website gives foreign visitors information on restaurants with menus in foreign languages such as English, Chinese and Korean. The Federation says, "We have eleven restaurants on the website now, but we plan to post more restaurants where tourists from abroad can have a pleasant meal."

### March 29

An American skier living in Higashikawa died in an avalanche in the Tokachidake Mountains. The location of the accident is one of the well-known places for back-country skiing in Hokkaido. An expert on outdoor activities advises that anyone going skiing there should ask an experienced guide to come along to avoid various risks in the mountains.

### April 3

The number of visitors at Asahiyama Zoo during the 2012 fiscal year totaled about 1,623,000. The number of visitors has decreased about 100,000 over the previous year, and it also has been decreasing for the five years since 2008. An employee at the zoo says that they are going to put most of their efforts into attracting tourists from Southeast Asia.

### April 11

Cancellations of train service from JR Hokkaido over the 2012 fiscal year were 165 by the end of February. The cancellations have reached a record number for the past ten years, of which those caused by vehicle malfunction were 91, those by railway facility trouble were 46, and those by human error were 28. A transportation policy specialist points out that the incident ratio is almost double that of other JR companies such as JR East, JR West and so on because JR Hokkaido has been slower to replace facilities and introduce new types of railway cars.

**Condolences** The staff of Asahikawa Info was deeply saddened to hear of the passing of Mr. Toby Weymiller, who had previously been featured in this newspaper. All of us send our sincere condolences to his family.



**For further information or to register for events contact:**

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

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Special Thanks to KAWAI Tatsuo, Proofreader & Advisor

## YANASE TAKASHI AND HIS "POEMS AND FAIRY TALES" FRIENDS

やなせたかしと「詩とメルヘン」のなかまたち

Although he is most famous for creating the beloved *Anpanman* series of children's stories, illustrator and comic artist YANASE Takashi was also involved with editing the influential literary and arts magazine *Poems and Fairy Tales* for thirty years until the end of its publication in 2003. This exhibition at the Asahikawa Museum of Art has many beautiful illustrations used in the magazine on display and places special focus on works from the magazine's early 1970s period.

**Date:** Now until May 29th (Wednesday)**Time:** 9:30am~5:00pm, Closed Mondays (except on May 6th) and on May 7th**Venue:** Asahikawa Museum of Art (At Tokiwa Park)**Admission:** General: ¥800, University/Senior High Students: ¥500, Elementary/Junior High Students: ¥300**For Further Information Contact:** 0166-25-2577 (Asahikawa Museum of Art)

## "PICTURE POSTCARDS FROM THE BATTLEFIELD" EXHIBITION

戦没画学生「戦場からの絵葉書」展

This exhibition at the MIURA Ayako Literature Museum features a collection of over 300 postcards and letters made available by the families of young art students who lost their lives during the Pacific War. The passion of these young artists who dreamed of returning home to continue their art careers is strongly felt in the works they left behind, and this exhibition is dedicated to their memory.

**Date:** Now until June 9th (Sunday)**Time:** 9:00am~5:00pm, Closed Mondays and days following public holidays**Venue:** MIURA Ayako Literature Museum (Kagura 7-jo 8-chome)**Admission:** ¥500**For Further Information Contact:** 0166-69-2626 (MIURA Ayako Literature Museum)

## VIENNA BOYS' CHOIR CONCERT

ウィーン少年合唱団

The world-famous Vienna Boys' Choir will come to Taisetsu Crystal Hall as part of its 2013 Japan tour, where they will perform NHK's song "*Hana wa Saku*" (A Flower Blooms) in support of Great East Japan Earthquake recovery efforts. Other pieces on the program include Mozart's *Dir, Seele des Weltalls* ("To You, Soul of the Universe") and a selection of songs from MIYAZAKI Hayao's animated films such as *My Neighbor Totoro*.

**Date:** May 10th (Friday)**Time:** Doors 6:00pm, Show 6:30pm**Venue:** Asahikawa Taisetsu Crystal Hall (Kagura 3-jo 7-chome)**Admission:** General: ¥4,500, Senior Citizens/Disabled Persons: ¥4,000, Students: ¥2,000**Ticket Offices:** Gyokkodo, Yamaha Music, Asahikawa Civic Culture Hall, Taisetsu Crystal Hall, Kawai Showroom**For Further Information Contact:** 0166-69-2000 (Taisetsu Crystal Hall)

## ASAHIKAWA PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA FAMILY CONCERT

旭川フィルハーモニー管弦楽団 ファミリーコンサート

The Asahikawa Philharmonic Orchestra will perform its annual family concert at the Asahikawa Civic Culture Hall. With a diverse selection of pieces on the program, including Rossini's *William Tell Overture*, Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf*, and Ravel's *Ma mère l'oye* (Mother Goose), there is sure to be something for all ages to enjoy.

**Date:** May 12th (Sunday)**Time:** Doors 2:30pm, Show 3:00pm**Venue:** Asahikawa Civic Culture Hall (7-jo 9-chome)**Admission:** General: ¥1,000, Senior High School Students and Younger: ¥500**Ticket Offices:** Yamaha Music, Asahikawa Civic Culture Hall, Taisetsu Crystal Hall**For Further Information Contact:** 080-5590-4217 (ASAKAWA)

## YAMAUCHI KEISUKE CONCERT

山内恵介 コンサート

Up-and-coming star of the *enka* (Japanese popular ballads) world YAMAUCHI Keisuke is coming to Asahikawa as part of his Hokkaido-wide tour, where he will perform his hits including his latest single *Kushiro Kuko* (Kushiro Airport). Having started his singing career while still a high school student, YAMAUCHI is one of the youngest and most promising talents singing *enka* today. Don't miss this chance to see him in concert!

**Date:** May 16th (Thursday)

**Time:** 1st Show Doors 2:00pm, Show 2:30pm, 2nd Show Doors 6:00pm, Show 6:30pm

**Venue:** Asahikawa Public Hall (At Tokiwa Park)

**Admission:** All Seats: ¥5,000

**Ticket Offices:** Gyokkodo, Doshin Play Guide, Lawson Ticket, Ticket Pia

**For Further Information Contact:** 011-533-7711 (Adash)



## PASIÓN DEL FLAMENCO

パッション・デル・フラメンコ

The KOMATSUBARA Yoko Spanish Dance Troupe will present a night of flamenco music and dance in Asahikawa with magnificent performances from featured dancers Marco Vargas and Juan Ogalla. Since 1969 Ms. KOMATSUBARA has been at the forefront of popularizing this highly technical and passionate form of song, music and dance in Japan. Come see for yourself why flamenco has been designated by UNESCO as a masterpiece of intangible cultural heritage.

**Date:** May 17th (Friday)

**Time:** Show: 6:30pm

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

**Admission:** All Seats: ¥5,000 (¥4,300 for Min-On Members)

**Ticket Offices:** Gyokkodo, Lawson Ticket

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



## ISHIKAWA SAYURI CONCERT 2013

石川さゆり コンサート2013

Reigning queen of the *enka* world ISHIKAWA Sayuri celebrated the 40th anniversary of her singing career last year. Expect to hear her unforgettable hits such as *Amagi-goe* (Amagi Pass) and *Tsugaru Kaikyo*, *Fuyu-geshiki* (Tsugaru Straits, Winter Scene) in addition to other soulful pieces when she comes to Asahikawa for a live performance.

**Date:** May 20th (Monday)

**Time:** Afternoon Show Doors 1:30pm, Show 2:00pm, Evening Show Doors 6:00pm, Show: 6:30pm

**Venue:** Asahikawa Civic Culture Hall (Kagura 3-jo 7-chome)

**Admission:** S-Seats: ¥6,500, A-Seats: ¥6,000

**Ticket Offices:** Gyokkodo, Doshin Play Guide, Coach & Four Asahikawa, Lawson Ticket

**For Further Information Contact:** 0138-51-3339 (Seagull)



## THE BRIOSO BRASS SPRING CONCERT 2013

ザ ブリオソ・ブラス スプリングコンサート2013

The Brioso Brass, the only British-style brass band in northern Hokkaido, will demonstrate just how fun and exciting brass music can be in their spring concert in Asahikawa. Pieces to be performed include "Elsa's Procession to the Cathedral" from Wagner's opera *Lohengrin*, and Philip Sparke's "Music for a Festival."

**Date:** May 26th (Sunday)

**Time:** Doors 5:30pm, Show 6:00pm

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

**Admission:** General: ¥500, Elementary Students and Younger: Free

**Ticket Offices:** Yamaha Music, Taisetsu Crystal Hall

**For Further Information Contact:** 050-1095-6556 (OKUMA)



EVENTS IN ASAHIKAWA FOR MAY





# Hello Asahikawa!

**Name: Doreen Takai**

**Hometown: Lu Zhou, New Taipei City, Taiwan**

**Interviewed: April 23rd, 2013 by AIC**

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

**Doreen :** I am from a small city in the north of Taiwan called Lu Zhou. I was born and raised there. Lu Zhou's population has more than 200,000 people, and although it's a small city, the people there are very warm-hearted. It's very close to Taipei, about 20 minutes away by car and last year the Taipei subway began service there on a new line too. It's close to a famous night market too, about 20 minutes away by car. That's if the traffic isn't congested at least. Taiwan does have some traffic problems, but if you go by motor scooter you'll definitely get there quickly. There are several famous restaurants in Lu Zhou, and the most famous food there is a type of noodle called *Tseh-Lah-Mee* in Taiwanese. The noodles are served in soup or with a sauce, along with a variety of traditional side dishes, which would make anyone feel really happy. On cold days, eating the noodles in the hot soup warms you up, and the noodles in sauce are refreshing to eat on hot days. Please come visit and try them if you have the chance!

**AIC:** *What brought you here to Asahikawa?*

**Doreen :** Actually, I came to Asahikawa 3 1/2 years ago when I got married in October 2009, but in 2006 I went to a Japanese school in Sapporo for one year and during that time I visited Asahikawa.

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

**Doreen :** When I first started living here in 2009, I wanted to make an effort to go out and see the city and so I went outside to look around. At first, the only people I saw out on the streets were elderly people and children. I was a little surprised! I didn't go all the way into the city; it was just the area around my house. That made me wonder if I was going to be all right living here! But the scenery is very beautiful, being surrounded by mountains, and it felt great being here. I also thought the city was very beautiful. Now that I've been living here for 3 1/2 years, I've found that everyone in Asahikawa is very kind and they have always been willing to help me and explain things to me when I needed it. That makes me happy that I've come to live here. Also, because there isn't much snow in Taiwan, where it only snows in the mountains, I was very excited to come to Asahikawa, where it snows a lot. I was excited to see the world turned white by the snow, which is very romantic. It's difficult shoveling the snow though.

**AIC:** *How did you first get interested in coming to Japan?*

**Doreen :** I like studying languages, and so I thought about whether I should study English, French or Japanese. My boyfriend at the time was Japanese, so that made me decide to start studying Japanese. Also, Taiwan was formerly a colony of Japan, and there is much Japanese influence there now because they are so near to each other. When I went to Sapporo to start studying Japanese it was my first time living in Japan for an extended period, although I had traveled to Tokyo for short trips in the past. Living in Sapporo for one year, I came to love Hokkaido. Hokkaido is a popular place among people in Taiwan. Everyone wants to come here to travel, and it's a very popular place for people to take their honeymoons in the winter because of its romantic snowy atmosphere. It's also open and vast compared to Taiwan, which can feel very cramped. It has beautiful natural scenery, plus snow in the winter. That's why everyone in Taiwan likes Hokkaido, and that is what made me very happy that I came here.

**AIC:** *What kind of work are you doing in Asahikawa?*

**Doreen :** This April I've just started working at the counter at the Asahikawa International Center. It is my first time working at an international center like this, and I was very interested in working here. Every day I can speak English, Japanese and even Chinese sometimes, so I think that's really great. My co-workers are all very kind and we talk about all kinds of things. I've been enjoying working here a lot. I want to give my best effort working here as a member of the center and be of help to the people of Asahikawa. I also want to study another language, and am thinking of studying either Korean or Russian. I thought that working in the international center, I should try to become more international myself. I want to keep working hard toward that goal and would like to ask for everyone's help.

# Culture Corner

## Spring Has Passed By: KITAMURA Tadao

Spring has passed,  
and summer seems to have arrived:  
garment of white cloth  
hung to dry  
on heavenly Kagu Hill.

Dr. Ian Hideo Levy, ex-professor of Princeton and Stanford Universities, translated Empress Jito's poem collected in the *Manyoshu* ("Collection of Ten-Thousand Leaves") poetry anthology into English.

About thirteen hundred years ago, some successive generations of the Emperor lived in rather small capitals in the Yamato Basin, now the outskirts of present-day Nara. There are three small hills in the southern part of the basin. One of the three is Kagu Hill. All of the three were revered as where gods are enshrined, as all beautiful mountains or hills used to be in ancient days.

I would like to offer my explanation on the poem above as follows: peaceful and soothing scenery is seen in the Yamato Basin in early summer, where people are hanging their garments of white cloth to dry. As a legend says, the same sight is seen on the heavenly Kagu Hill when early summer has arrived.

Because it was written thirteen hundred years ago and the words and their usage from that time are very different from those of present Japan, the *Manyoshu* is very difficult for today's Japanese people to read. However, an American-born man of letters has published a unique and splendid book titled *Read Manyoshu in English\**, from which I have found that it is rather more convenient to read Japanese classics in English than in modern Japanese.

Imitating Dr. Levy, now I will attempt to translate a classic Japanese poem from the *Kokinshu* ("Collection of Poems of Ancient and Modern Times") into English:



**Kagu Hill**

From the furthest  
Serene light falling,  
On a mild day of spring,  
And still,  
Why do cherry blossoms scatter  
so ceaselessly?  
(Ki no Tomonori, *Kokinshu*)

\* Levy, Hideo: "英語でよむ万葉集 (*Read Manyoshu in English*)" IWANAMI SHINSHO 920 (2006)

# Life in Japan



## *Hanami and Jimpa in Hokkaido* By: **SAKURABA Satoshi**



Spring has come and cherry blossoms have bloomed here and there in Japan. In Hokkaido, however, cherry blossom season will come in May because Hokkaido is the northernmost island in Japan. As you may know, *hanami* (花見) is a typical event during cherry blossom season in Japan. Although the kanji character “花 (hana)” represents “flower,” the word *hanami* is usually used for viewing cherry blossoms. People go to *hanami* to enjoy viewing cherry blossoms with delicious foods and drinks.

The most famous place in Hokkaido to go for a *hanami* party would be Hokkaido Shrine (北海道神宮) which is located in Sapporo. People go there to view a lot of cherry trees when the blossoms are in full bloom. It is too crowded to get a good location to sit if you go on a holiday. In fact, to have their *hanami* parties in a good location, people have to reserve their places the night before their parties are held.

In Hokkaido, people often eat *jingisukan* (ジンギスカン “Genghis Khan”) at *hanami* parties. *Jingisukan* is barbecued mutton or lamb and is a local food in Hokkaido. For some people who are from outside Hokkaido, *jingisukan* can be tough to eat because of its distinctive flavor. However, if you get good quality mutton or lamb, you will be able to enjoy eating *jingisukan*. We call this custom “*jimpa*” (ジンパ), and it is not only held during *hanami* parties but also in many other situations. At Hokkaido University, students and teachers used to hold *jimpa* when it was nice outside. However, *jimpa* will be prohibited on the university campus this year because some past *jimpa* participants had bad manners.

*Hanami* and *jimpa* are very fun events if many people join in the party and the weather clears up. To eat and drink under the sun is exhilarating. If we prepare delicious foods and drinks, the only thing we have left to do is pray for good weather!

# In Touch With Nature

## Rare Species of Butterflies in East Asia

By: KAWAI Tatsuo & HISHIKAWA Noriyuki, Director of the Butterfly Association of Japan

The concept of zoogeography predicted the existence of plate tectonics over a hundred years ago. Any academic field, after intensive research, most often, could reach the truth. Many missionaries from western countries in the 18th century explored as far as the remote places of Asia, acting as plant-hunters or butterfly hunters. They knew that some living things found in the backcountry in India also had a habitat in some parts of the African continent.

Through their unparalleled spirit of inquiry and devoted efforts, the rare species of living things throughout the world have been collected and brought to the British Museum (London), which makes it possible to record new species.

The species of butterflies belongs to Arthropod Insects Lepidoptera, and as observed from systematic embryology, it fundamentally differs from humans' genetic patterns (coelomic stem), which belong to vertebrate animals Mammalian Animals Primates. Because of how the mesoderm of insects is formed out of unicellular coelomic stems in the Insecta world, the splendid right-and-left symmetrical gynandromorph (organism containing both male and female characteristics) can exist as if a bamboo were cut straight down the middle. The butterfly gynandromorph is an abnormal case and has a low probability of occurrence.

Apart from gynandromorphs, there is a wide variety of rare species, not only of butterflies but also in the entire biological world. Some rare species live in trackless, unexplored regions, and some narrowly survive, but are driven to extinction because of drastically degrading ecology. There are still unknown factors concerning survival in that some species can only outlive under specific circumstances.

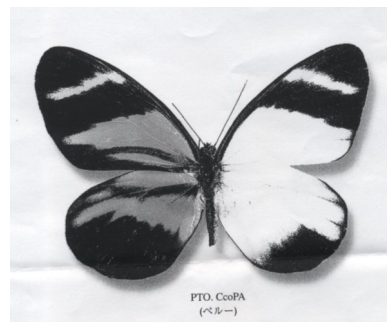
Compared with the days of the 18th century when plant-hunters were active, now the availability of transportation has led to rapid progress in the discovery of new species. Nowadays, environmental destruction on a large scale is feared because of the greenhouse effect, deforestation or urbanization, and though the earth seems to be small, we are only too glad that new species of butterflies are still being discovered.

Two species found as gynandromorphs in Japan are *Damora sagana liane* genetic in Kanagawa Prefecture, and *Anthocharis cardamines ishshiku* genetic in Nagano Prefecture. Two other rare species are *Buhtanitis mansfieldi* gynogenic (female) and *Agehana maraho* gynogenic (female).

### Two Examples of Gynandromorph Butterflies



Ascalaphus Swallowtail (*Papilio ascalaphus*)  
South Sulawesi (Indonesia)



Pamela (*Perrhybris pamela*)  
Peru



## Hello Wild Flowers

## Wandering Among The Wildflowers Around Asahikawa

By: Hitoshi KUDOH

Don't be afraid, Aya. I'm an old woman whom they call Yamamba. They say Yamamba is evil, but it's not true. Don't worry. I would not hurt a soul.

I know you, Aya. You came to pick wild mountain herbs, didn't you? Look over there. There spread a vast carpet of white flowers. They are Soft Windflowers. You can use their leaves and stalks. They are good. They are so mild and bland that you don't have to get rid of bitterness by cooking. You will love them. They are too good to pass over.

But pay attention! You may mix them up with poisonous monks-hoods around there. They have similar leaves to windflowers and fatal poison at the same time. So it's safe to pick these flowering ones only.

...based on "Hanasaki-yama" by Ryūsuke SAITÔ

## NIRINSÔ (二輪草)

*Anemone flaccida***Family:** Ranunculaceae**Common name:** Soft

Windflower, Twin Flower

**Description:** A rhizomatous perennial of late spring ephemeral. Has a 3-foliolated involucre on top of the stalk. 1~3 short peduncles appear from the involucre. Cups of pinkish to white flowers are borne on each top of the peduncles. They are sepals. The basal leaves are 3 lobed compound and have soft petioles. 15~25cm tall.



Water Colour Painting of a  
Nirinsô  
By Hitoshi KUDOH





## Movies ~ May



\*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

- Platina Data (Japanese)
- Wreck-It Ralph (Japanese Dub/Animation)
- Dragon Ball Z: Battle of Gods (Japanese/Animation)
- Chinese Zodiac (English -until 5/3-/Japanese Dub)
- Fune wo Amu (Japanese)
- Hana Kappa ~ Hana Sake! Pakkan Cho no Kuni no Daiboken (Japanese/Animation)
- Lincoln (English)
- Detective Conan: Private Eye in the Distant Sea (Japanese/Animation)
- Crayon Shinchan: Bakauma! B-kyu Gourmet Survival! (Japanese/Animation)
- Iron Man 3 (English/Japanese Dub 3D)
- Wara no Tate (Japanese)
- Super Hero Taisen Z (Japanese)
- Library Wars (Japanese)

### Coming Soon

- Tantei wa Bar ni Iru 2 (Japanese) 5/11
- Kencho Omotenashi-ka (Japanese) 5/11
- Sakura, Futatabi no Kanako (Japanese) 5/11
- Chugakusei Maruyama (Japanese) 5/18
- Jinjin (Japanese) 5/18
- Petal Dance (Japanese) 6/8
- Steins;Gate Fuka Ryoiki no Deja Vu (Japanese/Animation) TBA

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

URL: [http://www.geodinos.jp/cinema/asa\\_schedule.php?StoreID=5](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

- Aibo X Day (Japanese)
- Wreck-It Ralph (English/Animation)
- Platina Data (Japanese)
- Dragon Ball Z: Battle of Gods (Japanese/Animation)
- Fune wo Amu (Japanese)
- Lincoln (English)
- Detective Conan: Private Eye in the Distant Sea (Japanese/Animation)
- Wara no Tate (Japanese)
- Jackie Cogan (English)
- The Last Stand (English)
- Library Wars (Japanese)
- Super Hero Taisen Z (Japanese)
- Iron Man 3 (English/Japanese Dub 3D)

### Coming Soon

- Gangster Squad (English) 5/3
- Tantei wa Bar ni Iru 2 (Japanese) 5/11
- Kuroyuri Danchi (Japanese) 5/18
- Kuchizuke (Japanese) 5/25
- Real ~ Kanzen naru Kubinaga Ryu no Hi (Japanese) 5/25
- Oblivion (English) 5/31
- The Grandmaster (Chinese) 5/31
- G.I. Joe: Retaliation (English) 6/8
- Kiseki no Ringo (Japanese) 6/8
- The Great Gatsby (English) 6/14
- Sango Ranger (Japanese) 6/15
- After Earth (English) 6/21
- 100-kai Naku Koto (Japanese) 6/22
- Galileo: Manatsu no Hoteishiki (Japanese) 6/29
- Code Name: Jackal (Korean) June

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

# Golden Week Holidays

It's time again for "Golden Week," a stretch of consecutive holidays that is one of the busiest times for traveling in Japan. Let's take a look at what holidays make up "Golden Week."

**April 29th (Monday): Showa Day (昭和の日 *Showa no Hi*)**

Honors the birthday of Emperor Showa, who reigned from 1926 to 1989. This holiday is meant to encourage public reflection on this period of Japanese history.

**May 3rd (Friday): Constitution Memorial Day (憲法記念日 *Kenpo Kinenbi*)**

Celebrates the adoption of the Constitution of Japan on this day in 1947.

**May 4th (Saturday): Greenery Day (みどりの日 *Midori no Hi*)**

Formerly April 29th, it was moved to its present date in 2007. A day to appreciate nature that was inspired by Emperor Showa's love for plants.

**May 5th (Sunday): Children's Day (こどもの日 *Kodomo no Hi*)**

This holiday celebrates the happiness of children and the importance of expressing appreciation toward mothers. It is especially famous for the *koinobori* carp streamers that are raised across the country.

**May 6th (Monday): Compensatory Holiday (振替休日 *Furikae Kyujitsu*)**

This holiday is due to a special provision where holidays that take place on a Sunday are observed on the following Monday.

## International Communi-tea

The Asahikawa International Center's monthly International Communi-tea (茶ろん "Salon") event will resume this month with JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency) seminar participants from around Southeast Asia as our special guests in the evening session. Come join us for fun conversation with people from around Asahikawa and the world!

**Date:** May 31st

**Times:** 1:00 ~ 2:00pm & 6:30 ~ 7:30pm

**Location:** Asahikawa International Center Lounge, Feeeal Asahikawa 7F 1-jo-dori 8-chome

**Charge:** Free

## 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:** May 10th, June 14th

**Time:** 1:00 ~ 3:00pm & 6:50 ~ 8:50pm, 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.\*\***