

旭川 ASAHIKAWA Info

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Hokkaido News Top 5



December 2014

Compiled by TAKADA Nobuhiro

October 24

The City of Asahikawa announced that a total amount of sales of “Tabé Marche” this year reached 209,980 thousand yen, surpassing 200,000 thousand yen for the first time. The city hall explained that the reasons behind it are a good weather and a new family-friendly zone, which attracted 1.85 million people to the event. The City also estimated that an economic ripple effect would hit a record-high 4.5 billion yen.

October 29

The Mayor of Sapporo City made up his mind to bid for the Winter Olympics and Paralympics in 2026. The City carried out a survey on hosting the Winter Olympics and Paralympics, and the result showed that a majority of citizens in Sapporo are likely to support the bid. The bid for the Winter Olympics and Paralympics in 2026 will be expressed officially by the end of this year. It would be the second time for Sapporo to host the Winter Olympics since 1972, if it were to be chosen as a host city.

October 31

“New Chitose Airport Animation Festival 2014” took place at a movie theater in the airport terminal building. The festival had an animated short film competition, in which 45 nominated films out of 715 from seventeen countries were entered. 187 animations were put on during the festival until November 3.

November 19

Asahikawa Ryouin High School in Nagayamacho 3-chome is canceling the school bus operation for its students in the coming winter, because two local bus companies cannot provide the bus service due to a shortage of bus drivers. The lack of drivers is a nationwide tendency, as baby-boomer drivers have been hitting retirement age. Ryouin High School has had the school bus service for the students commuting from Higashikawa, Higashikagura, Takasu, and others since 2003.

November 20

The president of JR Hokkaido had a press conference to announce the names of Hokkaido Shinkansen Bullet Train Service. The bullet train service between Tokyo or Sendai and Hakodate is named “Hayabusa,” which means a peregrine falcon; the one between Morioka or Aomori and Hakodate is “Hayate,” equivalent to “a blast of wind” in English. Hokkaido Shinkansen that will be connecting Tokyo and Hakodate in four hours and ten minutes is scheduled to start its operation in March, 2016.



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-
chome, Asahikawa 070-0031

Tel: (0166) 25-7491

Fax: (0166) 23-4924

E-mail:

cir_kokusai@city.asahikawa.hokkaido.jp

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Special Thanks to KAWAI Tatsuo, Proofreader & Advisor

Recruiting Musicians for Winter Concert ウインターコンサート出演者募集

Asahikawa Taisetsu Crystal Hall is looking for Asahikawa City residents who would like to perform at the upcoming annual winter concert. You can join in the fun regardless of what instrument you play.

How To Apply: Download & fill out the application form at <http://www.city.asahikawa.hokkaido.jp/files/bunkashinko/crystalhall/>

Where To Apply: E-mail the completed form to crystalhall@city.asahikawa.hokkaido.jp
You can also fax the form to 0166-69-2001

Recruiting Period: Until December 12th (Fri)

For Further Information Contact: 0166-69-2000



2nd Exhibition of ABE Hiroshi: Baby Animals あべ弘士の第二回あかちゃん展

This exhibition will be featuring works of a children book writer, ABE Hiroshi, who is a native of Asahikawa. ABE developed an interest and honed his skills in art while working as one of the zookeepers at Asahiyama Zoo. While there, he took inspiration from the many animals he worked with, and used those as the basis for a series of picture books in display for this exhibition. This will be a good chance to take a peek into a unique animal world that will captivate children and grown-ups of all ages.

Date: now to December 25th (Thursday), except on Mondays and Tuesdays

Time: 10:00 am to 6:00 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



73rd Special Exhibition: Surishi—The World of MITAMURA Tsutomu 第73回企画展「摺師 三田村努の世界～」

Ukiyoe, which means “pictures of the floating world,” is a genre of woodblock prints that flourished in Japan during the urbanizing Edo Period. In order to fulfil a great demand of its major appreciators, *ukiyoe* were mass-produced by its printer, *surishi* (摺師). At this special exhibition, MITAMURA will introduce the time-honored techniques of *surishi* printers, manipulating the brush and the rubbing pad in a rhythmical manner, for instance, which requires a high level of skill.

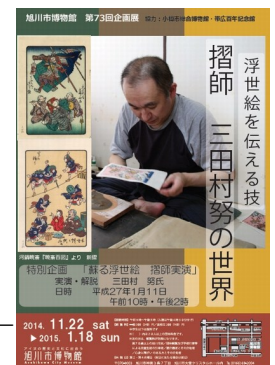
Date: now to January 18th (Sunday), except on Mondays

Time: 9:00 am to 5:00 pm (admission is until 4:30 pm)

Venue: Asahikawa City Museum (Kagura 3-jo 7-chome, inside Taisetsu Crystal Hall)

Admission: General—¥300, High School Students—¥200, Middle School and Under—Free. *Annual Pass is also available: General—¥600, High School Students—¥400

For Further Information: 0166-69-2004 or hakubutsukagaku@city.asahikawa.hokkaido.jp



A Body of Sensation 感じるからだ

Many artists find the human body as an abundant source of inspiration. At this special exhibition, viewers will be able to see the final products in which the artists explore the use of their hands, wrists, and even fingertips. One of the purposes of these artworks is to appreciate and be conscious of our bodies. This exhibition is full of unusual and interesting artworks that were inspired by the human body and its movements.

Date: now to March 8th (Sunday), except on Mondays, 12/29-01/03 and 01/13

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—¥510, High School Students—¥300, Senior Citizens (65+) and Children—Free

For Further Information Contact: 0166-25-2577 (Hokkaido Asahikawa Museum of Art)



35th Regular Concert of Asahikawa City Wind Orchestra 第35回定期演奏会 ～旭川市吹奏楽団～

Asahikawa City Wind Orchestra will have their 35th Regular Concert on the first Saturday of December. This year's program is made of great works like Tritsch-Tratsch-Polka Op. 214 by Strauss Jr., Johann, Die lustige Witwe (English: The Merry Widow) by Franz Lehár, plus many more.

Date: December 6th (Saturday)
Time: Doors 6:00pm, Show 6:30pm
Venue: Asahikawa Taisetsu Crystal Hall (Kagura 3-jo 7-chome)
Admission: ¥700
Ticket Offices: Yamaha Music Retailing Asahikawa, Taisetsu Crystal Hall
For Further Information Contact: 0166-69-2626



The Dream Is to Be a Doctor for Cattle 夢は牛のお医者さん

This movie is an adapted version of a television documentary that essentially captures the 26 years of life of a girl who encounters three calves in 3rd grade in a rural town of Niigata Prefecture. She becomes a great friend with the calves, then strives to become a veterinarian. The camera closely follows her attempts in pursuing a dream of earning a doctorate of veterinary medicine. The director of the film says that the message of the movie is to show the importance of never giving up on one's dream.



Date: December 7th (Sunday)
Time: 1st—11:00 am, 2nd—1:00 pm, 3rd—3:00 pm
Venue: Theater Kanda (3-jo 8-chome, 3F)
Admission: ¥1,500 (advance tickets—¥1,200)
For Further Information on the Film Visit: <https://www.teny.co.jp/yumeushi/>

Christmas Candle Night クリスマスキャンドルナイト

Are you looking for something to do with your family and friends before Christmas? Asahikawa City's Civic Activities and Exchange Center *CoCoDe* will be holding a Christmas event this year as well. Christmas market and food stands are available, on top of various activities which include beeswax candle & reusable shopping bag making and doodling. Be sure to check out the Christmas Music Festa and eco-friendly products giveaways as well!

Date: December 20th (Saturday)
Time: 1:00 pm to 7:00 pm
Venue: Civic Activities and Exchange Center *CoCoDe* (Miyamae-dori 1-jo 3-chome)
Admission: Free
For Further Information Contact: 0166-74-4151 (*CoCoDe*)



Joint Recital Vol. III of WATANABE Kenji & YASUDA Risa 渡辺健二&安田里沙 ジョイントリサイタルVol.III

Two of Japan's outstanding pianists, WATANABE Kenji and YASUDA Risa, will perform a two-part recital, featuring many beautiful classical pieces. Both WATANABE and YASUDA have won first prizes at internationally most prestigious Liszt concerts. One of Liszt's most recognized works, *Hungarian Rhapsody*, is also part of the program. If you are a music lover, this will be a great Christmas present for yourself and your loved ones.

Date: December 21st (Sunday)
Time: Doors 1:30pm, Show 2:00pm
Venue: Asahikawa Taisetsu Crystal Hall (Kagura 3-jo 7-chome)
Admission: General—¥3,000, High School Students and Younger—¥1,500
Ticket Offices: Gyokkodo Fecool Asahikawa, Kawai Asahikawa Shop, Yamaha Music Retailing Asahikawa, Taisetsu Crystal Hall, Asahikawa Civic Culture Hall
For Further Information Contact: 090-7583-1573 (Asahikawa Taisetsu Crystal Hall)



EVENTS IN ASAHIKAWA FOR DECEMBER

Book Review

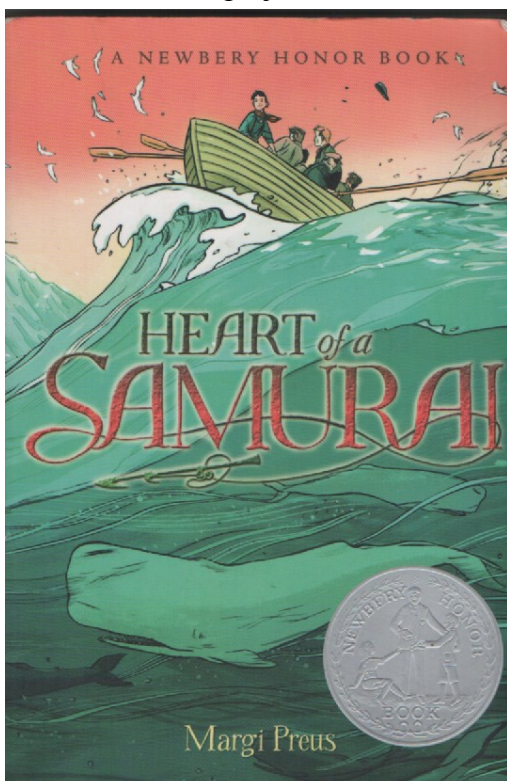
Heart of Samurai By KITAMURA Tadao

Do you happen to know a man by the name of John Mung?

His Japanese name is NAKAHAMA Manjiro (中浜万次郎), who was allowed to take the second name of NAKAHAMA by the shogunate at that time. When he was a fourteen-year-old fisher boy, his petty boat was wrecked in a raging storm and washed ashore on a solitary island in the midst of the Pacific Ocean, which is now called Torishima. Along with four companions, he endured harsh conditions and starvation like Robinson Crusoe did. Luckily though, after 140 days of desperation, a big U.S. whaling ship, “John Howland” appeared.

Captain Whitefield was a genuinely good-hearted American of the New World. He picked up the survivors with his ship and secured them in Honolulu Harbor, because Japan at that time was forbidding the coming and going of people from its isolation policy.

Mr. Whitefield warmly brought Manjiro to his hometown, Fairhaven, Massachusetts, and welcomed him into his family. The captain also sent him to elementary and professional schools, fighting with racism and prejudice.



Manjiro obtained knowledge of American democracy, newly developed industrial technologies, and, of course, English words. He experienced so many things in American life, among which were modern whaling and gold seeking,

After ten years of life in America and as a seaman, he daringly attempted to go home to Japan regardless of the risk of being prisoned or even executed, in a worst case scenario, for going abroad illegally. But the age was changing drastically. Progressive-minded people, local lords, scholars, and some of samurais were very eager to collect the western knowledge.

Now, Manjiro was a very important figure. Appointed as a samurai, he was allowed to carry katana and take a second name. He played a very important role in concluding the peace and friendship treaty between the United States of America and Japan. Manjiro was also the first author of English-Japanese Dictionary in Japan.

The History of the Holidays

Christmas By Kim LACEY

It's a holiday known as much for shopping as the birth of the Christ Child. Christmas is a mix of the old and the new of surprisingly recent traditions and history that goes back thousands of years.



We have all heard the biblical origins of Christmas, but societies have been celebrating light and birth in the darkest days of winter centuries before Jesus walked the Earth. In the Norse country, this winter celebration was known as “Yule.” Around December 21st, the winter solstice, fathers and sons dragged evergreens indoors as reminders of life and set logs on fire as a promise of good fortune.

Ancient Rome had its own December festivals. One week before the winter solstice, Romans began celebrating “Saturnalia,” an orgy of food and drink in honor of Saturn, the god of agriculture. Some Romans, particularly soldiers and government officials, also worshipped Mithra, the sun god. It is believed that to this small but powerful sect, the birthday of Mithra, December 25th, was the holiest day of the year.

By the 1st century A.D., pagan traditions were being challenged as Christianity took hold throughout the empire. But Christ's birthday remained a mystery, since the Bible doesn't mention exactly when he was born. Since pagan Rome already celebrated the birth of Mithra on December 25th, it is theorized that the Church adopted the date as the birth of the Christ Child. In the 4th century, the Church made it official, declaring December 25th as the Feast Day of the Nativity. The Church knew it could not outlaw the pagan traditions of Christmas, so it came to accept them. The evergreens traditionally brought indoors were decorated with apples, symbolizing the Garden of Eden. These apples would eventually become Christmas ornaments.

The story of Santa Claus also began in the 4th century with the death of Nicholas, a beloved Turkish bishop. The anniversary of his death became known as Saint Nicholas Day. On December 6th, good children woke to gifts from the kindly Saint. Bad children sulked away with nothing. In Holland, he was known as *Sinterklaas*.

Fifteen hundred years later in America, a seminary professor named Clement Clark Moore reimagined the legend of Saint Nicholas. In 1822, Moore wrote a poem called *The Night Before Christmas*, about a good-natured Saint named Santa Claus, who was pulled by a group of reindeer and came down the chimney on Christmas Eve. Like Saint Nicholas, Santa Claus spread good cheer and gave gifts to children. Less clear was exactly what this Santa Claus looked like.



Continued on the Next Page



Then in 1863, Thomas Nast, a cartoonist for Harper's Weekly, settled the matter once and for all with his version of the Christmas saint. Nast's Santa was rotund and jolly, with a full white beard and a sack full of toys. That is how American icon was born. It's no wonder that Santa Claus became an irresistible image to America's retailers, forever linking Christmas with shopping.

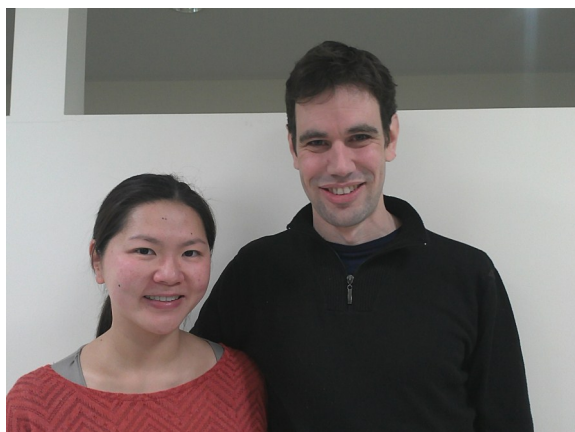
To most people, however, Christmas means much more than buying gifts. Humankind has long sought warmth, family, and joy during the dark days of winter; and year after year, Christmas delivers.

(Source: The History Channel)

Life in Japan

Comic Strips (Part 1) By Meagan LEMAY





Hello Asahikawa!

Name: Adeline and Lachlan Addison

Hometown: Sydney, Australia

Interviewed: November 14th, 2014 by AIC

AIC: *Hello, Adeline and Lachlan. Do you mind telling us what brought you guys here to Asahikawa?*

Lachlan: Well, Adeline used to work in Shibetsu as an ALT almost 10 years ago. And I love skiing, so we decided to come back to spend the winter in Asahikawa with our son.

AIC: *I see. Could you please describe your hometown for us? Where are you from and what is it like there?*

The Addisons: We live in the suburbs of Sydney, about 20 minutes away from Sydney City. Sydney is quite a big city, with 4.5 million people and very spread out. However, it is one of the most beautiful and lively cities of Australia. It has a lovely harbor and sandy beaches such as Bondi Beach, only 15 minutes from the city.

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

The Addisons: We've been really fortunate with people here. They are very friendly and always willing to help, even though we do not speak Japanese well. People often have trouble understanding us, but they are usually very patient when we speak. Also it snowed a lot today, so we, especially Lachlan, are really excited. We are very much looking forward to our winter here. As soon as the ski resorts are open, Lachlan will be skiing.

AIC: *Yes, looks like winter is already here. Like you said, it's been snowing for almost two days, nonstop. You guys already mentioned that Lachlan loves winter sports. What else do you do in your free time?*

Adeline: We've been going to the gym three times a week. We also started participating in Fun Fridays at Asahikawa International Center every other week. On Thursdays, we are studying Japanese. We have been driving to the surrounding towns to eat their local delicacies, such as buckwheat soba in Horokanai and rice balls in Fukagawa.

AIC: *How is the weather in Sydney, by the way? What do you usually do around this time of the year back home?*

Lachlan: Today it was 35 degrees in Sydney. Very hot. Many people would have been relaxing on the beach, since it is nearly summer in Australia. We would have been going to the park or hiding in the air-conditioned shopping centers!

AIC: *What is your favorite Japanese food?*

The Addisons: All foods. (laughs) We like miso ramen, curry rice, and katsudon. Oh, and *Bikkuri Donki!* [ビッリドンキー] Lachlan is also a big fan of imo shochu on the rocks.



Hello Asahikawa!

Adeline&Lachlan Interview (Part 2) Continued from Page 7

AIC: *Did you guys travel often in Australia?*

The Addisons: We don't travel a lot in Australia as everything is so far away from each other. The nearest big city to Sydney is Melbourne, which is a 9 or 10-hour drive. However, we have been to most of the major cities, the tropics in northern Australia and we've been to many towns and beachside areas in our state.

AIC: *That sounds lovely. There seems to be so many great cities in Australia, but what city in Australia is good to live in in your opinion?*

Lachlan: It depends on what kind of climate you enjoy living in, but I would recommend Sunshine Coast, just north of Brisbane. It is nice and warm in summer and there are lots of beaches. It is a very laid back and comfortable area to live in, in my opinion.

AIC: *How did you two meet and when did you guys decide that he/she is the one?*

Adeline: We used to work together for a small company, almost 12 years ago. We've been married for 6 years now.

Lachlan: Although there was no funny business going on until after I left the company!

AIC: *I see! What do you do for a living back home?*

The Addisons: Adeline is a HR Manager for a higher education provider, and Lachlan is an IT director for a national law firm.

AIC: *You mentioned earlier that you have a kid. What were your reactions when you found out that you would have a boy? What is his name and who named him?*

Adeline: Our son is named Lyam, which is a fairly common name in Australia, although the spelling is a little different. We got the spelling from a character in a book that Lachlan likes.

Lachlan: I was happy we were having a baby as I'd be able to play with Lego and remote control cars again! Having said that, he's very naughty at this age.

AIC: *I hope this trip will be a good experience for Lyam, too. By the way, Christmas is coming up soon. How do Australians usually spend their Christmas? Is there a "Christmas tradition" or specific dish that you eat?*

The Addisons: We would normally spend Christmas Eve and Christmas Day with various relatives. Our tradition is to get together on Christmas Eve with all the relatives and give presents to each other. Then on Christmas Day, we'd open the presents with our immediate family. Then all the relatives get together again for lunch, which normally consists of things like cold prawns (shrimps) and pudding with money in it!

AIC: *Sounds like a relaxing Christmas. Before we close, could you give me three words that would somewhat sum up Australia?*

The Addisons: Sunny, big, and laid-back!

AIC: *Thank you for talking to us today. Hope you guys make unforgettable memories this winter in Asahikawa.*

The Addisons: You are welcome. Thanks for having us.



★ Movies ~ December ★

*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.

*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.

★ **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 Feeal Asahikawa (1-jo-dori 8-chome). Get off at “Nagayama 10 (ju)-jo 3 (san)-chome.”

Now Showing

- Omoinkoshi (Japanese)
- Sukuitai (Japanese)
- Fury (English)
- Mitacle Debikurokun no Koi to Maho (Japanese)
- Kami no Tsuki (Japanese)
- Kamisama no Iutori (Japanese)
- Interstellar (English)
- Clover (Japanese)
- Dracula Untold (English)
- The Expendables 3 (English)
- Fushigi na Misaki no Monogatari (Japanese)
- Higurashi no Ki (Japanese)

Coming Soon

- Gone Girl (English/R-15) 12/12
- Aoharaido (Japanese)12/13
- The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies (English) 12/13
- Big Hero 6 (English) 12/20
- Yokai Watch the Movie (Japanese/Animation) 12/20
- Vancouver no Asahi (Japanese) 12/20
- Kuragehime (Japanese) 12/27

★ **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 Feeal Asahikawa (1-jo-dori 8-chome). Get off at “Nippon Seishi Mae.”

Now Showing

- Interstellar (English)
- Kinkyorirenai (Japanese)
- Kami no Tsuki (Japanese)
- La belle et la bête (French)
- Kamisama no Iutori (Japanese)
- Twilight Sasarasaya (Japanese)
- Clover (Japanese)
- The Expendables 3 (English)
- Hercules (English)
- Onodera no Ototo, Onodera no Ane (Japanese)
- Fushigi na Misaki no Monogatari (Japanese)
- Higurashi no Ki (Japanese)
- Stand by me Doraemon (Japanese)

Coming Soon

- The Last -NARUTO the Movie- (Japanese/Animation) 12/6
- Gone Girl (English/R-15) 12/12
- Aoharaido (Japanese)12/13
- Aikatsu the Movie (Japanese/Animation) 12/13
- The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies (English) 12/13
- Big Hero 6 (English) 12/20
- Vancouver no Asahi (Japanese) 12/20
- Yokai Watch the Movie (Japanese/Animation) 12/20
- Kuragehime (Japanese) 12/27

Protestant Churches

6-jo Church (6-jo-dori 10-chome)
 Seventh-Day Adventist Church (27-15-22 8-jo-dori)
 Toyooka Church (6-jo-dori 25-chome)
 Seiko Church (Shunko 6-jo 1-chome)
 St. Mark's Church (2-jo Nishi 3-chome)
 St. Paul's Lutheran Church (7-jo-dori 8-chome)
 Asahikawa Church Kawabata (1-jo 10-chome)
 Asahikawa Baptist Church (8-jo Nishi 1-chome)
 Toko Baptist Church (Toko 11-jo 3-chome)
 Nazarene Church (Kawabata 1-jo 4-chome)
 Holiness Church (Toyooka 12-jo 6-chome)
 Eiko Church (Kagura 4-jo 11-chome)
 Kamui Assembly Church (Kamui 4-jo 13-chome)
 Zion Church (Toko 3-jo 7-chome)
 Mennonite Church (Suehiro 4-jo 2-chome)
 Megumi Christ Church (Toyooka 12-jo 10-chome)
 Nagayama Evangelical (Nagayama 6-jo 21-chome)
 Midorigaoka Evangelical (Nishi Kagura 2-sen 4-go)
 Christ Evangelical Church (Toyooka 12-jo 10-chome)
 Yo no Hikari (Nagayama 4-jo 21-chome)
 Shin'ai Christ Church (Akitsuki 1-jo 1-chome)
 Tojo Christ Church (Omachi 1-jo 10-chome)
 Chuwa Bible Baptist Church (Chuwa 4-jo 1-chome)

Holiday Church and Temple Listing

Catholic Churches

5-jo Church (5-jo-dori 11-chome)
 Suehiro Church (Suehiro 2-jo 3-chome)
 6-jo Church (6-jo-dori 22-chome)
 Omachi Church (Omachi 1-jo 10-chome)
 Kamui Church (Kamui 4-jo 9-chome)

Temples

Keijoji 慶誠寺 (Toyooka 5-jo 4-chome)
Kinkokuji 錦谷寺 (Omachi 1-jo 5-chome)
Daikyuji 大休寺 (5-jo-dori 5-chome)
Myohoji 妙法寺 (6-jo-dori 19-chome)
Daihoji 大宝寺 (Higashi Asahikawa, Kita 1-jo 7-chome)
Kyokuzanji 旭山寺 (Higashi Asahikawa, Kuranuma 44)



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: December 12th&26th

*Fun Fridays are held on every 2nd and 4th Friday

Time: 1:00-2:00pm & 7:00-8:00pm

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.



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

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

Tel: (0166) 25-7491 Fax: (0166) 23-4924

E-mail: cir_kokusai@city.asahikawa.hokkaido.jp

****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.****