

# 旭川 ASAHIKAWA Info

January 2014 VOL. 206

Published by AIC

Also visit us at: <http://asahikawaic.jp/en/>



## Hokkaido News Top 5



January 2014

Compiled by TAKADA Nobuhiro

### November 21

Two more unique animal viewing facilities opened up in Asahiyama Zoological Park. One is a hippopotamus exhibit that has a pool with windows that enable visitors to have a look at a swimming hippopotamus from various angles. Another is a giraffe exhibit with an upper floor that shows how giraffes eat, and a lower floor that allows a glance of their feet.

### November 22

The president of AEON Mall unveiled a detailed plan at a press conference for a new commercial complex connected to JR Asahikawa Station. AEON Mall JR Asahikawa, a tentative name of the complex, will have a supermarket and restaurants on the first floor, shops for women's clothing on the second, shops for men's and children's clothing on the third, and a cinema complex on the fourth floor. The new commercial facility is expected to create 1,000 jobs when it opens in March 2015.

### November 25

The City of Asahikawa announced that the number of visitors to the City from abroad was about 3,625,000 from April to September in 2013. Although the number of visitors has decreased by about 4.5% compared to the previous year, duration of nights spent in the City has increased by 51.2%. The reason for the increase has much to do with regular flights operation to Hokkaido from Taiwan and Thailand. The period of stay for Taiwanese doubled, and for Thai, 3.7 times.

### December 4

According to TripAdvisor, a popular travel website, Sapporo was voted the second in Asia and the seventh in the world by "Travelers' Choice 2013." It is awarded to tourist spots with a rapid increase in number of reviews and browsing from April to September. The City of Sapporo commented that its continuous effort to attract Asian tourists for years has been proved effective.

### December 9

A bookstore in Kushiro City delivered 1,000 books each to three elementary schools in Akan district in the city at the request of an elderly person in his 80's. He had visited the bookstore in mid-November to order a total of 3,000 books as a gift to children at those schools and paid six million yen for the books, asking to remain anonymous. Having heard of the story, a publisher also decided to give away twelve bookcases to the schools.



**ASAHIKAWA  
INTERNATIONAL  
COMMITTEE**

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

Asahikawa International Committee  
(SASAKI Mai, Kim LACEY, 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

**Tel:** (0166) 25-7491

**Fax:** (0166) 23-4924

**E-mail:**

[cir\\_kokusai@city.asahikawa.hokkaido.jp](mailto:cir_kokusai@city.asahikawa.hokkaido.jp)

### Inside This Issue...

<b>Hokkaido News Top 5</b> <i>By TAKADA Nobuhiro</i>	1	<b>Life in Japan</b> "Japanese Traditional Culture, Kakizome" <i>BY SAKURABA Satoshi</i>	7
<b>Upcoming Events</b>	2-3	<b>Hello Asahikawa</b> (Catrina Caira) <i>Interviewed by AIC</i>	8-9
<b>Life in Asahikawa</b> "Akemashite Omedetou Gozaimasu!" <i>By KITAMURA Tadao</i>	4	<b>Eggnog Making</b>	10
<b>Literature and Asahikawa</b> "Yasushi INOUE and his works" <i>By Kim Lacey</i>	5-6	<b>Movies</b>	11
		<b>Bulletin Board</b>	12

Special Thanks to KAWAI Tatsuo, Proofreader & Advisor

## The 2nd Asahikawa Winter Photo Contest: In a Snowy Town 雪の降る街を 第二回旭川冬の写真コンクール

Asahikawa City Planning Citizens' Committee is waiting for submissions of photo depictions of Asahikawa winter, with the theme of a song "Yuki no furu machi wo (In a Snowy Town)." Anybody can submit three photographs maximum that best capture winter of Asahikawa. For those who are interested, a detailed description of this contest was written in page 6 of the last month's Asahikawa Info. If you do not own a hardcopy from the last month, here is the URL link for its PDF version: <http://asahikawaic.jp/en/publication/info-eng/>

**Period:** Now to January 27th, 2014 (Thursday)

**Submission Procedure:** Use a form on website or print on a 2L (A5) sized photo paper.

**For Further Information Contact:** 0166-56-3476 (between 9 am to 4 pm)

**Or Visit:** <http://asahikawa-photo.info/>



## Special Exhibition of Yasushi INOUE's Modern Civilization Criticism 企画展 井上靖現代文明批判

Yasushi INOUE was a famous writer originally from Asahikawa, known for his serious historical fiction of ancient Japan and the Asian continent. His work also included semi-autobiographical novels and short fiction, which depicted Japan of the early mid 20th century in revealing perspective. This special exhibition will focus on three of his novels, in attempt to convey INOUE's thoughts on modern civilization at the time. On **January 25th** from 1:30 to 3 pm, there will be a **special lecture** on INOUE's fascinating earlier work in the lounge of INOUE Yasushi Memorial Hall. It will be open to public for free, and sign-up is available by phone.

**Date:** now to February 16th (Sunday), except on Mondays and holidays (Dec 30th-Jan 4th)

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

**Venue:** INOUE Yasushi Memorial Hall (Shunko 5-jo 7-chome)

**Admission:** General—¥200, High School Students—¥100, Children—Free

**For Further Information Contact:** 0166-51-1188



## Kyokushonagaya The 13th Jugemu New Year's Vaudeville 旭笑長屋 第13回寿芸無新春寄席

Kyokushonagaya was formed in 1986 by a group of Asahikawa citizens who share love for rakugo. They go around Hokkaido and do volunteer performances at various welfare facilities. This New Year's Vaudeville is one of the group's annual traditions that has continued for 13 years already. This time, the main theme is Jugemu, which is one of the most famous stories in rakugo with a humorous repetition of a ridiculously long name.

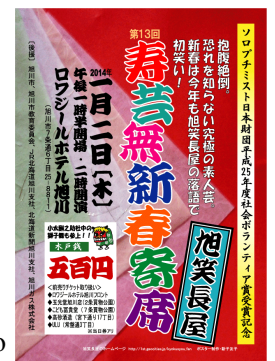
**Date:** January 2nd (Thursday)

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

**Venue:** Loisir Hotel Asahikawa (7-jo-dori 6-chome 25-8811)

**Admission:** ¥500

**Ticket Offices:** Loisir Hotel Asahikawa front desk, Children's Fukido, Gyokkodo, Takasago Brewery, ULU



## Asahikawa Ryouin Wind Crew 6th OB Concert 第6回旭川凌雲高校吹奏楽局 OB演奏会

Asahikawa Ryouin High School is throwing its 6th annual concert on the first Sunday of 2014. Japanese high school students often spend much time on extracurricular activities on top of studying after school. If you would like to support the local high school students and watch them perform with passion, here is your chance!

**Date:** January 5th (Sunday)

**Time:** Doors 4:30 pm, Show 5:00 pm

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

**Admission:** ¥500, Children under 3: Free

**For Further Information Contact:** 080-6099-6988



## Winter Cooking Class Using Rice Flour 米粉を使った冬のお料理教室

This would be a great opportunity for you and your child (elementary grade 1-6) to cook Yamanashi Prefecture's famous dish called Hoto noodles together. It is made by stewing flat noodles and vegetables in miso soup. This will surely be a good family bonding time, not to mention that the delicious Hoto noodles will warm up you and your kid.

**Date:** January 15th (Thursday)  
**Time:** 10:00 am to 12:00 pm  
**Venue:** New Asahikawa Community Center (Higashi 3-jo 7-chome)  
**Fee:** ¥300 per each child + parent (needs to be paid in advance to buy ingredients)  
**Things to Bring:** apron, handkerchief, bandana, 1 cup of rice  
**To Sign Up:** visit community center counter



## Special Exhibition for the 110th Anniversary of the Birth of Masaki YAMAGUCHI 生誕110年 山口正城展

Masaki YAMAGUCHI (1903-1959) was an abstract painter and a modern design educationalist from Asahikawa. He was deeply inspired by the theory of Bauhaus School in Germany, which combined crafts and the fine arts. YAMAGUCHI's paintings reflect such fresh and abstract impressions. Hokkaido Asahikawa Museum of Art is hosting this exhibition for 7 weeks in commemoration of YAMAGUCHI and his artistic creations.

**Date:** now to February 11th (Tuesday) except on Mondays and holidays (Dec 30th-Jan 4th)  
**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—¥500, High School Students—¥300, Seniors and Children—Free  
**For Further Information Contact:** 0166-25-2577



## Tsukemen Happy New Year Live つけめん ハッピーニューイヤーライブ

Tsukemen in Japanese refers to noodles that are served with dipping soup and toppings on the side. In this case, though, members of this classical ensemble took parts of their names ("T"airiku, "Su"guru, and "Ke"nta,) plus an English word "men" and came up with this creative group name. Their stages are known for maximizing the original sounds of instruments without using a PA equipment. For this concert, Tsukemen will mainly play the original pieces arranged by members, as well as the classics, jazz, film soundtracks, and even some famous video game theme songs.

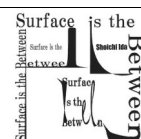
**Date:** January 17th (Friday)  
**Time:** Doors 6:00 pm, Show 6:30 pm  
**Venue:** Asahikawa Taisetsu Crystal Hall (Kagura 3-jo 7-chome)  
**Admission:** SS-Seats: ¥4,500, S-Seats: ¥3,500, A-Seats: ¥2,500  
**Ticket Offices:** Ticket Pia (P-code: 209-337), Lawson Ticket (L-code: 16395), Taisetsu Crystal Hall Ticket Office, Gyokkodo Asahikawa, Doshin Play Guide  
**For Further Information Contact:** 011-533-7711 Or Visit: <http://adashi.jp/>



## Exhibition of Shoichi IDA's Works: "Between" - The Between-World 井田照一作品展「間」-あいだの世界

What does the word, "between," really mean; a gap between two things, or is it more correct to see it as a relationship formed by two matters? Shoichi IDA's paper-works and sculptures speculate the above questions and may even create the "between-world" for you. If you haven't heard of him before, this is a good place to start. IDA was one of the best known paper artists and printmakers in Japan whose work is held in collections around the world, including the Museum of Modern Art in New York and the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.

**Date:** Now to April 6th (Sunday) except on Mondays and holidays (Dec 30th-Jan 4th)  
**Time:** 9:30 am to 5:00 pm (admission is until 4:30 pm)  
**Venue:** Hokkaido Asahikawa Museum of Art (inside Tokiwa Park) the 2nd exhibition room  
**Admission:** General—¥170, High School Students—¥100, Seniors and Children—Free



—あいだの世界—  
新収蔵 井田照一作品展

2013.11.16 Sat ▶ 2014.4.6 Sun  
 北海道立旭川美術館 第2展示室  
 観覧：一般100円 高校生100円  
 (1) 旭川市立美術館  
 (2) 旭川市立美術館  
 (3) 旭川市立美術館  
 (4) 旭川市立美術館  
 (5) 旭川市立美術館  
 (6) 旭川市立美術館  
 (7) 旭川市立美術館  
 (8) 旭川市立美術館  
 (9) 旭川市立美術館  
 (10) 旭川市立美術館  
 (11) 旭川市立美術館  
 (12) 旭川市立美術館  
 (13) 旭川市立美術館  
 (14) 旭川市立美術館  
 (15) 旭川市立美術館  
 (16) 旭川市立美術館  
 (17) 旭川市立美術館  
 (18) 旭川市立美術館  
 (19) 旭川市立美術館  
 (20) 旭川市立美術館  
 (21) 旭川市立美術館  
 (22) 旭川市立美術館  
 (23) 旭川市立美術館  
 (24) 旭川市立美術館  
 (25) 旭川市立美術館  
 (26) 旭川市立美術館  
 (27) 旭川市立美術館  
 (28) 旭川市立美術館  
 (29) 旭川市立美術館  
 (30) 旭川市立美術館  
 (31) 旭川市立美術館  
 (32) 旭川市立美術館  
 (33) 旭川市立美術館  
 (34) 旭川市立美術館  
 (35) 旭川市立美術館  
 (36) 旭川市立美術館  
 (37) 旭川市立美術館  
 (38) 旭川市立美術館  
 (39) 旭川市立美術館  
 (40) 旭川市立美術館  
 (41) 旭川市立美術館  
 (42) 旭川市立美術館  
 (43) 旭川市立美術館  
 (44) 旭川市立美術館  
 (45) 旭川市立美術館  
 (46) 旭川市立美術館  
 (47) 旭川市立美術館  
 (48) 旭川市立美術館  
 (49) 旭川市立美術館  
 (50) 旭川市立美術館  
 (51) 旭川市立美術館  
 (52) 旭川市立美術館  
 (53) 旭川市立美術館  
 (54) 旭川市立美術館  
 (55) 旭川市立美術館  
 (56) 旭川市立美術館  
 (57) 旭川市立美術館  
 (58) 旭川市立美術館  
 (59) 旭川市立美術館  
 (60) 旭川市立美術館  
 (61) 旭川市立美術館  
 (62) 旭川市立美術館  
 (63) 旭川市立美術館  
 (64) 旭川市立美術館  
 (65) 旭川市立美術館  
 (66) 旭川市立美術館  
 (67) 旭川市立美術館  
 (68) 旭川市立美術館  
 (69) 旭川市立美術館  
 (70) 旭川市立美術館  
 (71) 旭川市立美術館  
 (72) 旭川市立美術館  
 (73) 旭川市立美術館  
 (74) 旭川市立美術館  
 (75) 旭川市立美術館  
 (76) 旭川市立美術館  
 (77) 旭川市立美術館  
 (78) 旭川市立美術館  
 (79) 旭川市立美術館  
 (80) 旭川市立美術館  
 (81) 旭川市立美術館  
 (82) 旭川市立美術館  
 (83) 旭川市立美術館  
 (84) 旭川市立美術館  
 (85) 旭川市立美術館  
 (86) 旭川市立美術館  
 (87) 旭川市立美術館  
 (88) 旭川市立美術館  
 (89) 旭川市立美術館  
 (90) 旭川市立美術館  
 (91) 旭川市立美術館  
 (92) 旭川市立美術館  
 (93) 旭川市立美術館  
 (94) 旭川市立美術館  
 (95) 旭川市立美術館  
 (96) 旭川市立美術館  
 (97) 旭川市立美術館  
 (98) 旭川市立美術館  
 (99) 旭川市立美術館  
 (100) 旭川市立美術館

EVENTS IN ASAHIKAWA FOR JANUARY

# Life in Asahikawa

**“Akemashite Omedetou Gozaimasu!”**

**By KITAMURA Tadao**

Above is the greeting words used to celebrate coming of the New Year, equivalent to an English phrase, “Happy New Year!” A verb “*mederu*” is “to love” and “*medetou*” means “would like to appreciate.” Therefore, a polite form, “*o-medetou*” would be, “let us love/appreciate something.” A word-for-word translation would be something like this: The New Year has dawned, and let us rejoice in this solemn thing.

January is the first month of a year, which means that a new year starts with it. In Japanese word, it is also called *O-Shogatsu* (お正月,) meaning “the most proper month.” Japanese people have been keeping a special affection on the New Year, or “the most proper month” since long ago. Everyone is surrounded by happy feeling when a New Year arrives, regardless of gender or age. It may not be considered rational by the rest of the world, but a New Year signifies renewal and removal of all bad things of the previous year in Japan.

A majority of Japanese people today still appreciate many traditional customs handed down from their ancestors on New Year’s Day. You will often see a special decoration using pine, bamboo, straw and white papers hanging in front of entrances of buildings, or porches of houses. These may remind you that the people here are equally nature-loving as the ancient time.

Most events of New Year’s Day seem to be stemming from *Shinto* originally. *Shinto* in contemporary Japanese society, I presume, is no longer a religion in a strict definition, but is something that many people rely on. Perhaps *Shinto* has transformed into a Japanese tradition, which brings peace of mind and relief to many.



New Year begins when “*Joya-no-kane* (the bell of New Year’s Eve)” tolls 108 times at midnight on December 31, normally in Buddhist temples. A big crowd gathers in Shinto shrines (or Buddhist temples) in twos and threes to make the first prayer of the year (*Hatsumode*) before gods. Actually most do not know to which god they are praying.



Everything in January looks fresh before the eyes of Japanese people. We like to put a prefix “*hatsu*” to words, giving them a quality of the first thing of the year. The sunrise on New Year’s Day is called *hatsuhinode*, and the first dream of the New Year Day’s night, *hatsuyume*. Any “*hatsu-thing*” carries a special significance in the Japanese mind.

# Literature and Asahikawa



## Yasushi INOUE and His Works By Kim Lacey

*Asahikawa City has quite a few famous writers of its own to boast about: Ayako MIURA and Yasushi INOUE, to name a few. I am sure that there are many others that I am not aware of yet. With the special exhibition currently on view, I decided to write a little about INOUE and his work for this month's issue.*

Yasushi INOUE was born in Asahikawa in 1907 but soon moved to his mother's hometown, Shizuoka. He later visited Asahikawa four times in his life, the last of which was in 1990, a year prior to his death. The visit was in preparation for the unveiling of a monument dedicated to his literature as part of the celebration of Asahikawa City's 100th anniversary. INOUE was working on a piece about his memories of the City but in 1991 he passed away, leaving the work unfinished. Sadly, he was unable to see the monument's opening in 1993.

INOUE studied philosophy and literature at Kyoto Imperial University, and occasionally submitted his writings to a number of contests and won prizes for several. In 1935, as a husband and a new father, he became a reporter for the Mainichi newspaper in Osaka. One might say that the literary career of INOUE began fairly late, as he was already in his early forties when one of the two published short novels, *Togyu* (The Bullfight,) won him the prestigious Akutagawa Prize in 1949. He then resigned from the newspaper to focus on writing in 1951. By his death in 1991, INOUE had won major awards and become a bestselling author in multiple genres in Japan.

It would not be an exaggeration to call INOUE

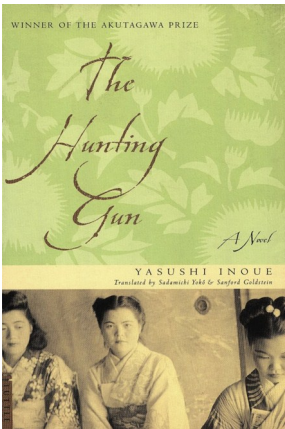
a winner of every major Japanese literary prize. Some of the awards he won during his literary journey include the 1958 Ministry of Education Award for the Arts for *Tempyo no iraka* (The Roof Tile of Tempyo), the 1959 Japan Art Academy Prize for *Hyoheki* (The Ice Wall), the 1960 Mainichi Art Award for both of his works, *Tonko* and *Roran*, the 1964 Yomiuri Prize for Literature for *Futo* (Wind and Waves), and the 1969 Japan Literary Prize for *Oroshiyakoku suimutan* (Dream of Russia.) In 1976, INOUE was awarded with the Order of Culture by the Emperor of Japan, the award that many consider to be extremely high honor granted for artistic merit in Japan.

As one of Japan's major and critically acclaimed literary figures, INOUE's work includes some fifty published novels and close to two hundred short stories. Although he is often described as a historical novelist, his work actually falls into many categories. The translated historical fiction includes *Tun-Huang*, *The Roof Tile of Tempyo*, *The Blue Wolf: A Novel of the Life of Chinggis Khan*, *Wind and Waves* and *Loulan*. The second category can be described as contemporary love stories as seen in *The Hunting Gun*. Here, INOUE's remarkably complex and sympathetic characters are showcased. The third category of

**(Article Continued on Next Page)**

# Literature and Asahikawa

his novels examines the political and social aspects of post-war Japanese society, often reporters being protagonists. Representative works include *Black Tide*, *The Bullfight*, and *The Ice Wall*. Lastly, there are writings with personal tones; stories of his own childhood in *The Clouds Dyed Red* and a moving nonfictional account of his mother's descent into dementia, *Chronicles of My Mother*. Of course there are works that contain more than one of the themes mentioned above, *A Voice in the Night*, for example.

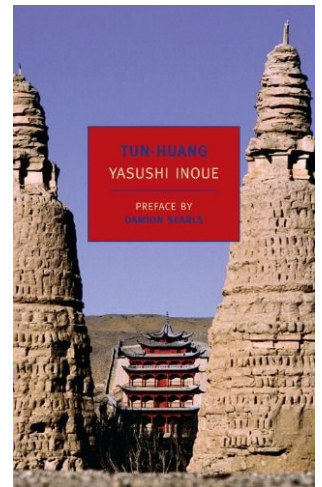


For those who might be interested in trying some of his works, I would recommend that you start with *The Hunting Gun*. It is relatively easier to find an English translation (even the Kindle edition is available at Amazon) and is absolutely stunning to read. Each

## Yasushi INOUE (井上靖) and His Works Part 2

sentence is a gem, and you will find yourself taken into a psychological world of hidden emotions and insight. You will experience passion, betrayal and death through this poetic prose.

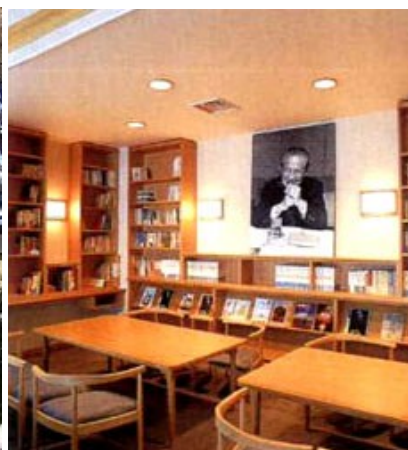
Another book that I would love you to check out is *Tun-Huang*, especially if you're into historic novels. INOUE does a brilliant job filling in the blanks from his imagination, to which history offered no explanations. The book not only covers history of Western China during the 11th century with new rising powers, but also integrates a curious adventure of a scholar as the main hero.



Happy reading!

### <References>

1. *J'Lit Books from Japan*. N.p.. Web. 2 Dec 2013. <<http://www.booksfromjapan.jp/authors/item/382-yasushi-inoue>>.
2. 井上靖について. N.p.. Web. 4 Dec 2013. <<http://www.horagai.com/www/who/020inou1.htm>>.
3. *Books and Writers*. N.p.. Web. 4 Dec 2013. <<http://www.kirjasto.sci.fi/inoue.htm>>.
4. 旭川市井上靖記念館. N.p.. Web. 4 Dec 2013. <[http://www.fukido.co.jp/inoue/idx\\_ino.html](http://www.fukido.co.jp/inoue/idx_ino.html)>



INOUE Yasushi Memorial Hall in Asahikawa was built in commemoration of him and opened in July, 1993. On top of the special exhibition going on now to February 16th, 2014, there are photographs, manuscripts, books, and personal items of INOUE in display that provide more opportunities to get to know his eighty-three years of life.

# Life in Japan

## Japanese Traditional Culture, *Kakizome* By SAKURABA Satoshi

There are many unique traditions in Japan, especially in January. Celebrating the new year in Japan also means paying special attention to the first time something is done in the new year. For example, Hatsumode (初詣) is paying a visit to a shrine (or a temple) and praying for one's happiness on New Year's Day. I think the most famous shrine in Asahikawa is Gokoku Shrine (護国神社.) I make it a practice to go there and pray for my family's health and happiness on January 1. Other Japanese traditions in January include New Year's dishes (おせち料理 : Osechi-ryori.) New Year's dishes involve foods that can hold out for a long time in order to avoid bothersome cooking during the first three days of January.

Moreover, there is a tradition called Kakizome (書初め.) Kakizome can be translated as the first calligraphy of the year. Recently, the number of people who enjoy Kakizome has been getting smaller and smaller. I feel faintly sorry about that. But Kakizome remains as one of the main winter holiday assignments for elementary school students in Japan. Kakizome usually involves writing New Year's resolutions in Kanji or Hiragana. Generally, it is done on January 2<sup>nd</sup>, but I think you can enjoy Kakizome whenever you decide your New Year's resolution.

As I mentioned earlier, Kakizome is the first calligraphy of the year. Therefore, tools for writing is the same as usual calligraphy. An ink brush (毛筆 : mohitsu,) a mat to place under a sheet (下敷き : shitajiki,) a paperweight (文鎮 : bunchin,) an ink stone (硯 : suzuri,) liquid or solid ink (墨 : sumi) and Japanese writing papers (半紙 : hanshi) are needed to enjoy Kakizome. Nowadays, you can get these items at a 100-yen store and enjoy Kakizome more easily. As for the ink, I recommend liquid ink because solid ink needs to be scratched on the ink stone for a few minutes.



Now, what letters would you want to write for Kakizome? The simplest Kanji character is “一” (いち : ichi,) but you will understand the difficulty of writing this letter if you have learned calligraphy. As a matter of fact, simple letters are harder to pull into shape because you must express your mind in these limited few strokes. Some of the letters I recommend you to write for Kakizome are “永” (longevity,) “和” (group-oriented attitude) and so on. If you can handle an ink brush well, I would suggest Kanji characters, such as “道” (road,) “志” (mind,) and “夢” (dream.) I hope you enjoy Kakizome and have a good year!



# Hello Asahikawa!

**Name: Catrina Caira**  
**Hometown: Sherkston, Canada**  
**Interviewed: December 11th, 2013 by AIC**

**AIC:** *Where are you from? What is your hometown like?*

**Catrina:** I am from Canada, my home is about a ten minute drive from Niagara Falls. I am from a very small town called Sherkston. Most of our town services are provided by the towns on either side of us, Port Colborne and Fort Erie. Fort Erie houses one of the bridges to the U.S., so we are always crossing the border.

**AIC:** *That is pretty cool. Could you tell us a little about yourself?*

**Catrina:** I am an ALT at Higashikawa Senior High School. My main hobby is sewing, but I also enjoy archery, photography, hiking, biking and martial arts. Well, a brief introduction of my family... My dad was born in Scotland but my grandparents were Italian on that side. So I grew up with a strong Italian influence. My mom is American and her parents are Croatian and German/Irish. My mom is a kindergarten teacher in Canada. I have one younger sister, Illa, who is a zookeeper. She works mainly with reptiles, though she also has a falconry license and a master dog training license. She can train dogs for the police, for instance.

**AIC:** *Wow, archery? Sounds fun, and your sister's job is really interesting. I can't imagine being near reptiles, let alone working with them. So, you've been in Japan for a while now. Have you found anything interesting or bizarre in Japan?*

**Catrina:** The sun rises way too early here. My first day in Japan, I was really jet lagged and did not realize this. I didn't close the curtains in the hotel room and was not happy when the sun woke me up at 4 am. That would never happen in Canada. I also have trouble with the garbage system here because it is very different from how it was back home. Lastly, I sometimes find the way addresses are given here confusing, so I often have to use my smartphone to figure out where I'm going.

**AIC:** *Well, the sun rises pretty late lately since winter is here. But I remember when I first moved into my apartment, it took me over an hour to go through the whole explanations of Japanese recycling system. I still get confused and refer to the "garbage calendar" often. So, how is it being an ALT in Japan? Any ups and downs?*

**Catrina:** Hmm, let's see. I like how I get to meet lots of people, work with students, see Japan, experience Japanese culture and share my own culture with the people around me. Some of the challenges I face are due to the fact that my Japanese is not that good. It can be quite difficult at times communicating with coworkers and doing everyday tasks around town.



# Hello Asahikawa!

## Catrina Caira Interview (Part Two) Continued from Page 6

**AIC:** *How and when did you become interested in Japan?*

**Catrina:** Well, it's kind of funny but when I was little I loved an American cartoon called, "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles." My love of this show led me to a karate club when I was in grade 3, because I was thinking, "Ninjas are from Japan, and so is karate. They must be the same!" Well, little did I know how wrong I was. I think that was where I learned a lot about Japan and got my first introduction to its history, culture and language. I later tried other martial arts, started watching Japanese movies and anime, and such. I have been a staff member at Anime North, Canada's largest anime convention, third largest in North America, for about 10 years. I run workshops there, bring in people to teach sewing, martial arts, traditional dance, pop dance, calligraphy, origami, and anything else that has to do with anime/Japan. I also work with the panels department there.

**AIC:** *Love for Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles brought you this far, huh? (laugh) Well, here you are in Hokkaido. I am curious about your impression of Asahikawa so far.*

**Catrina:** I love having a big city close enough to go on weekends. Back home I would go into Toronto to get stuff that I could not get around town, but it was about two hours; here is much better. I enjoy walking around Asahikawa, especially across the bridges and looking at the rivers.

**AIC:** *I am glad to hear that. Is there anything that you are looking forward to doing during your stay in Japan?*

**Catrina:** I want to try new things and learn more about Japanese culture. I want to learn Japanese and make lots of friends. Oh, and since I've only done western style archery, I would love to try Japanese archery.

**AIC:** *Christmas and the New Year is coming up soon. Do you have any special plan? Are you going back to Canada to see your family?*

**Catrina:** No, I won't be going back to Canada but I will be traveling in Hiroshima and Miyajima over the holidays.

**AIC:** *Alright. So, before we close, please tell us your future plan.*

**Catrina:** I'd like to learn Japanese and hope to one day be a university professor. So, I will eventually be going back for my doctorate.

**AIC:** *Well, Catrina, I appreciate you taking the time to talk to us today. Have fun in Hiroshima and Miyajima!*

**Catrina:** You're welcome. It was my pleasure.



Catrina in one of the costumes that she made.

# Eggnog Making



On December 21st, American Corner Asahikawa at Asahikawa International Center hosted a special Christmas event with an American consul from Sapporo, Carlton L. Benson, as a special guest. About forty Asahikawa residents came to see how eggnog, the traditional American drink of the Christmas season, is made. Kim Lacey, the Coordinator for International Relations for Asahikawa City, led the hot and cold eggnog making demonstrations with Mr. Benson.

The American Corners Program provides book collections, CDs, DVDs, and computers to improve mutual understanding between the peoples of the United States and Japan. Many events, such as this month's eggnog session, are also hosted to introduce various aspects of American culture in cooperation with resident diplomats from the American government.



A wide range of age groups participated in the event, from a little kid to elderly persons in their 70s. Most people who came to the eggnog event responded that it was their first time having eggnog. The creamy and sweet flavor seemed to have appealed to many. Following the eggnog making session, Consul Benson gave a small talk about what Christmas is like back in his home state, Arizona.

## ★ *Movies ~ January* ★

\*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

- 47RONIN (English)
- Rikyu ni Tazuneyo (Japanese)
- Lupin the Third VS Detective Conan (Japanese/Animation)
- Kamen Rider Gaimu & Wizard the Movie (Japanese)
- Gravity (English)
- Kanojo ha Uso wo Aishisugiteru (Japanese)
- Walking with Dinosaurs (English)
- Eien no Zero (Japanese)
- Planes (English/Animation)
- Kaguyahime no Monogatari (Japanese/Animation)
- Kiyosu Kaigi (Japanese)
- SPEC ~Close~ Zen no Hen (Japanese)
- SPEC ~Close~ Ko no Hen (Japanese)
- Red 2 (English)

### Coming Soon

- Escape Plan (English) 1/10
- Trick Last Stage (Japanese) 1/11
- Judge! (Japanese) 1/11
- Kuroshitsuji (Japanese) 1/18
- Ender's Game (English) 1/18
- Chisai Ouchi (Japanese) 1/25

★ **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

- Eien no Zero (Japanese)
- Planes (English/Animation)
- Walking with Dinosaurs (English)
- Kamen Rider Gaimu & Wizard the Movie (Japanese)
- Bushi no Kondate (Japanese)
- Kanojo ha Uso wo Aishisugiteru (Japanese)
- Gravity (English)
- Rikyu ni Tazuneyo (Japanese)
- Lupin the Third VS Detective Conan (Japanese/Animation)
- 47RONIN (English)
- Red 2 (English)
- Kiyosu Kaigi (Japanese)
- Kaguyahime no Monogatari (Japanese/Animation)
- SPEC ~Close~ Zen no Hen (Japanese)
- Hunter×Hunter Lasu Mission(Japanese Animation)
- Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs 2 (English/Animation)

### Coming Soon

- Escape Plan(English) 1/10
- Trick Last Stage (Japanese) 1/11
- Badboys J (Japanese) 1/11
- Judge!(Japanese) 1/11
- Kuroshitsuji(Japanese) 1/18
- Ender's Game(English) 1/18
- Genomehazard(Japanese/Korean) 1/24
- Chisai Ouchi (Japanese) 1/25
- The Wolf of Wall Street (English) 1/31

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



## AIC '14 Winter Fun

Asahikawa International Committee is hosting a day filled with fun winter activities, like skating and mochi (Japanese rice cake) making. If you are looking for an opportunity to get out of your house, skate (or fall!) and meet/talk to people from Asahikawa and around the world, please come join us. Regardless of nationality or age, everyone is welcome to participate.

**Dates:** January 9th (Thursday)

**Time:** 10:00-2:00pm (we will be meeting at Asahikawa International Center at 9:45 am and walk to the Taisetsu Arena together.)

**Charge:** Free



## Become an AIC Volunteer

Are you currently living in Asahikawa and interested in being a part of Asahikawa's international community? If so, apply to become an AIC Volunteer! We have many different opportunities available that can fit any schedule. Japanese ability is helpful, but not required. Come help share Asahikawa with the world as an AIC volunteer!

**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 them 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, International Affairs Division  
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.\*\***