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For further information or to register for events, contact:

Asahikawa International Committee (AIC)
(SUGANO Ayumi, SAITO Emmy, or GONZALEZ Gabriel)

Location:

International/City Affairs Division,
Tourism, Sports and International/City
Affairs Dept.

Address:

Asahikawa International Center Feeeal
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Hokkaido News Top 5

November - December 2022, compiled by the AIC

Paleolithic Obsidian Implements Designated National Treasures, (11/19)

The national cultural council submitted a report to the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology requesting for late paleolithic obsidian tools from the Shirataki archaeological site in Engaru to be officially designated as national treasures in the spring. This is a first for such artifacts, a collection of over 1,965 items, to become the oldest of Japan's national treasures. The collection includes various microliths, spearheads, and flake tools.

Information System for Transportation Services to be Updated, (11/22)

The Hokkaido Transportation Bureau will place all information concerning the suspension of transportation services due to heavy snowfall onto its website "Hokkaido, Safety Information for Travel." After last year's record snowfall that shut down many services, they have enhanced the site's functions to allow business operators to directly input information in real time. The site will display information for the majority of JR, flight and bus services within Hokkaido.

Rankoshi's Yumepirika Wins Two Highest Awards in Competition, (12/2)

In the 16th annual "You Choose Japan's Best Rice!" Contest held in Yamagata Prefecture, two Rankoshi farmers won the top two highest awards in the major category for the first time. The category had 220 famous regional rice brands with the largest farming areas in the nation come from all over to compete in one of Japan's most famous rice competitions. The grains were judged based on taste, scent and stickiness. Both competitors were happy to represent their town with their victory.

Self-Driving Bus Services Begin in Kamishibetsu, (12/2)

Regular operations of a self-driving bus in Kamishibetsu began on 12/1, with the Hokkaido Transportation Bureau stating that this is the first public service of this kind in the prefecture. As the population decreases and becomes older, the town aims to counterbalance the lack of drivers and maintain public transportation for its citizens. Current laws do not allow completed automated driving, so an operator on board acts as service support, using a game controller-like device to maneuver the vehicle.

Skiers Rejoice at Reopening of Vasaloppet Japan, (12/8)

Skiers are elated to see that the cross-country skiing and walk-skiing event known as Vasaloppet Japan will be held 3/11-12. For the first time, all parts of the event will be grouped in the Kitasaito District to make it easy to access for all participants and spectators. The number of skiers has dwindled in recent years to one-fifth of the amount seen at its peak, so they hope the ease of access will also help increase interest. The mayor of Asahikawa has stated he wishes to make this event as safe and appealing as possible, in regards to the coronavirus pandemic.

Read the latest issue of Asahikawa Info and get to know the AIC on our website:

<http://asahikawaaic.jp/en/>

Best in Show Exhibition for Youth Essay Contest

青少年エッセーコンクール 優秀作品展

Come and read the works of our very own Asahikawa youth that won the Yasushi Inoue Memorial Hall's essay competition! All works are on the theme of "beauty".

Date: Until 1/22 (Sunday)

Time: 9:00-17:00 (Entry ends at 16:30)

Place: Yasushi Inoue Memorial Hall (Asahikawa, Shunko 5-jo 7-chome)

Admission: General ¥300(*¥240), High school student ¥150(*¥120), Middle school student and under FREE (*Groups of 20+)

For more information, contact: 0166-51-1188 (Yasushi Inoue Memorial Hall)



Yasushi Inoue: People and Literature XIII, Judo

井上靖 人と文学 十三 柔道

This exhibition will focus on the influence of judo in the life and work of Yasushi Inoue, famed Asahikawa author, particularly within his novel 'Kita no Umi'.

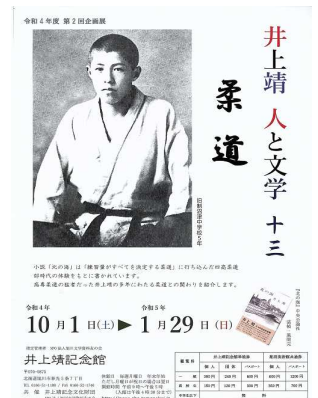
Date: Until 1/29 (Sunday)

Time: 9:00-17:00 (Entry ends at 16:30), Closed: Mondays (The following day if Monday is a holiday) & New Year's

Place: Yasushi Inoue Memorial Hall (Asahikawa, Shunko 5-jo 7-chome)

Admission: General ¥300(*¥240), High school students ¥150 (*¥120), Middle school students and under FREE (*Groups of 10+)

For more information, contact: 0166-51-1188 (Yasushi Inoue Memorial Hall)



Asahikawa Board of Education Painting Collection Exhibition

旭川市教育委員会 所蔵絵画作品展

The Asahikawa Board of Education will set up an exhibition displaying a portion of the paintings they have in their collection.

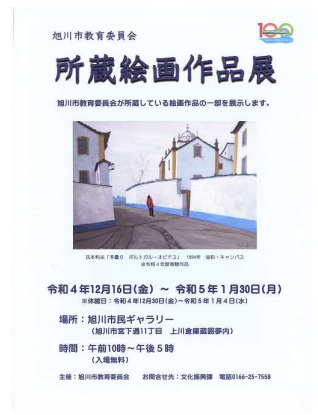
Date: Until 1/30 (Monday)

Time: 10:00-17:00, Closed: 12/31 (Friday) - 1/4 (Wednesday)

Place: Asahikawa Civic Gallery (Asahikawa, Miyashita-dori 11-chome, inside Kamikawa Soko Kuraimu)

Admission: FREE

For more information, contact: 0166-25-7558 (Culture Promotion Division)



Uaynukor kotan a=kar: Ainu language and history of the National Ainu Museum and Park

ウアイヌコロ コタン アカラ 民族共生象徴空間(ウポポイ)のことばと歴史

Discover the history behind the National Ainu Museum and the lake upon which it is set, alongside exhibition panels fully translated into the Ainu language.

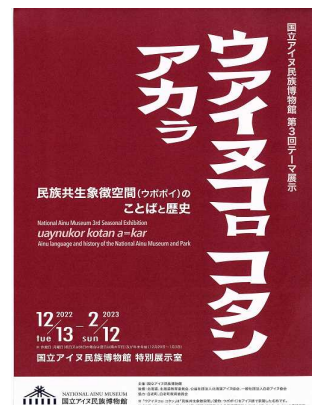
Date: Until 2/12 (Sunday)

Time: 9:00-17:00, Closed: Mondays (The following day if Monday is a holiday), 12/29 (Thursday) - 1/3 (Tuesday)

Place: National Ainu Museum (Shiraoi, Wakakusu-cho 2-chome)

Admission: Adult ¥1,200(*¥960), High school student ¥600(*¥480), Middle school students and under FREE (*Groups of 20+)

For more information, contact: <https://nam.go.jp/>



Art and Craft from the 1920's: Europe, Japan, Asahikawa

モダンの芸術 100年前のヨーロッパ、日本、旭川

Dive into the world of art and craft from 100 years ago, when we were between World Wars and art flourished in traditional and new forms.

Date: Until 3/12 (Sunday)

Time: 9:30-17:00 (Entry ends at 16:30), Closed: Mondays (except 1/9), 12/29-1/3 for New Year's

Place: Hokkaido Asahikawa Museum of Art (Asahikawa, inside Tokiwa Park)

Admission: General ¥800(*¥600), University and high school students ¥500(*¥400),

Middle school and elementary students ¥300(*¥200) (*Groups of 10+)

For more information, contact: 0166-25-2577 (Hokkaido Asahikawa Museum of Art)



Ryunosuke Akutagawa in Asahikawa, Mini-Exhibit

ミニ展示「旭川の芥川龍之介」

The world-famous Japanese writer made many travels in his lifetime throughout Japan, including Asahikawa. Learn more about his time here, just two months before his death.

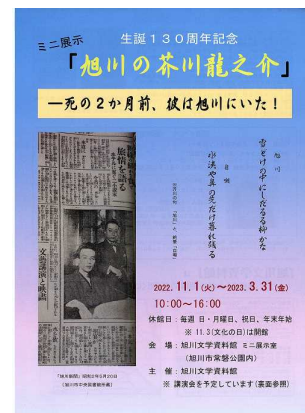
Date: Until 3/31 (Friday)

Time: 10:00-16:00, Closed: Sundays, Mondays, Holidays & New Year's

Place: Asahikawa Literary Museum (Asahikawa, inside Tokiwa Park)

Admission: FREE

For more information, contact: 0166-22-3334 (Asahikawa Literary Museum)



Words for Living with Cancer

がんと生きる言葉

This online talk will be led by Yohei Ohashi, a doctor diagnosed with a rare cancer, talking about his experiences and thoughts during his treatment and path to recovery.

Date: 1/14 (Saturday)

Time: 14:00-16:00

Place: Online event (Japanese)

Admission: FREE (Reserve a spot by 1/6 (Friday) by completing Google form with URL: <https://forms.gle/fhYTmCDJxCXeXHvNA>)

For more information, contact: 0166-69-3550 (Asahikawa Medical University Hospital, Rehabilitation Department)



Memorial Reading of Asunaro Monogatari

あすなろ忌「あすなろ物語」朗読会

Come and listen to a memorial reading of 'Asunaro Monogatari', performed in memory of its author, Yasushi Inoue.

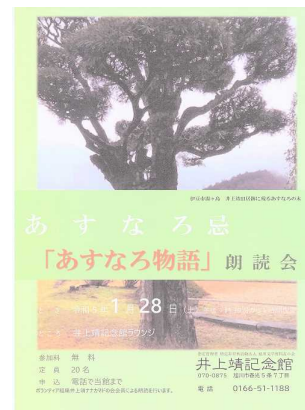
Date: 1/28 (Saturday)

Time: 13:30~ (Around one hour)

Place: Yasushi Inoue Memorial Hall (Asahikawa, Shunko 5-jo 7-chome)

Admission: FREE (Call to apply)

For more information, contact: 0166-51-1188 (Yasushi Inoue Memorial Hall)



Life in Asahikawa

AKEMASHITE OMEDETOU GOZAIMASU

明けましておめでとうございます。

By KITAMURA Tadao

"New Year has dawned. And it is auspicious indeed!" is the translation for the title of this article in Japanese. Put in a more natural English phrasing, you might say "Happy New Year".

We hope this new year of 2023 shall be full of goodness, with no war or conflict in the world. We sincerely pray for the end of this pandemic and that there be no natural disaster, no more prejudice, no more economic instability.

We the Japanese consider the New Year a renewal of everything that came before: bad things are cancelled and good things become improved. So the New Year is refreshing and soothing, and everyone feels happy.

"On the first day of the year, a rite tells that we are to rejoice the happiness of everlasting world, and place pine and bamboo in front of every doorway. We must celebrate today, for it is truly joyful!"

In my childhood, children used to have fun singing this song. However times are changing and many of our New Year's customs are disappearing; it is rare to see pine and bamboo decorations in every house's doorway nowadays. There were also special games done mainly only during New Year's: battledore and shuttlecock, top-spinning, card-snatching, and so on. One that I particularly enjoy is *hyakunin-issu*, or "One hundred poets, one piece each", a card game mainly for grown-ups.

For the good of yours,

Coming out to a field on an early spring day.

Picking some young herbs

My garment wetting with dew.

(Emperor Koko (C.E. 830-887) from the *Kokin-Shu Anthology*)

Each of one hundred selected short verses (*waka*) are put on two kinds of cards: one for chanting, the other for snatching on which only the second half of the verse is written. Cards on which only lower part of a verse is written are scattered in front of game-competitors. A chanter chants one of the one hundred verses. A player snatches the card with only the second half of the same verse written on it as first as he or she recognize which verse is chanted. Players compete in the game for their agility and also knowledge on the *waka* anthology. What an elegant game it is!



Asahikawa Info

AIC: Please tell us about yourself and where you are from.

Haruka: My name is Haruka Yoshida. I am a Canadian, Quebecoise (from the province of Quebec). and a Montrealer (from the city of Montreal) who was raised by Japanese parents. Actually, I was born in Japan but brought to Canada when I was three years old. Because the official languages of Quebec are French and English, I am trilingual: at home, I speak Japanese with my family; at school and at work, I speak French and English; and with friends, I usually speak a mixture of French and English we call "Frenghish". I studied in French until I was sixteen years old, and then I switched to studying in English for university.

AIC: How did you first get interested in Japan?

Haruka: Japan has always been a huge part of my life because my roots are here. Being raised as Japanese in a Canadian territory, I always



Name: Haruka Yoshida

Home Country: Canada

Interviewed: 2022/12/14

If you live in Asahikawa, or are just passing through and would like to be interviewed for "Hello, Asahikawa!", email us at:

cir_kokusai@city.asahikawa.hokkaido.jp

Hello, Asahikawa!

questioned who I was. When I was a teenager, I had a multiple identity crisis. I couldn't identify myself as a purely Japanese person raised in Japan nor as a Canadian born and raised by Canadian parents. I wanted to know about the country where I was from and what it means to be Japanese. That's the main reason that brought me to my "home country - *furusato*" today.

AIC: Is this your first time in Japan? How long have you been in Japan?

Haruka: As I mentioned before, this is not my first time in Japan. I was born here, and I have traveled here several times to see my grandparents in the past.

AIC: What brings you to Asahikawa in particular?

Haruka: Actually, when I applied for my current job, I requested to be placed in Kyushu or Shikoku because I don't like winter. However, the placement I got was Asahikawa, one of the coldest cities in Japan... I guess I was meant to be in Asahikawa!

AIC: What kind of work do you do?

Haruka: I work currently as an assistant language teacher in high school. I teach English and organize English-related activities for students.

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

Haruka: A lot of things make me happy, and I am always searching for new adventures and challenges. If I have to choose, my top three hobbies would be hiking, baking, and photography. In my free time, I often go for a walk with my camera or smartphone to capture the uniqueness of Asahikawa.

AIC: Do you have any favorite Japanese foods?

Haruka: I love all kinds of food, so it is very hard to

Asahikawa Info

choose one. Every time a student asks me this question, I answer: *Ohagi (tsubu-an)*, of course! Some other dishes I like are: *katsudon*, *nimono*, and all kinds of *teishoku*.

AIC: Any places you would recommend to others (restaurants, sight-seeing, etc.)?

Haruka: During the last four months, I have explored Asahikawa deeply, and the following are my favorite places: the Arashiyama Observation Deck (I biked here with my *mama-chari* and climbed the mountain by foot because I did not have a car... But it was worth it. The view is exceptional!) and Taiyaki Soba Sumire (I fell in love with this place for its quality of soba, the perfect taiyaki that they grill in front of you, and the kindness of the owner. I discovered this place randomly, and I am glad because they make me feel at home).

AIC: What have been your impressions of Asahikawa so far and how does it compare to your hometown?

Haruka: From my point of view, Asahikawa is great! From the moment I moved here, I fell in love with the city. It has a very nice balance of city life and nature, and people are very caring as well. My hometown, Montreal, is a bigger city with people from everywhere in the world, so I would say that Asahikawa is much calmer. The temperature and the climate are similar, but I find that the snow is lighter here. Both Asahikawa and Montreal have traces of indigenous culture, so that is something I find extremely interesting.

AIC: Do you mind sharing any frustrations or challenges you have encountered thus far?

Haruka: As an ALT who works with students, I find that the young Japanese population are very reserved and do not speak much. I feel like most of them are afraid to make mistakes. These aspects are extremely challenging since if students are not willing to communicate with me, I cannot help with their English pronunciation or speaking skills. One of my goals as a teacher is to expand the young Japanese generation's mindset and share new perspectives with them. Something that I am shocked about is that many Japanese people tend to not say what they think. Thus, it can be very challenging to make trusting ties like friendship with them. Most interactions seem to be superficial but professional.

AIC: do you have any goals or things you are looking forward to doing here?

Haruka: One thing I would like to achieve here is to become a real HIKER. I would like to climb mountaintops, cross paths with hikers and build new connections with them. I would like to become stronger emotionally and physically in order to become more open-minded. I am also interested in starting martial arts and learning the Hokkaido dialect of Japanese.

AIC: Is there anything else you would like to say to our readers?

Haruka: Thank you for reading. I am exciting to get to know the city and the people here!



Movies - January

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

Aeon Cinema Only: Every Monday is Happy Monday! Admission is ¥1,100 (tax included) for all.

Cineplex 7 Asahikawa and Dinos Cinemas Only: Every Wednesday is Ladies' Day! Admission is ¥1,100 (tax included for women at all theaters.

Aeon Cinema: Miyashita-dori 7-chome / 0166-74-6411

URL: cinema.aeoncinema.com/wm/asahikawa (Japanese)

Now Showing

- Omi Akindo Hashiru! (Japanese)
- Lonely Castle in the Mirror (Japanese/Anime)
- Kamen Rider Geats x Revice: Battle Royale (Japanese)
- Black Night Parade (Japanese)
- I Wanna Dance with Somebody (English PG12)
- Dr. Koto's Clinic (Japanese)
- Avatar: The Way of Water (English)
- From Siberia with Love (Japanese)
- Kaiketsu Zorori: Lalala Star Tanjo (Japanese/Anime)
- The First Slam Dunk (Japanese/Anime)
- Phases of the Moon (Japanese)
- Black Adam (English)
- That Time I Got Reincarnated as a Slime (Japanese PG12/Anime)
- Suzume no Tojimari (Japanese/Anime)
- One Piece Film Red (Japanese/Anime)
- The Tatami Galaxy (Japanese/Anime)

Coming Soon

- Uso Happyaku Naniwa Yume no Jin (Japanese) 1/6
- Emergency Declaration (Korean) 1/6
- Ichikei's Crow (Japanese) 1/13
- And So I'm at a Loss (Japanese) 1/13
- Yokai Watch: Jibanyan vs. Komasan (Japanese/Anime) 1/13
- Flag Day (English PG12) 1/20
- Sobakasu (Japanese) 1/20
- Aikatsu! 10th Story ~Mirai e no Starway~ (Japanese/Anime) 1/20
- The Legend & Butterfly (Japanese) 1/27
- Kin no Kuni Mizu no Kuni (Japanese) 1/27
- Dream Horse (English) 1/27
- Shin Stigmatized Properties Pt2 (Japanese R18+) 1/27
- Shikakenin Fujieda Baian (Japanese) 2/3
- Damon Slayer: To the Swordsmith Village (Japanese/Anime) 2/3
- #Manhole (Japanese PG12) 2/10
- Shylock no kodomotachi (Japanese) 2/17
- Blue Giant (Japanese/Anime) 2/17
- Ultraman Decker Final: Journey to Beyond (Japanese) 2/23
- Scroll (Japanese) 2/24
- Naoni, Chigira-kun ga amasugiru (Japanese) 2/24

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

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CinePlex 7 Asahikawa: Nagayama 12-jo 3-chome Western Powers Nagayama
0166-49-1000 / URL: <http://www.unitedcinemas.jp/asahikawa/index.html> (Japanese)

Now Showing

- Kamen Rider Geats x Revice: Battle Royale (Japanese)
- Black Night Parade (Japanese)
- Lonely Castle in the Mirror (Japanese/Anime)
- Avatar: The Way of Water (English 4DX)
- Dr. Koto's Clinic (Japanese)
- From Siberia with Love (Japanese)
- The First Slam Dunk (Japanese/Anime)
- Black Adam (English)
- Phases of the Moon (Japanese)
- That Time I Got Reincarnated as a Slime (Japanese PG12/Anime)
- Suzume no Tojimari (Japanese/Anime)
- Sword Art Online Progressive: Scherzo of a Dark Dusk (Japanese/Anime)
- One Piece Film Red (Japanese/Anime)

Coming Soon

- Emergency Declaration (Korean) 1/6
- Familia (Japanese/PG12) 1/6
- Ichikei's Crow (Japanese) 1/13
- And So I'm at a Loss (Japanese) 1/13
- Kuroko's Basketball: Last Game (Japanese 4D/Anime) 1/20
- Kin no Kuni Mizu no Kuni (Japanese) 1/27
- The Legend & Butterfly (Japanese) 1/27
- The Banshees of Inisherin (English PG12) 1/27
- Darwin's Amazing Animals (Japanese) 2/3
- Damon Slayer: To the Swordsmith Village (Japanese/Anime) 2/3
- Shylock no Kodomotachi (Japanese) 2/17
- Yudo (Japanese) 2/23
- Doraemon: Nobita's Sky Utopia (Japanese/Anime) 3/3
- Black Clover: Sword of the Wizard King (Japanese/Anime) 3/31
- Shazam! Fury of the Gods (English) 3/17
- Dungeons & Dragons: Honor Among Thieves (English) 3/31

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

AIC Bulletin Board

Need Help?

If you ever find yourself in need of assistance, know that the Hokkaido Foreign Resident Support Center is there for you! They are able to provide you with consultation services in various languages (Japanese, English, Chinese, Korean, Tagalog, Vietnamese, Russian, Indonesian, Thai, Nepalese, Burmese) on residence procedures, employment, medical care, welfare, childbirth, childcare, education, and more for FREE! Call them at 011-200-9595 or go to: www.hiecc.or.jp/soudan

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

Dates: January 13th & 27th, February 10th & 24th, March 10th & 24th

Times: 1:00pm-2:00pm ~Afternoon~ 2nd and 4th Friday of the month
6:30-8:30pm ~Night~ 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)



Fun Fridays!

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 an afternoon visit.



The Asahikawa International Center (Feeeal Asahikawa 7F 1-jo-dori 8-chome) has free Wi-Fi available for public use. If you reside in Asahikawa, registration for a user card is required. 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/shell, offers for culture/language exchange, or write an essay about your life in Asahikawa or your hometown. The article should not be profit-related! Please send your submissions to us at the AIC.



Asahikawa International Committee

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