

# 旭川 ASAHIKAWA Info

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## Hokkaido News Top 5



June 2021  
Compiled by AIC

### Asteroid Ryugu is a Dark Place 4/25

An international research team that includes researchers at the Nayoro City Observatory “Kitasubaru” has been observing the asteroid “Ryugu,” and announced that it has the highest level of polarization ever recorded for an asteroid. Objects that have a high level of polarization tend to have low light reflectance. The data reveals that Ryugu is indeed, a dark astronomical object.

### Travelers “Depart” for Hawaii at the Asahikawa Airport 4/25

The event, “Pretend Travel: Hawaii Edition,” was held at the Asahikawa Airport, located in the town of Higashikagura. Participants of all ages were able to get a taste of what it would be like to fly to Hawaii, despite the pandemic. Participants went through customs, ate a Hawaii-themed in-flight meal of Loco Moco, and watched the sun set in Hawaii through a livestream.

### ¥6,230,000 Contribution Keeps Shiokari Station in Operation 5/6

Thanks to the hometown taxation system and donations from people across Japan, the town of Wassamu, located in Kamikawa subprefecture, was able to secure ¥6,230,000 in funds to cover the operating costs of the unmanned Shiokari Station on the JR Soya line. In addition to the many train lovers across Japan, fans of the author MIURA Ayako, who wrote the book “Shiokari Pass,” also pitched in to save the station.

### Akkeshi Whiskey Receives Gold Medals at American Whiskey Competition 5/8

Three whiskey products from the Akkeshi Distillery in the town of Akkeshi, located in Kushiro subprefecture, have received two double-gold (the top award) medals and a gold medal (the number #2 award) at the San Francisco World Spirits Competition 2021 in the United States. This is the second year in a row that the Akkeshi Distillery has received the competition’s top award in the “Japanese Single Malt Whiskey” category.

### Local Asahikawa Businesses Eligible to Receive Financial Relief 5/18

In the recent State of Emergency declaration, Asahikawa was designated as an area where additional coronavirus measures will be in effect. Local restaurants, etc. that either shut down or shorten their hours during this time will be able to apply for financial relief from the government after the state of emergency ends in June. In a press conference, Asahikawa Mayor NISHIKAWA Masahito stated that it could take up to a month for businesses that applied for funds to receive them. In Asahikawa, around 2,300 businesses are eligible to receive financial relief.



### Inside This Issue...

**For further information  
or to register for events contact:**  
Asahikawa International Committee  
(KAMIMAE Ayumi, Daniel LIZARRAGA, or  
SAITO Emmy)  
**Location:**  
International/City Affairs Division, Tourism,  
Sports and International/City Affairs 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)

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# Explore Asahikawa

By Daniel Lizarraga

## Fraleet Alley (ふらりーと)

*The alley that brings back memories of the Showa period*

This alley, located in Asahikawa's downtown area, prospered as a fish and vegetable market before WWII. After the war, it flourished as an entertainment district with several movie theaters. As time passed, the number of restaurants and izakaya (Japanese style pub) grew, turning the alley from a daytime entertainment spot into a nighttime one. Guests staying at nearby hotels and company employees getting off of work would often drop by to grab a drink and eat grilled chicken. Taking the alley's new atmosphere into account, the public voted on a name in 2004, and from that point on it was known as 5・7 小路 ふらりーと (5-jo 7-chome Fraleet Alley). “ふらりと” means “casually,” or “on a whim,” referring to how people casually drop by the izakaya to grab a drink and some food.

Nowadays, this alley has 18 different establishments that include restaurants, izakaya, a fruit and vegetable shop, and a hair salon. The citizens of Asahikawa are fond of the alley's nostalgic feel, which is created by the various remnants of the Showa period. Take a trip back in time and discover the alley's unique atmosphere and local cuisine for yourself!



Although I included pictures of the alley during the day, night is when Fraleet comes alive. The glow of the many lanterns scattered throughout the alley combined with the old shop signs create an atmosphere that makes you feel like you walked into the past. Given that the rest of Asahikawa looks fairly modern, this alley is a real treat for those who like the aesthetic of the Showa Period. I have been lucky to visit several of the small shops in this alley, including the ramen shop (fish-base broth), which I highly recommend! When the coronavirus situation gets better, come to Fraleet Alley and grab a bite to eat!

### Fraleet Alley Changes with the Seasons

Summer: Fraleet Alley Festival

Fall: Jack-o-lantern Contest

Winter: Ice Candles, Snowmen, Christmas Decorations on the Alley Entrance and Exit

## UENO Farm (上野ファーム)

UENO Farm is one of the many wonderful places in Asahikawa that come alive with the start of the spring season. From the name, you might think that this is just one of the many local farms. However, you won't find animals or fields of crops at this farm. Just what kind of place is this?

UENO Farm is home to a charming garden that is inspired by the gardens of England, yet maintains the essence of Hokkaido's natural beauty. The style of English gardens tend to be symmetrical or geometric in design, whereas Japanese gardens are inspired by nature, and tend not utilize techniques that would make the garden look overtly manmade. This garden aims to combine both of these traits through the use of symmetry in the design of the garden, while keeping many of the wild flowers found in Hokkaido and letting them grow in a way that is reminiscent of how you would find them in nature.

Many of the flowers in this garden bloom at different periods, so you know you will be able to see many colorful and vivid flowers no matter when you go (excluding the winter, of course). If you are a big fan of gardens and aim to go frequently, you will notice the subtle changes in scenery that occur both seasonally, and yearly. Most importantly, this garden is a place where you can come relax and breathe some fresh air. There are many themed areas, such as "The Gnome's Garden," where you can gaze upon beautiful trees, wild flowers, and a variety of herbs, and the "Mirror Border" (pictured below), where you can walk down a path with flowers mirrored on both sides.

In addition to the flowers, you will definitely want to drop by the Oka no Fumoto no Chiisana Naeya gift shop and the NAYA café! The gift shop has many miscellaneous flower-related items, snacks, and souvenirs that everyone will enjoy. If you are a gardener, you will find many useful tools, and you will also be able to buy flowers and seedlings to enhance your garden at home. The café is located in a rustic, repurposed barn, and offers a variety of sweets and light meals. Take advantage of the outdoor seating so that you can enjoy the scenery of the garden as you partake in your meal!

June Flowers: Oriental Poppies, Lupins, Common Columbines, Foxgloves, and Geraniums.

Location: Asahikawa, Nagayama 16-chome 186

Admission: General ¥1,000 (elementary school students and under are free), Group Admission (10 people and up) ¥800

For Further Information Contact: 0166-47-8741, or send an email to [info@uenofarm.net](mailto:info@uenofarm.net)

Hours and Season: 10:00-17:00 from late-April to mid-October (same hours for gift shop and café)





# Hello Asahikawa!

**Name: Queena Xu**  
**Home Country: United States**  
**Interviewed: 5/17/2018**

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](mailto:cir_kokusai@city.asahikawa.hokkaido.jp)!

**AIC: Hello Queena! Where are you from?**

**Queena:** I'm from California in the United States.

**AIC: What brings you to Japan?**

**Queena:** This seems like a very typical answer but... I've always been really interested in Japanese culture from a young age, having been influenced by anime and manga. As I grew up, I became interested in learning the Japanese language and more about the culture. I took my first trip to Japan back in 2016 and loved it so much that I came back the same year. It was then that I decided I wanted to try working and living in Japan. Thus, I applied for the JET Programme USA, which is how I wound up here in Hokkaido as an ALT.

**AIC: What do you do for work?**

**Queena:** I am an ALT (Assistant Language Teacher), teaching English in a rural town here in Hokkaido. I teach at all levels of schooling ranging from kindergarten to high school. My work may seem really tiring, but I really do enjoy it! I love being able to work with children and helping them with English. My favorite part about this job is being able to watch the children grow up as they move up in grades.



**AIC: How long have you been living in Japan?**

**Queena:** I've lived in Japan for almost 3 years now. I really didn't think I'd stay for this long, but the beauty of Hokkaido, the kindness of the people, and the fulfillment from working with students has made it difficult to leave!

**AIC: How does life in Japan compare to life in your hometown?**

**Queena:** Definitely the population size is the biggest difference. Going from a city of 1 million people to a small town of 3000 was a huge culture shock. But I have grown to love the small town life. Having lived in a large city my whole life, this is my first time experiencing rural life. I love being surrounded by nature, farm fields, the vast sky above. Also the fact that there are distinct differences in the season here is a real treat. I love how friendly everyone in the town is. They really look out for me and I appreciate every interaction I have with the locals.

**AIC:** How do you like Japanese food? What are some of your favorites?

**Queena:** I love Japanese food! It's really hard to pick a "favorite" because I enjoy so many varieties of Japanese food. But if I had to choose, I would pick udon or oyakodon. They are my Japanese "comfort foods." Makes me feel warm and cozy on the inside. Additionally, I also really enjoy trying out new teishoku. I love the restaurants that offer a twist on the classic teishoku or have a rotating daily menu. You never know what delicious sides you're going to get!

**AIC:** What are your favorites from back home?

**Queena:** I come from a Chinese heritage so my favorite foods back home have to be homestyle Chinese food. Especially boiled or steamed dumplings. My family used to hand wrap hundreds of them during New Years. It's one of my favorite childhood pastimes. Aside from Chinese food, I really love (and miss) foods with good cheese! Like gourmet mac-n-cheese, grilled cheese, mmm, cheese...

**AIC:** What do you like about Asahikawa? What are some of your favorite spots?

**Queena:** I like the fact that Asahikawa is not such a big city, as strange as it sounds, but it is "city" enough to have all the offerings of a bigger city. There are beautiful cafes, nice gardens and parks to walk around in, interesting foods to try, and many hidden places I have yet to explore!

As for my own town, I love the quiet, simple life I live. My favorite spot is a lake right next to the onsen. On my weekends in the summer, I would occasionally run around the lake in the morning, soak in the onsen until noon, and come back home to cook a nice meal. A blissful, peaceful day.



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

**Queena:** On the weekdays, I very much enjoy staying at home, resting from a long day of work, cooking a nice meal for myself and watching an episode of anime. On the weekends though, I try to enjoy the outdoors as much as possible if the weather permits. I took up skiing my first year in Hokkaido and have grown to really love it. I skied almost every weekend this year! In the summer, I love going hiking and camping. Being outdoors is really refreshing, minus all the bugs though...

*Continued on Page 6*

**AIC:** **How long do you plan to be in Asahikawa?**  
**Queen:** I was originally planning to be in Japan for only 1 year. But I have really fallen in love with Hokkaido, and now it's my third year here and I have signed on for another year! Coming from forever sunny California, I've never experienced this much snow in my life. But now I can't get enough of it! I don't know if I'd be able to go back to living in a place without snow! So I hope to take in as much of the snowy Hokkaido experience as possible.

**AIC:** **Do you miss anything about life back in the States?**

**Queen:** I miss my family a lot. Of course because of COVID-19, I haven't been able to visit home in almost 2 years. I hope to have a chance to visit them next year when vaccines have been widely distributed in Japan and traveling internationally is safe to do so. I also miss having a variety of food from different countries as well. As much as I love Japanese food, it'd be great to have more variety of foreign foods!

**AIC:** **Thank you for participating!**

**Queen:** You're welcome.



## ★ *Movies* ~ *May* ★

\*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.

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

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

### Now Showing

- Cruella (English)
- End-of-Life Concierge (Japanese)
- Inochi no Teishajyo (Japanese)
- Police x Heroine Lovepatrina! ~Challenge from a Phantom Thief! Let's Arrest with Love and a Pat!~ (Japanese)
- Jigoku no Hanazono (Japanese)
- Feral (English)
- Mirai e no Katachi (Japanese)
- Rurouni Kenshin: The Final (Japanese)
- BanG Dream! Episode of Roselia I (Japanese/Anime)
- Detective Conan: The Scarlet Bullet (Japanese/Anime)
- Signal (Japanese)
- Evangelion:3.0+1.0 Thrice Upon a Time (Japanese/Anime)
- Demon Slayer: Mugen Train (Japanese/PG12/Anime)

### Coming Soon

- Enraku Cho de Aimasho (Japanese/R15+) 6/4
- On the Street (Japanese) 6/4
- Rurouni Kenshin: The Beginning (Japanese) 6/4
- Character (Japanese) 6/11
- Gyokou no Nikuko-chan (Japanese/Anime) 6/11
- Hinomaru Soul~The Heroes Behind the Scenes~ 6/18
- A Quiet Place Part II (English) 6/18
- The Fable: A Contract Killer Who Doesn't Kill 6/18
- Mortal Combat (English/R15+) 6/18
- Sore Ike! Anpanman: Fuwa Fuwa Fuwari to Kumo no Kuni (Japanese/Anime) 6/25
- Peter Rabbit 2: The Runaway (English) 6/25
- The Door into Summer (Japanese) 6/25
- Arc (Japanese) 6/25
- BanG Dream! Episode of Roselia II (Japanese/Anime) 6/25
- The Seven Deadly Sins: Cursed by Light (Japanese/Anime) 7/2
- Lockdown Hotel/Death, Spirit, Feeling, Dyeing (English) 7/2

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

## ★ *Movies* ~ *May* ★

\*<Cineplex 7 Asahikawa and Dinos Cinemas Only> 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.

★ **Cineplex 7 Asahikawa:** Nagayama 12-jo 3-chome Western Powers Nagayama / 0166 – 49 – 1000

URL: <http://www.unitedcinemas.jp/asahikawa/index.html> (Japanese)

**Directions:** Take Dohoku Bus No. 66, 72 or 665 at Bus stop No. 18 in front of Feeeal Asahikawa Department Store (1-jo-dori 8-chome). Get off at “Nagayama 10 (ju)-jo 3 (san)-chome.”

### Now Showing

- Unhinged (English/PG12)
- Cruella (English)
- Inochi no Teishajyo (Japanese)
- Jigoku no Hanazono (Japanese)
- Beautiful Lure: A Modern Tale of Painted Skin (Japanese)
- Rurouni Kenshin: The Final (Japanese 4DX)
- Detective Conan: The Scarlet Bullet (Japanese 4DX/Anime)
- Brave: Gunjyo Senki (Japanese/PG12)
- Evangelion:3.0+1.0 Thrice Upon a Time (Japanese/Anime)
- Demon Slayer: Mugen Train (Japanese/PG12/Anime)

### Coming Soon

- Rurouni Kenshin: The Beginning (Japanese 4DX) 6/4
- Mune ga Naru no wa Kino no Sei (Japanese) 6/4
- Darwin's Amazing Animals: Super Legacy of Sea Creatures (Japanese) 6/11
- Hinomaru Soul~The Heroes Behind the Scenes~ 6/18
- The Fable: A Contract Killer Who Doesn't Kill 6/18
- A Quiet Place Part II (English 4DX) 6/18
- Mortal Kombat (English/R15+) 6/18
- Peter Rabbit 2: The Runaway (English) 6/25
- Sore Ike! Anpanman: Fuwa Fuwa Fuwari to Kumo no Kuni (Japanese/Anime) 6/25
- On The Road: An Artist's Journey (Korean) 7/2

★ **Dinos Cinemas:** Taisetsu-dori 5-chome / 0166 – 21 – 1218

URL: <http://cinema.sugai-dinos.jp/pc/> (Japanese)

**Directions:** Take Dohoku Bus No. 61, 62, 67 or 667 at Bus stop No. 18 in front of Feeeal Asahikawa Department Store (1-jo-dori 8-chome). Get off at “Nippon Seishi mae.”

### Now Showing

- Hitokuzu (Japanese)~6/10
- The Father (English)~6/10
- Tomorrow's Dinner Table (Japanese)
- HOKUSAI (Japanese)
- Inochi no Teishajyo (Japanese)
- Jigoku no Hanazono (Japanese)
- Fate/Grand Order Paladin; Agateram
- Beautiful Lure: A Modern Tale of Painted Skin (Japanese)
- The Gentlemen (English/PG12)
- Girls und Panzer das Finale (Japanese/Anime)
- Junk Head (Japanese)
- Midnight Swan (Japanese)
- Rurouni Kenshin: The Final (Japanese)
- Detective Conan: The Scarlet Bullet (Japanese/Anime)
- Signal (Japanese)
- Evangelion:3.0+1.0 Thrice Upon a Time (Japanese/Anime)
- Demon Slayer: Mugen Train (Japanese/Anime)

### Coming Soon

- Brothers in Brothel (Japanese) 6/4
- Rurouni Kenshin: The Beginning (Japanese) 6/4
- Character (Japanese) 6/11
- SNS Girls 10 Days (English/R15+) 6/11
- Otsunahiki no Koi (Japanese) 6/18
- Hinomaru Soul~The Heroes Behind the Scenes~ 6/18
- Tesla (English) 6/18
- A Quiet Place Part II (English) 6/18
- The Fable: A Contract Killer Who Doesn't Kill 6/18
- Peter Rabbit 2: The Runaway (English) 6/25
- Itomichi (Japanese) 6/25
- The Door into Summer (Japanese) 6/25
- Black Widow (English) 7/8

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

# Foreign Language Courses at AIC

## Foreign Language Courses: Beginner (15 Classes)

Language	Dates	Teachers
Korean	Every Tuesday starting 6/15	KIM Michie
Chinese	Every Wednesday starting 6/16	TSUYAMA Noboru
Russian	Every Thursday starting 6/17	SUZUKI Momoko

**Time:** 18:30-20:00

**Location:** Asahikawa International Center (1-jo 8-chome, Feeeal Asahikawa 7F, International/City Affairs Division), Meeting Room #1

**Capacity:** 19 people for each class. The class will be cancelled if there are less than 10 sign-ups

**Fee:** ¥18,000 (The teacher will prepare a textbook for you free of charge)

**Sign-up:** Contact the Asahikawa International Committee at 0166-25-7491, or send a message to [aic1\\_kokusai@city.asahikawa.hokkaido.jp](mailto:aic1_kokusai@city.asahikawa.hokkaido.jp)

**Notes:** Courses will be taught in Japanese

## FUN FRIDAYS

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:** June 11th & 25th, July 9th & 23rd, August 13th & 27th

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

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](mailto: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.\*\***