

# 旭川 ASAHIKAWA Info

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## Hokkaido News Top 5



May 2021  
Compiled by AIC

### Tour Guides to Promote Asahikawa's Local Products 3/20

The Asahikawa Chamber of Commerce and Industry will open a temporary shop in a Tokyo shopping center that will sell local products from Asahikawa during the Golden Week holiday, and they have arranged for tour guides to sell the products on their behalf. Asahikawa businesses say they are hitting two birds with one stone because not only will tour guides with an extensive knowledge of Asahikawa be able to promote the city for them, but they will also be able to expand the market for their products.

### Products Made from Town's Local Specialty Make Debut 3/25

The Aibetsu Town Association for the Promotion of Beets has begun the sales of four unique food products that incorporate the town's local specialty—beets. Products making their debut include beet beer, beet salad dressing, beet roll cake, and beet jelly & mousse. Beets are rich in iron and vitamins, and have a delicious taste that you can't beat!

### Asahikawa High School Students Win SDGs-themed Competition 3/31

High school students all throughout Hokkaido applied to join the SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) Quest, Mirai no Koshien" competition, where students present ideas on how to achieve the SDGs laid out by the United Nations. 12 teams from 9 schools were selected, and the team from the Asahikawa Agricultural High School took first prize. Based on their research concerning the cultivation of organic flowers, they reported that an excessive usage of chemical fertilizers can cause the soil to release more greenhouse gases.

### Town of Higashikawa and JAL Enter into Official Partnership 4/7

Higashikawa has entered an official partnership with Japan Airlines (JAL) to cooperate in various initiatives including "workations," where people travel to a particular area to go sightseeing while they continue working. Higashikawa has entered partnerships with several companies, with JAL marking their 14th partnership. JAL will help advertise Higashikawa's "workation" initiative, and will feature Higashikawa's local products in their in-flight magazines.

### Official Olympic Goods Line-up to Include Ainu Traditional Crafts 4/16

The Tokyo Organizing Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games announced that it has completed making Olympic goods out of traditional crafts from all 47 prefectures. The craft from Hokkaido is an everyday tool called a "Menokoita," which is both a cutting board and a bowl. It is hand-carved using a traditional Ainu carving technique called "Nibutani Ita."



### Inside This Issue...

**For further information or to register for events contact:**  
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# Life in Asahikawa

## Mayflower = *Sakura*

By KITAMURA Tadao

What is the mayflower of your home country? Is it the Hawthorne? Or the Anemone? Ours in Hokkaido, is of course, the cherry blossom. The cherry blossom (*sakura*) is, as you know, a flower that the Japanese people have loved since long ago. It can be said that the cherry blossom is a source of inspiration for the Japanese people's sense and interpretation of beauty. It has borne so many great works of literature, poems, pictures, and other works of art in every field.

*Konoha-sakuya-hime* (木花之佐久夜毘売) is a goddess that appears in the myth of the genesis of the nation, and her name means "Flowers of trees are in bloom." It is generally thought that the word "*sakura*" is derived from her name. She is enshrined as a goddess of both cherry trees and Mt. Fuji.

*Bushido* (武士道), the "warrior's code of ethics," is an especially esteemed aspect of *sakura*, as the cherry tree scatters its abundant petals ungrudgingly. Thus, the *sakura* is a symbol of both beauty and bravery.

When you hear the word "*sakura*," what most people refer to is *somei-yoshino* (*Prunus yedoensis*). It is the most popular species of the *sakura* family. Its blossoms of noble white with a tinge of faint pink cover the whole crown of the tree, and are admired by many people. In fact, most well-known *o-hanami* (*sakura*-viewing) sites are where this species is planted. Unfortunately, this species has a northern climate barrier at about the latitude of Sapporo. This is why we cannot see the *somei-yoshino* in Asahikawa.

Instead, we in Asahikawa have another species of cherry tree called the *ezo-yamazakura* (*Prunus sargentii*), which happens to be our mayflower. This species blooms during early May—much later than the *P. yedoensis*, which blooms from mid-March to early April. Our variety of *sakura* is much more brilliant than the other because the colors of its petals have the tinge of a much richer, rosier pink, and its pedicel and sepals are reddish in color. In addition, the leaves that sprout simultaneously with the rosy flowers enhance the brilliance of the tree's crown all the more.

There are many *o-hanami* (*sakura*-viewing) locations here in Hokkaido. In Asahikawa, we have the Asahi-yama (旭山) Park, the Kaguraoka (神楽岡) Park, and Tokiwa (常盤) Park—all of which are very popular for *o-hanami*. Kamuikotan (神居古潭) is also a very good site for *sakura*-viewing. In my opinion, the Pallet-Hills in Takasu (鷹栖) serve as pretty and picturesque scenery, even if all the cherry trees are still young.



There are several very old and great *P. sargentii* trees in other municipalities of Hokkaido, which are taken good care of. One of them is standing in the back garden of the Kokutai-ji (国泰寺), a Buddhist temple in Akkeshi (厚岸) Town. It is about 160 years old, 9m tall, and is designated as a “natural monument” by the government.

The *chishima-zakura* (*P. nipponica* var. *kurilensis*) is another northern species of *sakura* in the *Prunus* family. It has smaller flowers (about 2 to 2.5cm in diameter) than that of the *ezo-yamazakura*, which measure from 2.5 to 4cm in diameter. The color of its flowers are a little paler than that of the *P. sargentii*. It does not grow tall (only around 3 to 5m), but it stretches its branches out wide. You can see this cherry tree in the *Hoppo Yaso-en* (北方野草園) (The Northern Wild Plants Garden) in Arashiyama (嵐山).

Straying away from the topic of the mayflower, I would like to talk about the Carmine Cherry (*Prunus cerasoides rubra*). Frank Kingdon-Ward, a British botanist and “plant hunter,” had documented this plant in his *Pilgrimages for Plants* (1960, George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd. London). He first encountered it in an adventurous expedition shortly before the onset of WWII. He ventured near the headstream of the Irrawaddy River in the deep backlands of the northernmost region of Myanmar, close to the border of Tibet. He wrote about the strong impression he received upon first witnessing the glorious carmine color of the tall and robust tree he saw in the deep valley of Aduun. Its branches radiated like bright flames coming, or likes streams of lava. There is also a mystery as to why the cherry tree seeds he collected from the Carmine Cherry tree bloomed pinkish-white blossoms in England and other boreal areas.

I am very anxious as to whether or not the Carmine Cherry trees Frank Kingdon-Ward had seen are still safe, because the land where the Carmine Cherry trees grew was the very location of the bloody, notorious Battle of Impahl that was fought between the Imperial Army and the Allied forces in WWII. Here in Japan, there is a legend that cherry blossoms bloom brightly where a furious fight had taken place.

# Coronavirus Vaccine Information

*Translated from the April edition of Asahibashi*

Vaccine distribution on the national level has been delayed, so the vaccine distribution schedule for those over 65 is being adjusted. Please check the local newspaper and the city website for information on when you will be able to reserve a vaccine appointment and where vaccination facilities are located.

**Q: When will vaccinations begin for those 65 years and older?**

**A:** The number of vaccine doses that was distributed to Asahikawa in mid-April was limited to 1,000, so the city has placed a priority on those in eldercare facilities. Due to this, general vaccinations for those who are 65 years and older is expected to start from mid-May onwards.

**Q: Where can you get the vaccine?**

**A:** In addition to city-wide medical facilities, you can be vaccinated at various public and commercial facilities. Once those vaccination centers are determined, you will see a notification on the city homepage.

**Q: When will my vaccine card arrive?**

**A:** For those who have a residence card and are 65 years of age or older (includes those who will be 65 by March 31st of next year), your vaccine card should have arrived in the mail in late-April. Those who are under 65 are expected to receive their vaccine card sometime from June onwards.

**Q: What should I do when my vaccine card arrives?**

**A:** Please use the information on your vaccine card as a reference and call medical facilities that accept vaccination appointments, or the call center. Once the number of vaccine doses that will be distributed to Asahikawa is determined, the start date for reserving vaccine appointments will be listed on the city website. Please store your vaccination card in a safe place until you go to receive the vaccine.

**Q: Who should I call to get my questions answered regarding the vaccine?**

**A:** Please call the **Asahikawa Coronavirus Call Center:**

Phone number: (0166) 25-3501

Hours (M-F): 8:45-17:15

Fax: 0166-21-3176 (For those with a hearing disabilities, etc.)

**Note:** There may be changes to this information.

## Flying Squirrel House Opens at Asahiyama Zoo

*Translated from the April edition of Asahibashi*

In recent years, the Asahiyama Zoo has set up exhibits that showcase Hokkaido's vast array of wildlife, like the Ezo Tanuki, the Northern Fox, and the Ezo Winter Hare. In addition, many tree species native to Hokkaido have been planted. This year, the zoo has decided to set up a new exhibit just in time for the summer period: the Ezo Flying Squirrel House!

This will be the zoo's very first "nocturnal exhibit," where the normal daylight hours will be reversed. The exhibit will be illuminated at night and will remain dark during the day to avoid putting stress on the animals. The zoo already had flying squirrels for visitors to see, but they are nocturnal animals so they spend most of the day resting in their nesting box. Visitors that managed to see them moving around are considered very lucky. Now, visitors will be able to see Ezo Flying Squirrels when they are most active! You might even be able to see them glide around!

Ezo Flying Squirrels are truly amazing creatures. They don't hibernate during the harsh Hokkaido winter and still manage to survive. They make nests in holes in trees made by woodpeckers and raise their offspring in them. Their presence is a symbol of a diverse and healthy forest. This is the perfect opportunity to see one of Hokkaido's hidden creatures up close and personal!



# Hello Asahikawa!

**Name: Terry Lee**  
**Home Country: Singapore**  
**Interviewed: 1/23/2021**

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 Terry! Where are you from?

**Terry:** I'm from Singapore. It's a very small country. It's actually smaller than Sapporo.

**AIC:** It's smaller than Sapporo? Wow!

**Terry:** Singapore is like a small part of Tokyo. The central area of Singapore is the main business district, and the rest of Singapore is what we call the "heartlands." Those are where most of the housing districts are. I happen to be on the east side.

**AIC:** So Terry, what brings you to Japan?

**Terry:** I've always wanted to live overseas. Before Japan I had a job in Taiwan and lived there for two years. I met my wife, who is Japanese, in Singapore. We met at a Japanese language exchange session. Japanese people that live in Singapore organized themselves and taught local people how to speak Japanese. That's how we met, and we moved to Japan.

**AIC:** Is this your first time in Japan?

**Terry:** No, we actually went to Okinawa first for our honeymoon. We reached Hokkaido in April or late March of 2019 before all of this craziness struck us. In around August we moved to Kutchan. We both had a job there... until the coronavirus struck. And because we were working in a tourism-based industry, times got hard. In between that 6-7 months, we came back here to Asahikawa. It was her parent's idea. We've been here for about a month. Primarily because she is pregnant. The 14th of May is what the doctor told us, but because she's having a C-section she will deliver on the 6th of May. We're expecting a daughter. That is the primary reason we came to Asahikawa from Kutchan. We have more support here like friends and family, and there is a hospital here where she really wants to do the whole process. Kutchan has a hospital, but because it's a small town, it's really crowded. Asahikawa is probably better.

**AIC:** That's amazing! Congratulations! So, what do you do for work?

**Terry:** I have been doing freelance translation ever since my time in Taiwan because I was working there as a freelance translator and editor. After I left my job in Taiwan I continued working for the same company and a few other Taiwanese companies on a freelance basis. My Japanese was almost zero when I first came here. It's a lot better now, but when I was first trying to find a job in Sapporo, I couldn't find one with my level of Japanese at the time. I could get a job without being able to speak Japanese in Niseko. Before the coronavirus struck, they needed people who could speak English fluently. Now it's different because most of the guests are domestic travelers. The tables have turned! *(laughs)* Now, native Japanese who can speak a little bit of English are in top demand. In the meantime I've been doing translation and have been brushing up my Japanese. I just got my N2 certificate.

*Continued on Page 6*

**AIC:** **Congrats! What do you like about living here?**

**Terry:**

I find Asahikawa to be a balance between nature and urban life. Singapore has a population of 5.7 million, but Sapporo is only 1.95 million, so when I first reached Sapporo, I was like, "Wow! This is fantastic! It's surrounded by nature!" But my wife, having grown up here, says she can't stand Sapporo. The population is 330,000 in Asahikawa, so 1.95 million in Sapporo is a lot for her. For me, 1.95 million is nothing. Asahikawa is in the middle between Sapporo and the countryside towns. I don't feel the fast pace of life you feel when you are in Sapporo and Tokyo. There isn't a transportation system here like in Sapporo, but it's not too expensive to own a car compared to Singapore. Singapore is the most expensive place to own a car in the world. It's very expensive for several reasons, but for one, there's a huge car tax you have to pay. So, a Toyota in Singapore would cost the same as a Ferrari in Japan. When my wife tells me, "This car is a bit expensive," I say, "No it's not! What are you complaining about?"



**AIC:** **(laughs). I never knew it was so expensive to have a car in Singapore! Moving on, what are some cultural differences between Singapore and Japan?**

**Terry:**

I find that Japan is at a sweet-spot between Western Culture and East Asian Culture. I like the traffic conditions here compared to Singapore. People here are very courteous and they observe etiquette. It's not true of everyone, but it is true of most people. I have also driven in New Zealand, Australia, and in the UK. I like the way they drive as well. In general, I think Japan is closer to these countries than she is to Singapore and Taiwan even though she is geographically in East Asia.

Another difference is the way the Japanese government handled the coronavirus pandemic. My family in Singapore is very worried for me. They watch the news and say, "Why is Japan not keeping this under control?" There are 3000-4000 new cases every day, whereas in Singapore or Taiwan, there are basically no more local infections. When I tell my family that the Japanese government doesn't have the right to restrict people's movement, they just don't get it. They ask, "Why can't the government stop you from leaving your home? Why can't the government just force a restaurant to shut down?" In Japan, they just can't do that. They can only say, "Please do not sell alcohol after 8pm." There, it's more like, "You better do this or we'll shut down your business." In Singapore, there was a rule recently where you can't have anyone other than those living with you come to your home. That's how strict it was. They did get it under control, so it did work from a pandemic point of view, but it wouldn't work in Japan. No one would agree to it. The media and the opposition would just go crazy.

**AIC:** **They definitely would. So, how do you like Japanese food?**

**Terry:**

I love it. Even when I wasn't in Japan. I loved it in Taiwan and I loved it in Singapore. If you go to the streets of Taiwan, the influence of Japanese cuisine is everywhere. It is a native Chinese speaking country, but if you look at the signs of lots of restaurants, they always add in little bits of hiragana, like "の." You might see a sign that has nine characters in Chinese followed by a "の." They use Japanese in their signs and people like it. No one knows what it means, but most people like the style. In Singapore they like Japanese food as well, and restaurants command a very high price. Now I'm eating the food in Hokkaido and it's amazing.

**AIC:** **What are some of your favorites?**

**Terry:**

I like *ramen*, but I can't eat it every day because it's too unhealthy. I like *sushi* as well, but I haven't eaten it for a while because my wife can't eat raw food right while she's pregnant. I'm trying to be a good husband (*laughs*). I also like *sashimi*. I used to like *wagyu* beef but I have not touched beef for quite a while. My wife is not really a fan of beef. Oh yeah, I think the Japanese do pizza fantastically well. Niseko has lots of Italian restaurants and the pizza is amazing.



**AIC:** **What is Singaporean food like?**

**Terry:**

So, Singapore is an immigrant society, and it has only been independent since 1965. Our ancestors came from India and South China. China was fraught with perpetual war and poverty, so a lot of people from the south of China came to either Singapore or Hong Kong, one of the British colonies. Taiwan as well. The British would send a lot of Indians from one colony to another, and Singapore was a British colony. So, Indians, Chinese, and Malays, the local people from Malaysia, were all mixed and made the blend of what you have today. You have Chinese Chicken Rice, for example, and it might be cooked with Indian spices. It's an immigrant society and it is reflected in the cuisine as well. Also, because it's an international city, you will find a lot of international cuisine, like French and Italian, and lots and lots of American restaurants as well, like Shake Shack. Recently, Korean food has been hugely popular. I've always found Singapore to be a fantastic place to travel to if you are a tourist.

**AIC:** **I hope I can go after the pandemic! What do you like to do in your free time?**

**Terry:**

This was even before I met my wife, but I love traveling. Ironically I didn't travel much when I was in Taiwan because I was trying to save money, but when I returned to Singapore, I got a full-time job. I had saved up enough money, so I went to Australia and New Zealand. I also went to Scotland. I had to fly to London so I stayed there for three days, but if you like nature, I don't think London will be your cup of tea. London is like New York City with a bit of an English accent (*laughs*). Italy is also wonderful. Thanks to Airbnb I could spend most of my budget on food. I think that's what you should do, because if you go to Italy and you don't eat out, it's a huge waste. The area is also flooding with tourists. I felt so sad, because with the history of the architecture of Italy, every building is at least a few hundred years old. Some are 2000 if you are in Rome. It's difficult to appreciate them when there are too many people, and it's so sad. I hope this will change after the pandemic. I love traveling and reading as well. I don't read much fiction. I read history books, and I like watching historical dramas on Netflix.

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

**Terry:**

I miss my family a lot. I haven't seen them in a while. The saddest part of my life here was that my dog passed away last year in June. When we first heard about the virus in China, nobody would have expected it to become what it became. We were told it was a Chinese problem and people in America were told it was an Asian problem. Now it's a world problem. When I was in Niseko, I never imagined that all the flights would be cancelled. That was my last chance to see my dog before she passed away. I can see my family through video, but it's not the same. The people definitely, and my dog.

**AIC:** **That's all I have! Thank you for participating, Terry.**

**Terry:**

You're welcome.

# Cherry Blossom Viewing in Asahikawa



May is here, which means it's *hanami* time! In mainland Japan the flowers start blooming as early as late March, but in Hokkaido, they start blooming around the beginning of May and last about halfway through the month. Due to the coronavirus, you may not see as many groups gathering this year. Be sure to take all the necessary precautions and be safe if you decide to go see the blossoms!

That being said, there are many locations to view cherry blossoms within the city. According to [sakura.weathermap.jp](http://sakura.weathermap.jp), **cherry blossoms are expected to start blooming on 4/29 (Thursday) and be in full bloom on 5/2 (Sunday)**, but be sure to check online for the latest information just to make sure! Below we listed some of the most prominent viewing spots in the city. If you are interested in the Ukiyo-e art exhibition at the Hokkaido Museum of Art (Tokiwa Park) featured on page 10, why not go and enjoy *hanami* at the same time?

## Cherry Blossom Viewing Locations in Asahikawa:

- Asahiyama Park
- Hanasaki Sports Park (From Hanasakicho 1-chome to Hanasakicho 5-chome)
- Kaguraoka Park
- Shunkodai Park (Aza Chikabumi 6-sen 3-go)
- Tokiwa Park



## ★ *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

- The Trail of the Chicago 7 (English)
- Mank (English)
- Earwig and the Witch (Japanese/Anime)
- Rurouni Kenshin: The Final (Japanese)
- BanG Dream! Episode of Roselia I (Japanese/Anime)
- Detective Conan: The Scarlet Bullet (Japanese/Anime)
- Freaky (English/R15+)
- Byplayers: What if 100 Supporting Characters Make a Movie (Japanese)
- Signal (Japanese)
- Monster Hunter (English)
- Kiba: The Fangs of Fiction (Japanese)
- Thomas the Tank Engine: Come One, Come All! To the Future Inventions Show! (Japanese/Anime)
- Caution, Hazardous Wife (Japanese)
- Tom and Jerry (Japanese/Anime)
- Evangelion:3.0+1.0 Thrice Upon a Time (Japanese/Anime)
- Demon Slayer: Mugen Train (Japanese/PG12/Anime)
- Raya and the Last Dragon (English/Japanese/Anime) ~5/13
- Love like a Flower Bouquet (Japanese) ~5/6

### Coming Soon

- Mobile Suit Gundam: Hathaway's Flash (Japanese/Anime) 5/21
- Hinomaru Soul~The Heroes Behind the Scenes~ 5/7
- Nomadland (English) 5/7
- Godzilla vs. Kong (English) 5/14
- Inochi no Teishajyo (Japanese) 5/21
- Feral (English) 5/21
- Cruella (English) 5/27
- A Quiet Place Part II (English) 5/28
- A Crocodile who Lived for 100 Days (Japanese/Anime) 5/28
- Rurouni Kenshin: The Beginning (Japanese) 6/4
- On the Street (Japanese) 6/4

**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

- Earwig and the Witch (Japanese/Anime)
- Rurouni Kenshin: The Final (Japanese 4DX)
- Detective Conan: The Scarlet Bullet (Japanese 4DX/Anime)
- Ava (English/PG12)
- 21 Bridges (English)
- My Blood & Bones in a Gloing Glalaxy (Japanese/PG12)
- Kiba: The Fangs of Fiction (Japanese)
- Monster Hunter (English)
- Nomadland (English)
- Healin' Good Pretty Cure: Yume no Machi de Kyun! tto GoGo! Daihenshin!! (Japanese/Anime)
- Tom and Jerry (Japanese/Anime)
- Evangelion:3.0+1.0 Thrice Upon a Time (Japanese/Anime)
- Loved Like a Flower Bouquet (Japanese)
- Demon Slayer: Mugen Train (Japanese/PG12/Anime)

### Coming Soon

- Hinomaru Soul~The Heroes Behind the Scenes~ 5/7
- Unhinged (English/PG12) 5/14
- Godzilla vs. Kong (English 4DX) 5/14
- Utsukushiki Yuwaku (Japanese) 5/14
- Inochi no Teishajyo (Japanese) 5/21
- Mobile Suit Gundam: Hathaway's Flash (Japanese 4DX/Anime) 5/21
- Cruella (English) 5/27
- A Quiet Place Part II (English) 5/28
- Rurouni Kenshin: The Beginning (Japanese 4DX) 6/4
- Mune ga Naru no wa Kino no Sei (Japanese) 6/4

★ **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

- Midnight Swan (Japanese)
- Junk Head (Japanese)
- Fate/stay night [Heaven's Feel]III.spring song (Japanese/Anime)
- Rurouni Kenshin: The Final (Japanese)
- Detective Conan: The Scarlet Bullet (Japanese/Anime)
- Signal (Japanese)
- Kiba: The Fangs of Fiction (Japanese)
- Tom and Jerry (Japanese, English/Anime)
- Caution, Hazardous Wife (Japanese)
- Brave: Gunjyo Senki (Japanese)
- Evangelion:3.0+1.0 Thrice Upon a Time (Japanese/Anime)
- Demon Slayer: Mugen Train (Japanese/Anime)

### Coming Soon

- Hinomaru Soul~The Heroes Behind the Scenes~ 5/7
- The Gentlemen (English/PG12) 5/7
- The Reason I Jump (Japanese) 5/7
- Girls und Panzer das Finale (Japanese/Anime) 5/7
- Tane Maku Tabibito (Japanese) 5/7~5/13
- Utsukushiki Yuwaku (Japanese) 5/14
- Godzilla vs. Kong (English) 5/14
- Fate/Grand Order Paladin; Agateram 5/15
- Inochi no Teishajyo (Japanese) 5/21
- Jigoku no Hanazono (Japanese) 5/21
- A Quiet Place Part II (English) 5/28
- Tomorrow's Dinner Table (Japanese) 5/28
- HOKUSAI (Japanese) 5/28
- Brothers in Brothel (Japanese) 6/4
- Rurouni Kenshin: The Beginning (Japanese) 6/4

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

## Two Views of Hiroshige's 53 Stations of the Tokaido

**Dates:** Now ~ June 27th (Sunday)

**Hours:** 9:30-17:00 (Last entry is at 16:30)

**Location:** Hokkaido Asahikawa Museum of Art (Located in Tokiwa Park)

**Admission:** General ¥1000, High School and University Students ¥600, Elementary and Junior High School Students ¥300

**Notes:** Closed Mondays (Except 5/3), and closed on 5/6 (Thursday)

The Tokaido was a route used in ancient times that connected eastern and western Japan, with several post stations in-between that offered food and lodging to travelers. The Tokaido was one of five main routes that connected Edo with the outer provinces, and ran along the coast of eastern Japan. At first, the Tokaido was primarily used by the government and military, with limited access for ordinary people. However, during the Bunsei period (1804-1830), the road was used by many for leisurely trips as well. Books about those making pilgrimages to the Ise Grand Shrine on the Tokaido became best-sellers, further increasing the desire for travel amongst the populace. Amidst this boom, UTAGAWA Hiroshige's series of ukiyo-e woodblock prints "The 53 Stations of Tokaido" was published, becoming well-loved for its vivid illustrations of famous locations along the route. Amongst UTAGAWA's many series of works depicting the Tokaido, this exhibition will feature his most popular series, the "Hoeido Edition," as well as the "Marusei Edition," which was created 15 years later. By comparing and contrasting these two editions, you will be able to understand the admiration the people of this time had for the Tokaido and observe the change of scenery between the two editions that portray the subtle changing of times.



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!

# FUN FRIDAYS

**Dates:** May 14th & 28th, June 11th & 25th, July 9th & 23rd

**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.

# FREE Wi Fi

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

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**\*\*The opinions expressed in the essays are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Asahikawa International Committee or the City of Asahikawa.\*\***