

旭川 ASAHIKAWA Info

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Hokkaido News Top 5



February 2018
Compiled by AIC

December 22

A walking path from Tenninkyō Onsen to Hāgoromo Waterfalls will be open to the public in May 2018 for the first time in 5 years. The path was closed due to the 2013 landslide. Hāgoromo Waterfalls reach up to 270 meters in height, one of the biggest in Hokkaido and chosen as one of the 100 best waterfalls in Japan.

December 31

The Maruyama Zoo in Sapporo City announced a plan to implement the use of AI for animal health and housing management. The zoo is teaming up with Hokkaido University and local IT companies to explore the possibilities of the early detection of diseases by using AI to analyze animal locomotion and sounds.

January 6

Takasu-based adventurer Yasunaga OGITA reached the South Pole on a solo trek unassisted, becoming the first Japanese to achieve a feat of this kind. There are only 20 such people in the world. The journey lasted 50 days and 1,126 km. OGITA said "I just kept walking step by step and didn't give up or make compromises."

January 13

Research conducted by Hokkaido University has concluded that warm waters off the coast of north Shiretoko make it difficult for salmon fry (newly hatched salmon) to move to the Sea of Okhotsk offshore. This lowers the fry's survival rate, explaining the drop in numbers of recent salmon catches.

January 15

The Furano Grape Research Institute announced that "Furano No.2" (ふらの2号), a special grape variety used for icewines, was harvested on the morning of January 14 and will be ready for sale in December 2018. The grapes were harvested under Canadian icewine standards; grapes have to be naturally frozen on the vine and pressed in a continuous process while the air temperature is -8°C or lower for at least 24 hours.



For further information or to register for events contact:

Asahikawa International Committee
(SUGANO Ayumi, Daniel LIZARRAGA,
or SAITO Emmy)

Location:

International/City Affairs Division,
Regional Development Dept.

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ASAHIKAWA Winter Garden

北彩都あさひかわ 冬のガーデン

The Asahikawa Kitasaito Winter Garden is now open to the public! Get pulled in a sled by a snowmobile at the Snow Train, skate for free in the open air at the Yukki Rink, and experience the thrill of riding in a snow raft! This is your chance to fully enjoy the winter season!

Yukki Rink: Now - 2/12 (Monday, Holiday), 10:00-19:00, Asahikawa Station North Square

Snow Train: Now - 2/12 (Monday, Holiday), 10:00-16:00, Runs to and from the Asahikawa Station South Square and the Garden Center at Kitasaito Garden

Snow Raft/Banana Boat Rides: Now - 2/3 (Saturday), 10:00 -16:00, Garden Center

For Further Information Contact: 0166-25-6212

Notes: The skating rink is free of charge (includes shoe rentals). You must be wearing a hat and gloves to use the rink. Admission fee for the Snow Train, Snow Raft, and Banana Boat: ¥200 (Elementary school students and below are free with paying adult)

6th Annual Asahikawa Winter Photography Contest

第6旭川冬の写真コンクール

Let's show the world the beauty of Asahikawa's winter season! The purpose of this contest is to convey the uniquely beautiful winter in Asahikawa to the rest of Hokkaido, Japan, and the world. There are even awards given to best photo taken on a smart phone and a separate category for kids! Award winning photos are displayed at various locations throughout the city.

Theme: Conveying the Beauty of Winter in Asahikawa

Entry Period: Now until 2/15 (Thursday) for web submissions and until 2/19 (Monday) for print submissions

Eligibility: Photos must be taken within Asahikawa city limits. 3 submissions are allowed per person. Photos that have won prizes in prior competitions or have been published are ineligible. Photos that have been previously uploaded on personal social media accounts are not considered "published." Check online for information on how to submit your photos.

For Further Information Contact: 0166-25-6488



Dog Exhibition

いぬ展

2018 is the year of the dog, and what better way is there to celebrate it than going to an exhibition entirely composed of dog art! Do you anticipate a ruff year? Soothe your soul with paws-itively incredible art provided directly from the community of Asahikawa. Unleash your passion for art, fetch your friends, and peruse the collection!

Date: Now until 2/24 (Saturday)

Time: 10:00-18:00

Venue: Gallery Puru Puru (7-jo-dori 8-chome)

Admission: Free

For Further Information Contact: 0166-73-8289

Notes: Closed on Mondays and Tuesdays.



Life ... The Gift from Asahiya

Life ... あさひやまからのおくりもの

This musical is sure to leave you with pleasant afterthoughts and warm feelings. A preview is written below:

Mai lived happily with her mother and father in Tokyo until one day, her father's toy store went bankrupt and was forced to close. Mai was shocked beyond belief. They moved to her father's hometown, Asahikawa, but Mai couldn't handle the change in the environment. With her hopes and dreams fading away, she becomes a shut-in. Her father wants to help her get back on her feet again so he takes her to the Asahiya Zoo. There, she meets incredible animals and caretakers who leave her with an inspirational message. This is the story of that message: The message of life.

Date: 2/4 (Sunday)

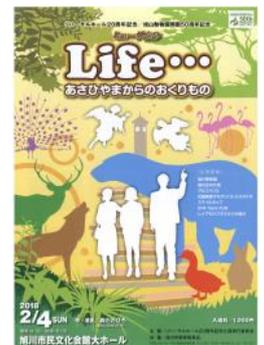
Time: Opens 14:30, Starts 15:00

Venue: Asahikawa Civic Culture Hall, Large Hall (7-jo-dori 8-chome)

Admission: General Admission ¥1,000

Ticket Office: Asahikawa Civic Culture Center Shop, Machinaka Exchange Center

For Further Information Contact: 080-4041-8489



Winter Concert ウインターコンサート

This Winter Concert is composed of and organized by amateur performing musicians living in the city of Asahikawa and the surrounding suburbs. You will be able to hear piano, guitar, mandolin, a reed instrument trio, a choir, and more! Look forward to the unique performances of all 11 of the performing groups!

Date: 2/12 (Monday, Holiday)

Time: Opens 13:30, Starts 14:00

Venue: Asahikawa Taisetsu Crystal Hall, Concert Hall (Kagura 3-jo 7-chome)

Admission: Free, but you need to pick up a ticket at on the locations below.

Ticket Office: Kawai Asahikawa Shop, Yamaha Music Retailing Store, Gyokkodo, Potato Service Counter, Asahikawa Civic Culture Center, Asahikawa Taisetsu Crystal Hall.

For Further Information Contact: 0166-69-2000



59th Kirarin Dream Concert “Our Friends at AMP”

第59回木楽輪夢コンサート「AMPの仲間たち」

This concert is sponsored by the Asahikawa Music Promotion Committee and will feature YOSHIMOTO Moe on violin and KUROSAKI Takumi on piano.

Date: 2/17 (Saturday)

Time: Opens 13:30, Starts 14:00

Venue: Kirarin Hall (Connected to the Kagura Community Center, Kagura 3-jo 6-chome)

Admission: Free, but you must call or apply from the Kagura Community Center website to reserve your spot. The seating capacity is 80 persons.

For Further Information Contact: 0166-61-6194



Asahikawa University High School Brass Band Club Regular Concert

旭川大学高校吹奏楽部第19回定期演奏会

The Asahikawa University High School Brass Band Club is back with their 19th regular concert! They will be playing “Poetic Intermezzo” by James Barnes, “Wind of the Valley” and “Comet of the Northern Sky” by HAYASHI Daichi, “Higi IV ‘March’” by NISHIMURA Akira. Come and enjoy the wonderful music of these up and coming musicians!

Date: 2/17 (Saturday)

Time: Opens: 17:30, Starts 18:00

Venue: Asahikawa Taisetsu Crystal Hall, Concert Hall (Kagura 3-jo 7-chome)

Admission: General Admission ¥500

Ticket Office: Asahikawa University High School, Yamaha Music Retailing Store

For Further Information Contact: 0166-48-1221



Japan Ground Self-Defense Force 2nd Division Band 5th Chamber Music Performance

陸上自衛隊 第2音楽隊 第5回室内楽演奏会

The Japan Ground Self-Defense Force 2nd Division Band's origins started in 1954 with the purpose of providing morale to the troops and for advertising purposes. In 1975, the name of the band changed to its current name and is located in the city of Asahikawa. The 2nd Division Band holds regular concerts, participates in music festivals, and tours throughout Hokkaido as a part of its regular activities. They even performed the theme for “Beauty and the Beast” at last year's Summer Festival Fireworks Exhibition Opening Ceremony. For this performance, they will be playing chamber music, a form of classical music composed for a small group of instruments.

Date: 2/24 (Saturday)

Time: Opens 17:30, Starts 18:00

Venue: Asahikawa Taisetsu Crystal Hall, Concert Hall (Kagura 3-jo 7-chome)

Admission: Free, but you must fill out and send a postcard with information (Name, phone number, address, etc.) to reserve your spot. Contact the number below for more details on how to send a postcard. Please use one postcard per person.

For Further Information Contact: 0166-51-6111

Notes: You must reserve your tickets by 2/6 (Tuesday)



EVENTS IN ASAHIKAWA FOR FEBRUARY

Hello Asahikawa!



Name: Stephen Hayes
Home Country: New Zealand
Interviewed: January 16th, 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!

AIC: So Stephen, what brings you to Japan? Is it your first time?

Stephen: My wife is from Japan. We were living in New Zealand but thought we should try to live in Japan for a while. We have young children so we thought we should try it while they are young. I came on the JET Programme in August 2016, and have been teaching English at a high school in Asahikawa. I had visited Japan for two weeks about 5 years ago, but this was my first time to Hokkaido.



AIC: Is this your first time out of your home country? Where else have you been?

Stephen: I had done a bit of travel in South East Asia and America.



AIC: Sounds fun! Do you speak Japanese or any other languages?

Stephen: I am trying to learn Japanese, but it is difficult to find time. My family speaks to me in English, and to each other in Japanese, so I often feel like a foreigner in my own home! I don't speak any other languages.

AIC: How long do you plan on being here in Asahikawa?

Stephen: We were planning to stay until at least August 2019, but we are going home in a few months at short notice because of my father's health. But we love it in Asahikawa, it is a great place to live, we would happily live here forever if circumstances allowed.

AIC: Sorry to hear that you're heading back already. Where are you from originally?

Stephen: I am from New Zealand. The lifestyle in Asahikawa for us has been surprisingly similar, lots of nature and outdoor activities. The winter is completely different, but apart from occasional nerves driving on the road, I think the winter here is fantastic. I will miss it a lot.

AIC: What are your hobbies? Are you into winter sports?

Stephen: I have enjoyed learning ice skating and cross country skiing. There are many other winter things I would like to do if I had the time, but cross country skiing is my favourite. It is not possible to do this where I am from, so it is very interesting for me.

AIC: Lastly, how do you feel about karaoke?

Stephen: I don't do it often, but when I do, I either love it or hate it, never in between.

AIC: Thank you for letting me interview you!

Stephen: You're welcome.



Explore Asahikawa!



In this edition, we interviewed Mr. Nobuta, one of the owners of Izakaya Tenkin. The Tenkin name spans multiple restaurants and has a rich history in Asahikawa. What makes Izakaya Tenkin an Asahikawa favorite? Read more about Izakaya Tenkin and Mr. Nobuta's thoughts below!

AIC: Did you set your sights on working as a chef from the time you were young?

Mr. Nobuta: Yes, I did from when I was very young. I loved cooking. I was aware that my father was managing this restaurant from the time I was little. That's when I knew I wanted to be the successor of the family business.

AIC: How was the name "Tenkin" decided upon? *Note: Tenkin is written using the kanji for heaven/sky "天" (ten) and the kanji for money/metal "金" (kin).*

Mr. Nobuta: From long ago in Japan it was often said that "The customer is god," and that remains true for us today. "The customer is god," in other words, you must value your customers. We strive to make our customers happy and it is shown in our service and mentality. If we don't get customers, we won't be able to do business, right? That business becomes money, and that is our livelihood. God lives in the heavens, and "天金" (Tenkin) represents money falling to us from those heavens.

AIC: Could you tell me a little about the history of Tenkin and how it started?

Mr. Nobuta: Well, my grandfather and my grandmother founded Tenkin. The two of them ran the restaurant until my grandfather joined the war and went to Manchuria. He came back, they continued the restaurant, and from there onwards it got bigger and bigger. They had a shop that specialized in meat like shabu-shabu and sukiyaki, and another one that specialized in more traditional Japanese cooking. The first Tenkin was actually right here in this building, and when they made a new Tenkin restaurant on 3-jo-dori they decided to make that one the flagship shop and turn this one into an izakaya. We've been running those two shops for several decades now.

AIC: What does Tenkin specialize in?

Mr. Nobuta: As an izakaya, our focus is on "fast, affordable, and delicious". We get our dishes out fast, provide it to our customers at an affordable price, and serve food with superior taste. Those are our standards. We carefully select in-season ingredients from all over of the prefecture and this is how we are able to serve delicious meals to our customers.



AIC: What are some of the seasonal specialties around this time of the year?

Mr. Nobuta: In January right now, Pacific cod is in season. Soft cod roe in ponzu sauce is incredible this time of the year. You can eat it with ponzu sauce, you can make tempura out of it, and you can eat it with a beaten egg poured on top. It is even good in hot pot. In February, sailfin poacher is in season. Crab season peaks in March. Hokkaido has 3 different surrounding seas: The Sea of Japan, the Sea of Okhotsk, and the Pacific Ocean. You can harvest different types of seafood at each sea at any given time of the year. Even if it's the same type of seafood, the time that each one can be harvested

differs depending on the sea. For example, with crab, the season is about to start in Wakkanai. If you head down south towards Mombetsu and even Kushiro, that's where we have been getting our crab catches recently. The crab season in the Pacific Ocean is over, and now it is moving on up to the Sea of Okhotsk. We like to tell our customers what foods taste the best in that season and from there they learn for themselves.



AIC: **Are you interested in foreign cuisine?**

Mr. Nobuta: I am. I haven't had the time to dedicate myself to it, but I am definitely interested. There are so many high-quality ingredients in foreign cuisine like truffles. I've never cooked with them before, but I have eaten them.

AIC: **If you could study a single type of foreign cuisine, what would it be?**

Mr. Nobuta: It would have to be French cuisine. I would take French cuisine and make it match the Japanese izakaya atmosphere. Instead of eating it in the traditional sophisticated way, you'd eat it like you'd eat anything else we serve here. I think that would be pretty interesting. I want to make it fast, affordable, and delicious.

AIC: **Lastly, please give a message to our readers!**

Mr. Nobuta: We want to continue providing the most delicious foods from each season to our customers, and we would like for more of the foreign residents here to experience the quality of these fresh, Japanese ingredients. We look forward to seeing you stop by!

We would like to thank Mr. Nobuta, one of the owners of Izakaya Tenkin for granting us the opportunity for an interview. Check out their website at www.tenkin.net for hours and more information. Thank you for reading!

★ *Movies ~ February* ★

*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 / ☎ 74 – 6411

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

Now Showing

- The Dark Tower (English)
- The Crimes That Blind (Japanese)
- Colors of Wind (Japanese) ~2/22
- Uso wo Aisuru Onna (Japanese)
- Paddington 2 (English)
- Geostorm (English)
- Monkey King: Hero is Back (Japanese/Anime)
- Kingsman: The Golden Circle (English/PG12)
- That is not a Child but a Minor (Japanese)
- Yo-kai Watch Shadowside: The Return of the Oni King (Japanese/Anime)
- The 8-Year Engagement (Japanese)
- Star Wars: The Last Jedi (English)
- Destiny: Kamakura Monogatari (Japanese)
- Fullmetal Alchemist (Japanese)
- Kaiketsu Zorori Movie: ZZ no Himitsu (Japanese/Anime)

Coming Soon

- Funouhan (Japanese/PG12) 2/1
- In This Corner of the World (Japanese/Anime) 2/3
- Interlude in Prague (English) 2/3~2/16
- Manhunt (Japanese/English/Mandarin) 2/9
- Tonight, at the Movies (Japanese) 2/10
- The Greatest Showman (English) 2/16
- Ku Kai (Japanese) 2/24
- Black Panther (English) 3/1
- Doraemon the Movie: Nobita's Treasure Island (Japanese/Anime) 3/3
- Principal (Japanese) 3/3

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

★ Movies ~ February ★

*<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 / ☎ 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

- The Dark Tower (English)
- The Crimes That Blind (Japanese)
- CINEMA FIGHTERS: 6 short films (Japanese)
- K Ballet Company: Cleopatra in Cinema (Japanese) ~2/2
- Tremble All You Want (Japanese)
- Paddington 2 (Japanes)
- Geostorm (Japanese 4DX3D, English 2D)
- Mazinger Z: Infinity (Japanese2D, 4DX)
- Evil and the Mask (Japanese)
- Renegades (English)
- Star Wars: The Last Jedi (Japanese2D, 4DX3D, English2D, 4DX3D)
- Kingsman: The Golden Circle (Japanese 4DX, English 2D/PG12)
- Yo-kai Watch Shadowside: The Return of the Oni King (Japanese/Anime)
- The 8-Year Engagement (Japanese)
- Destiny: Kamakura Monogatari (Japanese)
- Kamen Rider Heisei Generations Final: Build & Ex-Aid with Legend Rider (Japanese)

- Funouhan (Japanese/PG12) 2/1
- Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri (English) 2/1
- Fate/stay night [Heaven's Feel] I. presage flower (Japanese4DX/Anime) 2/3
- Detective Conan: The Darkest Nightmare (Japanese 4DX/Anime) 2/10
- Tonight, at the Movies (Japanese) 2/10
- The Greatest Showman (English) 2/16
- River's Edge (Japanese/R15+) 2/16
- The Emoji Movie (Japanese/Anime) 2/17
- Black Panther (English) 3/1
- Doraemon the Movie: Nobita's Treasure Island (Japanese/Anime) 3/3
- Principal (Japanese) 3/3
- Sunrise 4DX Collection (Japanese/Anime) 3/3

★ **Dinos Cinemas:** Taisetsu-dori 5-chome / ☎ 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

- Loving Vincent (English) ~2/16
- The Dark Tower (English)
- Hanagatami (Japanese/PG12) ~2/9
- An Inconvenient Sequel: Truth to Power (English) ~2/2
- Girls und Panzer Final Chapter Pt.1 (Japanese/Anime)
- Geostorm (English)
- Ito-kun A to E (Japanese)
- Godzilla Kaiju Wakusei (Japanese)
- Is the Order a Rabbit?? ~Dear My Sister (Japanese/Anime)
- Kingsman: The Golden Circle (English/PG12)
- The 8-Year Engagement (Japanese)
- Yo-kai Watch Shadowside: The Return of the Oni King (Japanese/Anime)
- Star Wars: The Last Jedi (English)
- Kamen Rider Heisei Generations Final: Build & Ex-Aid with Legend Rider (Japanese)
- Destiny: Kamakura Monogatari (Japanese)
- The Detective is in the Bar 3 (Japanese)

Coming Soon

- Funouhan (Japanese/PG12) 2/1
- The Scythian Lamb (Japanese) 2/3
- Tonight, at the Movies (Japanese) 2/10
- The Greatest Showman (English) 2/16
- The Beguiled (English) 2/23
- Ku Kai (Japanese) 2/24
- Black Panther (English) 3/1
- Principal (Japanese) 3/3
- Doraemon the Movie: Nobita's Treasure Island (Japanese/Anime) 3/3

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

ASAHIKAWA WINTER FESTIVAL

The 59th Asahikawa Winter Festival will take place 2/7 (Wednesday) through 2/12 (Monday)! There are many events going on at the same time so pick up the Asahikawa Winter Festival Executive Committee's event leaflet (pictured below) in either English or Japanese for the full scoop on all events, including a guide map. There is no parking on festival grounds, so be sure to use the free shuttle bus to get to the festival!



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: February 9th & 23rd, March 9th & 23rd, April 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.



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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.****