

旭川 ASAHIKAWA Info

February 2020 VOL. 279

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Hokkaido News Top 5



February 2020
Compiled by AIC

Dec. 22

The Hokkaido government is in the final stage of eliminating smoking areas for its employees, and is aiming to be completely smoke-free by June, 2020. Other municipalities going smoke-free have received many complaints from citizens reporting that nearby smoking areas are being over-crowded by city employees. The Hokkaido government will talk to these municipalities in order to come up with solutions for such situations.

Jan. 1

The number of fatalities from traffic accidents that occurred in Hokkaido during 2019 has increased from the previous year by 11 people. The number had been declining for the past four years. More accidents happen from October through December.

Jan. 6

The Sapporo district meteorological observatory announced its weather summary for the month of December in Hokkaido. At 22 observation sites, the average snowfall for December was 52% less than usual, which was the lowest ever for the month since records began in 1961. The lowest was in Hiroo Town in Tokachi sub-prefecture at 87% less snowfall, with only a meager 10 cm of snowfall.

Jan. 8

Hokkaido Dairy Products Co., Ltd. has come up with a new way to sell its fresh milk in Taiwan. Controlled low-temperature chilled milk is selling 4 times more these days than last year. The average shelf life for milk is about 15 days, however, the company was successful in increasing its shelf life to 35 days. Now, the milk can even be shipped overseas.

Jan. 11

Record-low snowfall is creating some concerns for overwintering vegetables. Snow creates a much needed moisturizing effect for vegetables in the soil during the winter. However, a lack of snowfall accelerates soil freezing, so soil might remain frozen even after spring has come. Hokkaido is experiencing half of its average snowfall thus far.



Inside This Issue...

For further information

or to register for events contact:

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

Location:

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

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Hokkaido News Top 5 <i>By AIC</i>	1	Movies	6-7
Upcoming Events	2-3	Bulletin Board	8
Hello Asahikawa! (Kevin Noreen) <i>Interviewed by AIC</i>	4-6		

Paintings by Asahikawa Artists 旭川ゆかりの画家たち 七彩の美

The history of art in Asahikawa goes back over 100 years. In this exhibition, you will see over 60 works of art created with a variety of hues similar to that of a rainbow with its seven brilliant colors. In these gloomy winter months, make a trip to the art museum for a breath of life!

Date: Now~3/15 (Sunday), Closed Mondays

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

Location: Hokkaido Asahikawa Museum of Art (Inside Tokiwa Park)

Admission: General ¥800 (¥600), High school students ¥500 (¥400), Junior high and elementary school students ¥300 (¥200). Prices in parenthesis are for groups of 10 or more purchased in advance. Those holding a disability identification booklet can enter for free

For Further Information Contact: 0166-25-2577

Notes: Contact for more info on repeater discounts, the Museums' Linking System, and for information on the museum's irregular holidays.



“Female Chorus Album I” by NAKADA Yoshinao “100th Printing Commemoration Concert” 中田喜直作曲「女声合唱曲集 I」～第100刷発行記念演奏会～

This concert celebrates the 100th printing of NAKADA Yoshinao's “Female Chorus Album I,” a truly impressive feat that shows the widespread appeal of this book and its songs. A choir group will be performing a variety of songs from this album.

Date: 2/9 (Sunday)

Time: Starts 15:30

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

Admission: ¥1,000, Free seating. Price is the same for students

Ticket Office: Asahikawa Taisetsu Crystal Hall Museum Shop, Yamaha Music Retailing Store

For Further Information Contact: 19th NAKADA Yoshinao Commemoration Competition Executive Committee, SUGANO at 0166-52-2659



Asahikawa University High School Brass Band Club 21st Regular Concert 旭川大学高校吹奏楽部 第21回定期演奏会

Come see the Asahikawa University High School perform a variety of classical pieces, including Apassionato by Vaclav Nelhybel, “Watchman, Tell us of the Night” by Mark Camphouse, and much more!

Date: 2/11 (Tuesday, Holiday)

Time: Opens 17:30, Starts 18:00

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

Admission: General ¥500 (Same price whether tickets are reserved or bought on the day of the concert)

Ticket Office: Yamaha Music Retailing Store, Coach and Four, Asahikawa Civic Culture Hall Shop, Asahikawa Taisetsu Crystal Hall Museum Shop, Asahikawa University High School

For Further Information Contact: Asahikawa University High School, KAWASHIMA at 0166-48-1221



Asahikawa History Citizen's Theatre “Asahikawa Youth Graffiti The Golden Age” 旭川歴史市民劇 旭川青春グラフィティ ザ・ゴールデンエイジ

The Asahikawa History Citizen's Theatre will be performing a show about Asahikawa's past and the people that lived there, spanning from the end of the Taisho Era to the beginning of the Showa Era. You will also see a preview for their August play!

Date & Time: 2/15 (Saturday) Opens 18:30, Starts 19:00

2/16 (Sunday) Opens 13:30, Starts 14:00

Venue: Asahikawa Civic Culture Hall, Small Hall (7-jo-dori 9-chome)

Admission: General ¥500. Tickets can be reserved or bought on the day of the show. Free seating

Ticket Office: Machinaka Bunkagoya, Kodomo Fukido, Junkudo Bookstore Asahikawa

For Further Information Contact: Asahikawa History Citizen's Theatre Executive Committee Office at 0166-23-2801 from 10:00-18:00 (closed Mondays), or by email at bunkagoya@sky.plala.or.jp



7th Campaign for a Brighter Society Family Concert 第7回 明るい社会づくり運動 ファミリーコンサート

At this concert, you will hear a Doraemon medley, a MISORA Hibari Medley, Japanese Graffiti XVII, and a medley composed of many fun, famous songs! Bring the family and enjoy this free concert!

Date: 2/16 (Sunday)
Time: Opens 13:30, Starts 14:00
Venue: Asahikawa Public Hall (Inside Tokiwa Park)
Admission: Free. Free seating
For Further Information Contact: WATANABE at 090-7928-9398
Notes: Preschool children are allowed to join the concert. A day-care room will also be available if you would like to use it.



Asahikawa Crystal Brass The 2nd Subscription Concert 旭川クリスタル・プラス 第2回 定期公演

The Asahikawa Crystal Brass is a brass ensemble that formed in June, 2016. The Asahikawa Taisetsu Crystal Hall is their main rehearsal location, so they put "crystal" in the group's name. This will be their first time performing at the Hall, and their second performance ever!

Date: 2/23 (Sunday)
Time: Opens 12:45, Starts 13:30 (A trombone quartet pre-concert performance will begin at 13:05)
Venue: Asahikawa Taisetsu Crystal Hall, Concert Hall (Kagura 3-jo 7-chome)
Admission: General ¥1,000, High School and under ¥500 (Pre-school children and under are free)
Ticket Office: Ticket Pia (P code: 169-131), Yamaha Music Retailing Store, Asahikawa Taisetsu Crystal Hall Museum Shop, Asahikawa Civic Culture Hall Shop, Coach and Four
For Further Information Contact: Call the Asahikawa Crystal Brass Office, KOMATSU at 050-5373-2432 (after 18:00), or email at asahikawa.crystal.brass@gmail.com



Hokkaido Asahikawa Commercial High School Brass Band Club 33rd Regular Concert 北海道旭川商業高等学校吹奏楽部 第33回定期演奏会

The Asahikawa Commercial High School's brass band club is holding another exciting concert this year! In addition to a variety of classical pieces, they will be playing a few pieces composed by the brass band club itself! Come on and join the fun!

Date & Time: 2/23 (Sunday) Opens 16:30, Starts 17:00
 2/24 (Monday) Opens 12:30, Starts 13:00
Venue: Asahikawa Civic Culture Hall, Large Hall (7-jo-dori 9-chome)
Admission: Reserved seating ¥1,500, Unreserved seating ¥1,000, Student unreserved seating (high school students and under) ¥500
Ticket Office: Lawson Ticket (L code: 11337), Asahikawa Civic Culture Hall Shop, Yamaha Music Retailing Store
For Further Information Contact: 080-3231-5975 from 9:00-17:00, weekdays only



Winter Concert ウインターコンサート

This winter concert is brought to you by local amateur musicians. Not only will you see a wide variety of instruments such as the mandolin, oboe, accordion, and the flugelhorn, but you will also see performances from nine different groups!

Date: 2/24 (Monday, Holiday)
Time: Opens 13:30, Starts 14:00
Venue: Asahikawa Taisetsu Crystal Hall, Concert Hall (Kagura 3-jo 7-chome)
Admission: Free, however, a ticket is needed to enter and can be picked up for no cost at the below locations. Unreserved seating
Ticket Office: Kawai Music Shop, Yamaha Music Retailing Store, Gyokkodo, Potato Service Center, Coach and Four, Asahikawa Civic Culture Hall Shop, Asahikawa Taisetsu Crystal Hall Museum Shop
For Further Information Contact: Asahikawa Taisetsu Crystal Hall at 0166-69-2000
Notes: In the event of full seating, entrance may be refused at the door



EVENTS IN ASAHIKAWA FOR FEBRUARY



Hello Asahikawa!

Name: Kevin Noreen
Home Country: U.S.A.
Interviewed: 1/27/2020

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: Hello Kevin! Where are you from?

Kevin: I'm from a small town in Colorado called Gunnison. It's about 6,000 people.

AIC: Colorado? I'm guessing the weather is pretty similar to here, yeah?

Kevin: It has a really similar climate. We have long cold winters and we usually get a lot of snow. The winters are followed by a nice beautiful summer that is short. We don't have a long spring, either. That's mud season. It's funny that I actually moved from the coldest place in Colorado to the coldest place in Japan.

AIC: So, what brings you to Japan?

Kevin: I visited Japan in 2018 for a ski trip and loved it here. I wanted to do something different, so I looked into options to get a job in Japan, and teaching English was a really good option. I applied for a job with AEON and was accepted, and put my preference in that I wanted to be in Asahikawa. I was psyched that I could come back, teach, and ski a lot too.

AIC: How does living in Japan compare to the U.S.?

Kevin: It's really different in a lot of ways, but really similar in others. Like I said, the weather is similar. Everybody here is really friendly. There are a lot of similarities with the tourism industry. Colorado gets a lot of ski tourism—same with Hokkaido especially. I noticed that on my first trip here there were a lot of similarities there. Similar struggles, similar things that people are trying to accomplish in order to bring tourists here, and also the pros and cons that kind of economy can create. The biggest difference would be the language and some of the cultural differences. I'm enjoying experiencing those and I still feel like I have a ton to learn. The food is so diverse, the cultural is so nuanced. It's really cool to see.

AIC: What do you like about Japan?

Kevin: The people are all really friendly. Even though I can still hardly speak any Japanese, if you smile and make a bit of an effort they're always friendly, happy to help, happy to talk to you. It's fun to see people from a different culture in a new light as someone living in that culture. I think it's a really respectful culture. It's really neat to see how much people care about others, and how "omotenashi" adds so much more meaning and depth to hospitality. I often thrive in places that are really foreign for me, so I enjoy that aspect of it too. Teaching has been incredibly rewarding. I enjoy the people I work with and where I work.



AIC: **What are some of your favorite spots here?**

Kevin: I love going to Kamui Ski Links. I spend a lot of time there. In Asahikawa, I enjoy going to the river walkways and exploring them. I have a lot of fun going to second hand shops and checking those out. There are a lot of nice bars and coffee shops where I definitely like spending time. There's so much to see. The diversity of the food is great. My town has probably around 12 restaurants, so coming here was overwhelming. The quality of the food in general is better than the United States.



AIC: **You must get asked this all the time, but do you like Japanese food?**

Kevin: I love Japanese food, and I go for yakitori a lot. It's fun to get a bunch of different little things. I like ramen a lot too. I've had shabu-shabu a couple times, and definitely enjoyed that. I also enjoy the traditional Japanese-style breakfast with rice, raw egg, and miso soup. I enjoy that too. I find there's a lot of good baked goods and pastries here, which I was sort of surprised about. You hear about all the rice in Japan, but a lot of places here have high quality baked goods. I'm definitely happy with the food.

AIC: **We sort of touched on this already, but what are your hobbies?**

Kevin: I love skiing and mountain biking. Those are my two go-to sports for winter and summer. I enjoy reading, and I'm really into woodworking and craftsmanship. I worked construction for a long time in the United States, so I got into metal working for a little bit before I moved to Japan. I also like writing and traveling.

AIC: **What kind of things do you like to read and write?**

Kevin: I have been reading a compilation of Japanese stories. The book is titled "Modern Japanese Stories," but it was published in the early 1900s. They're "modern," but a lot of the stories are from the Edo period or even earlier. I really enjoy reading classical style pieces, so I'm a big fan of Hemmingway. My favorite book is by a fairly unknown British author named James Hilton called "Lost Horizon." For writing, I like writing stuff about people. A lot of the journalism I've done have been profile pieces about people who live in the community. For reading, I also like fantasy novels.

AIC: **What languages do you speak?**

Kevin: I speak English and German. I lived in Switzerland for a year during high school and stayed with a host family, so I learned German at that point and I've kept it up over the years since then. Those are the two languages I speak. I've studied a lot of other languages and know a handful of words in a few others too. I have been struggling to learn Japanese. I find that the writing system is extremely difficult. When I learned German I was a lot younger, and now I feel like I don't have the same capacity for memorization that I used to. I feel like if I were in a position where I had to use it all the time and needed to talk to people I could pick it up quickly, but Japanese has been difficult for me to study in more of a book sense. I feel pretty good that I'll be able to pick up speaking and listening, but writing is a whole nother game.



Continued on Page 6

AIC: Do you miss anything about the U.S.?
Kevin: There's not a lot of food I miss, well, my Mom's a really good cook so sometimes I miss the comfort food of home. Mostly friends and family more than anything. I don't miss a lot of real activities or foods, because I kind of do a lot of the same things over here. My sister just got married right before I came to Japan, it's cool to see them start their life together. They just got a little puppy, so I've been getting pictures of their puppy. (laughs)



AIC: Lastly, do you like Karaoke?
Kevin: Apparently I do, yeah. I had only done Karaoke maybe two or three times before coming to Japan. About a week ago I went out with my coworkers, went to a karaoke place, and had a lot of fun! I'll definitely go back sometime. I need to work on my singing, though. Definitely can't hit the high notes.

AIC: That's all I have! Thank you for participating.
Kevin: No worries!

★ *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 / 0166 - 74 - 6411
 URL: cinema.aeoncinema.com/wm/asahikawa (Japanese)

Now Showing

- AI Amok (Japanese)
- Maeda Kensetsu Fantasy Eigyobu (Japanese)
- Bad Boys for Life (English)
- Okasan to Issho: Surikae Kamen wo Tsukamaero! (Japanese)
- Cats (English)
- Last Letter (Japanese)
- The Memory Eraser (Japanese)
- Richard Jewell (English)
- Parasite (Korean/PG12)
- Kaiji: Final Game (Japanese)
- Ford v. Ferrari (English)
- Tora-san, Welcome Back (Japanese)
- Shinkansen Henkei Robo Shinkalion: The Marvelous Fast ALFA-X That Comes From the Future (Japanese/Anime)
- Kamen Rider-Reiwa the First Generation (Japanese)
- Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker (English)
- My Hero Academia: Heroes: Rising (Japanese/Anime)
- Yokai Gakuen Y Neko wa Hero ni Nareruka (Japanese/Anime)
- Murder at Shijinso (Japanese)
- Kiss Me at the Stroke of Midnight (Japanese)
- Frozen 2 (English)
- Sumikko Gurashi (Japanese/Anime)

Coming Soon

- Wotakoi (Japanese) 2/7
- The Peanut Butter Falcon (English) 2/7
- Die Kleine Hexe (English) 2/14~20
- 1917 (English) 2/14
- Stolen Identity 2 (Japanese) 2/21
- Charlie's Angels (English) 2/21
- Bombshell (English) 2/21
- Meow Meow Japanese History (Japanese/Anime) 2/22
- 37 Seconds (Japanese/PG12) 2/28
- Fukushima 50 (Japanese) 3/6
- Judy (English) 3/6
- Doraemon: Nobita's New Dinosaur (Japanese/Anime) 3/6
- Mask Ward (Japanese) 3/6

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 / 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

- AI Amok (Japanese)
- Bad Boys for Life (English/R15+)
- Knives Out (English)
- Our 30 Minute Sessions (Japanese)
- Cats (English)
- Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker (English 4DX)
- Summer Wars (Japanese 4DX/Anime)
- The Memory Eraser (Japanese)
- Taiyo no Ie (Japanese)
- Jojo Rabbit (English)
- Ford v. Ferrari (English)
- Kaiji: Final Game (Japanese)
- Tora-san, Welcome Back (Japanese)
- My Hero Academia: Heroes: Rising (Japanese/Anime)
- Frozen 2 (English 4DX)

Coming Soon

- King of Prism ALL Stars Prism Show Best 10 (Japanese/Anime) 2/7
- The Knight of Shadows: Between Yin and Yang (Chinese) 2/7
- Goodbye: Life Comedy of Starting From a Lie (Japanese) 2/14
- Darwin's Amazing Animals (Japanese) 2/21
- Red (Japanese/R15+) 2/21
- Midsommar (English/R15+) 2/21
- Escape Room (English 4DX) 2/28
- Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark (English) 2/28
- Fukushima 50 (Japanese) 3/6
- Doraemon: Nobita's New Dinosaur (Japanese/Anime) 3/6
- Mask Ward (Japanese) 3/6

★ **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

- Bad Boys for Life (English)
- AI Amok (Japanese)
- The Upside (French) ~2/6
- Cats (English)
- Signal 100 (Japanese)
- High School Fleet (Japanese/Anime)
- The Memory Eraser (Japanese)
- Ford v. Ferrari (English)
- Downton Abbey (English)
- Tora-san, Welcome Back (Japanese)
- Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker (English)
- Yokai Gakuen Y Neko wa Hero ni Nareruka (Japanese/Anime) ~2/9
- Frozen 2 (English)

Coming Soon

- Howling Village (Japanese) 2/7
- Little Miss Period (Japanese) 2/7~2/13
- The Man Who Feels No Pain (Hindi) 2/7~13
- Pet Sematary (English 2/14~27)
- Eiri (Japanese) 2/14
- 1917 (English) 2/14
- Stolen Identity 2 (Japanese) 2/21
- Charlie's Angles (English) 2/21
- Shimajiro and the Flying Ship (Japanese/Anime) 2/28
- First Love (Japanese) 2/28
- Shirobako (Japanese/Anime) 2/29
- Fukushima 50 (Japanese) 3/6
- Mask Ward (Japanese) 3/6
- Doraemon: Nobita's New Dinosaur (Japanese/Anime) 3/6

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

ASAHIKAWA WINTER FESTIVAL

The 61st Asahikawa Winter Festival will take place 2/6 (Thursday) through 2/11 (Tuesday, Holiday). There are many events happening throughout the festival so pick up the Asahikawa Winter Festival Executive Committee's event leaflet 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!

Fireworks and Projection Mapping Light Show:

The Projection Mapping Light Show will take place every day. Fireworks will take place on 2/6 (Thursday), 2/8 (Saturday), and 2/11 (Tuesday) beginning at 19:00 at the Main Snow Sculpture (Asahibashi Riverside Festival Site).

International Ice Sculpture Competition:

Ice sculptors spend two days crafting their sculptures and showcase them throughout Kaimono Koen all the way to the station. These masterpieces are illuminated every night until the festival ends.

Snow Lights in the Zoo:

Don't miss this rare opportunity to observe the zoo animals at night by the light of hundreds of ice candles. "Snow Lights in the Zoo" will run from 2/6 (Thursday) through 2/11 (Tuesday, Holiday). Hours are 10:30-20:30.

Ice Slide and Snow Sculptures:

Try out the 100m long ice slide at the top of the Main Snow Sculpture and check out the wide variety of small snow sculptures at the Asahibashi Riverside Festival Site!



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: February 14th & 28th, March 13th & 27th, April 10th & 24th

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.****