

旭川 ASAHIKAWA Info

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Hokkaido News Top 5



September 2013

Compiled by TAKADA Nobuhiro

July 31

The mayor of Yubari City presented the Qatar foreign minister with Yubari melons when the mayor visited Doha to express his gratitude to the State of Qatar on July 31. In 2012, Qatar helped the city of Yubari carry out a program, which invited the people in Tohoku region affected by the massive earthquake in 2011. The mayor also treated sheikhs to the melons at a Japanese restaurant there to extend a market for Yubari melons.

August 2

JR Hokkaido announced to close Tappi-Kaitei Station in the Seikan Tunnel which connects Hokkaido and Honshu (the main Japanese island) in early November. The tunnel is planned to go through a renovation in order to resume the operation of the Hokkaido Shinkansen line in fiscal 2015. The only undersea station in Japan opened in 1988 and is located 134 meters under the Tsugaru Strait.

August 6

Transport Police officials in Asahikawa Higashi Police Station handed out flyers to visitors from abroad at the Asahikawa Airport on August 6. The flyers explain traffic rules in Japan to avoid accidents, and are available in English, Chinese and Korean languages. A Korean tourist driving a rented car caused a fatal traffic accident in the town of Biei on August 3.

August 6

Lê Công Vinh, a goal getter of Vietnamese national soccer team, has joined Consadole Sapporo, a professional soccer team in Japan League Division 2, on a season-long loan deal on August 6. The soccer player has participated in 51 international matches and scored 35 international goals. At a press conference, he expressed his wishes to score as many goals as he can.

August 15

Thirteen college basketball teams in and out of Hokkaido are having a training camp in the city of Wakkanai this summer. On top of its cool climate, hospitalities provided by people in Wakkanai have attracted a growing number of college teams over the years. Another advantage of having a camp there is that it is one of the most convenient places for athletes to play practice matches against good teams.



For further information or to register for events contact:

Asahikawa International Committee
(SASAKI Mai, Kim LACEY, or SAITO Emmy)

Location:

International Affairs Division, Civic and Community Services Dept.

Address:

Asahikawa International Center
Feeeal Asahikawa 7F, 1-jo-dori 8-chome, Asahikawa 070-0031

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Special Thanks to KAWAI Tatsuo, Proofreader & Advisor

GENIUS-DALÍ ART PRINT EXHIBITION

奇才・ダリ 版画展

The surrealist artist Salvador Dalí (1904-1989) gained as much fame and notoriety for his flamboyant personality as he did for his works of art, which include many iconic elements such as the melting pocket watches from his 1931 work *The Persistence of Memory*. Later in life Dalí worked extensively in printmaking, using engravings and etchings made upon wood and metal plates. This exhibition features approximately 200 of his prints, and also includes several sculptures.

Date: Now until September 8th (Sunday)

Time: 9:30am to 5:00pm (Closed Mondays)

Venue: Hokkaido Asahikawa Museum of Art (Tokiwa Park)

Admission: General: ¥1,000, High School Students: ¥600,
Elementary/ Jr. High Students: ¥300

For Further Information Contact: 0166-25-2577 (Asahikawa Museum of Art)



THE IMPERSONATION ENTERTAINER KOROKKE'S CONCERT

ものまねエンターテイメント コロツケコンサート

Korokke is not a name of a deep-fried dish with fillings in this case. "Korokke" is also a famous Japanese comedian who specializes in impersonating other celebrities in Japan. This special concert claims to open up Korokke's everything, available only on stage. You will end up tearing up with laughter, so watch out!

Date: September 5th (Thursday)

Time: Daytime stage 2:30 pm, Nighttime stage 6:30 pm

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

Ticket Offices: Gyokkodo Feeal Asahikawa (5F),
Coach&Four Asahikawa Music Corner

Admission: S-Seats ¥5,500, A-Seats ¥5,000

For Further Information Contact: 011-261-9991 (Trust Even Planning)



LEGEND'S AUTUMN CONCERT 2013

レジェンド オータムコンサート 2013

"LEGEND" is the first Japanese Quintet opera unit based in Tokyo. The group was formed in 2005 and ever since its first concert in May, 2006, the five guys have been boasting their unique interpretation of classical music. The unit debuted with Sony Music Direct Inc. in April of 2011 and in November of the same year, released the first long-awaited album. This autumn concert in Asahikawa is a part of their nation-wide tour which will continue in Sapporo.

Date: September 6th (Friday)

Time: Doors 6:00 pm, Show 6:30 pm

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

Admission: SS-Seats ¥6,000, S-Seats ¥5,000, A-Seats ¥3,000

For Further Information Contact: 0166-63-2929 (Taisetsu Crystal Hall Ticket Office)



ASAHIKAWA FRAUEN CALL, THE 22ND CONCERT

旭川フラウエンコール第22コンサート

If you feel like listening to a performance organized locally, then this would be a great concert for you to check out. The concert will also be broadcasted live by NHK and HBC Asahikawa, and by 83.7MHZ FM. Be sure to tune in for some relaxation!

Date: September 7th (Saturday)

Time: Doors 2:30 pm, Show 3:00 pm

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

Admission: ¥1,000

For Further Information Contact: 24-2339 (OOTA), 51-3608 (AOYAGI)



ROARING EARTH! FOUR SEASONS OF LIFE

咆哮する大地 ～命の四季

This dynamic drum performance will be performed by the famous Japanese TAIKO drum troupe, ASKA, which was formed in 1990. Fusing the power of taiko drums with the grace of Japanese dance, the performers create unforgettable stage pieces. There will also be solos on a giant drum, as well as incorporation of other traditional Japanese instruments, such as SHAKUHACHI and SHINOBU. You will be able to enjoy ample expression of the strong Japanese soul with your friends and family.

Date: September 8th (Sunday)
Time: 3:00 pm
Venue: Asahikawa Civic Culture Grand Hall (7-jo 9-chome)
Admission: All Seats ¥4,500, Members ¥4,000
Ticket Offices: Gyokkodo Asahikawa
For Further Information Contact: 0166-57-0244 (MIN-ON Asahikawa)



THE FIFTEENTH HIKOICHI HAYASHIYA'S SOLO RECITAL

第十五回 林家彦いち独演会

If you are looking for an opportunity to enjoy RAKUGO (a form of traditional Japanese verbal entertainment of a comical story-telling), don't miss out on this chance. The storyteller, Hayashiya, will sit on stage, and using a paper fan and a small cloth he will depict a classical Japanese story in the SEIZA sitting position.

Date: September 10th (Tuesday)
Time: Doors 6:30 pm, Show 7:00 pm
Venue: Asahikawa Civic Culture Small Hall (7-jo 9-chome)
Admission: Advanced Booking ¥1,500, At Door ¥2,000
Ticket Offices: Gyokkodo Asahikawa, Takasago Brewery, Children's Fukido, Junkoubou, Dokushaku-Sanshirou, ULU (Tokiwa Dori 3-chome)
For Further Information Contact: 080-5428-0157 (MASUDA) harukam223@yahoo.co.jp



KYOUKO YOSHIDA AND FRIENDS' CONNECTED TRIO

吉田恭子と仲間達 ふれあいトリオ

Violinist Kyouko YOSHIDA will be performing with two of her fellow musicians. She has just celebrated her 10th anniversary since her debut last year. Genichi WATANABE (Cellist) and Mitsutaka SHIRAIISHI (Pianist) will lead us into a fantastic classical harmony this autumn.

Date: September 19th (Thursday)
Time: Doors 5:30 pm, Show 6:30 pm
Venue: Asahikawa Taisetsu Crystal Hall (Kagura 3-jo 7-chome)
Admission: Adults ¥2,000, Senior Citizens (65 and older) and disabled ¥1,500, Students / Children (4 years-college students) ¥1,000
For Further Information Contact: 0166-25-7331 (Taisetsu Crystal Hall)



YOSHIKAZU MERA CONCERT

米良美一コンサート

Have you ever watched *Princess Mononoke*? Then you might recognize Yoshikazu MERA's voice in the anime's theme song. Here is your chance to hear it live! MERA is a popular Japanese countertenor, whose voice is said to range three and a half octaves. He released a major hit disc in 1998 "Nightingale" on Swedish records (BIS) in Japan. MERA also appears frequently as a soloist with the Bach Collegium Japan, where he performs Baroque music with a renowned conductor Masaaki SUZUKI.

Date: September 22nd (Sunday)
Time: Doors 6:30 pm, Show 7:00 pm
Venue: Asahikawa Takasu Melody Hall (Takasu Minami 2-jo 4-chome)
Admission: Advanced Booking ¥3,500, At Door ¥4,000
For Further Information Contact: 0166-87-2500 (Takasu Melody Hall)



EVENTS IN ASAHIKAWA FOR SEPTEMBER



Hello Asahikawa!

Name: Kim Lacey

Hometown: Austin, Texas, United States

Interviewed: August 22nd, 2013 by AIC

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

Kim : No, actually my first destination to Japan was Tokyo. I was there for about a month last summer, living in a sharehouse and traveling. I loved every minute of it. Because Tokyo is one of the biggest cities in the world, it was an excellent opportunity to meet and make friends from all over the world. Come to think of it, it was exactly a year from today when I left Japan. At that time, I had no clue that I will be returning to Japan so soon. It is my first time to Hokkaido, though and to be honest, I was not aware of Asahikawa's existence until the beginning of this year. Since my arrival, I've realized that there is more to Japan than Tokyo and Osaka, not to mention that there is so much more to Hokkaido than Sapporo City. It is a shame that not too many foreigners know this. Hopefully, I can make a small contribution to advertising and hosting more foreign tourists to many wonderful parts of Hokkaido. On a personal level, I feel very lucky that I am in Asahikawa City, at the very center of Hokkaido. I am looking forward to exploring Hokkaido during my stay here.

AIC: *Where are you from? Were you born in the U.S.?*

Kim : I guess I have a pretty unique background. As some people might be wondering, I am not your typical American that many people here easily picture. I think all of my predecessors looked foreign and somewhat "different," but in my case, not too many people can tell that I am American unless I say so, or start speaking in English. I am Korean-American, if you will. I was born in South Korea but moved to Texas as a child. I've spent about two-thirds of my life in the U.S.. There are many people like me in America; African-Americans, Hispanic-Americans and Asian-Americans, to name a few. It is one of my wishes to broaden this kind of understanding here in Japan through both my job and private social interactions. Other things that confuse people often is my name. My last name is *Lacey*, not Kim, because my step-father is Irish-American. My friends back home call me *Kimmy* or *Kimberly*.

AIC: *What brought you to Asahikawa?*

Kim : I became interested in Japanese culture and language during my sophomore year in college. Then around last year, I heard about this opportunity to work as a Coordinator for International Relations (CIR) in Japan and decided to apply to this position. Applicants can request a specific city or region when filling out the application, but I decided to leave it blank. Hey, I like surprises! A few months later I heard back that I will be placed to Asahikawa. Currently, I am working for the Asahikawa International Affairs Division. It has been only two weeks so I have a long way to go until I get used to both my position and life in Japan in general. My impression of the city so far is that Asahikawa is a great city, surrounded by nature and kind people..



Kim Lacey Interview Part Two

AIC: *What have you been doing since your arrival? Is there anything particular you would like to try in Japan?*

Kim : Well, I met so many new people for work in relatively a short period of time. I am still trying to memorize people's names, going through a pile of business cards I've received during the last couple of weeks. I also tried the famous Asahikawa shoyu ramen and Jingiskan mutton meat at a beer garden with some colleagues. Unfortunately, I haven't had a chance to really explore the area because it's been raining every weekend. I would like to try some winter sports here, taking advantage of heavy snow. Also, as mentioned above, I hope to travel around as much as I can and get to know the northern parts of Japan.

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

Kim : I love traveling, watching movies and studying foreign languages. Even before I got into Japanese language, I enjoyed watching Japanese anime, such as *Pocket Monsters* and *Slam Dunk* as a child. My immediate goal for now is to improve my Japanese (especially kanji) and learn more about Japan. I also like listening to music while walking/biking. Some of my favorite Japanese musicians are Mr. Children, GReeeeN, Funky Monkey Babys (they are gone!) My guilty pleasure is listening to the 48 groups, SKE and AKB, in particular. I am into sports as well, both playing and watching. I used to run cross-country and long distance for track&field in high school, and in college I participated in Ultimate Frisbee and fencing. I had a slight injury on my left knee a while ago so I am trying to take it easy. Perhaps I should start running again here before it gets too cold.

AIC: *What is your ultimate goal in life?*

Kim : As far as my career is concerned, I see myself returning back to the U.S. after finishing my time here in Asahikawa, however many years that may be. I would like to become a foreign officer, working at the U.S. embassy or consulate abroad. I think the happiest and luckiest people in the world are those who have a job that they truly love and enjoy. In my case, I think this career path would suit me well since I love to travel and interact with various people from different culture and background. It will be even better if Japan will somehow be involved in my future life. Finally, I hope to find a person I deeply care about and spend the rest of my life with that special someone.

AIC: *Before closing this interview, is there anything that you would like to say to our Asahikawa Info readers?*

Kim : We don't really have this exact phrase in English, so I will just say it as it is in Japanese. よろしくお願ひします! I am new to this town and have so much to learn. I would love to meet and get to know people of Asahikawa. Let's talk, hang out, go out to dinner together~

AIC: *I appreciate you taking time to talk, Kim!*

Kim : My pleasure.

Life in Asahikawa

September

By: KITAMURA Tadao

People are saying that recently climate on the earth has been changing rapidly because of carbon dioxide density in the atmosphere. Meteorological abnormality is occurring very frequently all over the world. Icebergs in the polar regions and glaciers in uplands are decreasing in their mass, and isle nations are losing their land areas.

In Hokkaido, too, we definitely can experience some changes of seasons. Number of *manatsubi* days, in which the high temperature exceeds 30 degrees Celsius, is increasing every summer. And during winter, heavy snow causes significant inconvenience in urban life.

And coming of autumn this year might take place later than the previous year. September 23rd is Autumnal Equinox Day. There surely remains remnant of summer in most part of this archipelago, even in September. Yet, here in Asahikawa, we surely feel air of autumn.

Have you ever heard Japanese idiomatic prose expressing pleasantness of autumn: the season when horses fatten under high and blue sky? Referring to this, an American writer (Jack Seward (2000), 'The McNeil of Tokyo.' Tuttle Publishing) puckishly puts forward a question through one of his characters; "Why the Japanese would prize obesity in their horses? Surely they did not eat them." Neither have I been sure why it is good when horses are fat. How do you think?

Anyway, September in Asahikawa is beautiful and nice. Tinted scenery of autumn is what people of Hokkaido are equally proud of. We think without hesitation that it is the best thing in the whole world. It is said that abundant solar energy with help of sharp change in air temperature in the mountains of Hokkaido causes biochemical reactions in plants so active that the color substances in their leaves become markedly prominent.

Mountain tinting begins on the hillsides of the Daisetsu Mountain Range around mid-September. You will be amazed to see brilliantly colored leaves of alpine plants, such as *JIMU-KADE*, *Harrimanella stelleriana.*, *URASHIMA-TSUTSUJI*, *Arctous alpinus*, members of azalea family and *CHINGURUMA*, *Geum pentapetalum*, a member of rose family, contrasting greenness of creeping pine.

In late September, surrounding hills of KO-GEN-ONSEN or GINSENDAL, and the highlands behind SOUNKYO spa become paradises of color as families of rowan, such as *Sorbus sambucifolia* and *S. matsumurana*, join in the beauty contest.

Later on, autumnal tinting comes down to villages, towns, and finally arrives at streets of Asahikawa around mid-October. Beautifully colored leaves of NANAKAMADO (*Sorbus commixta*), or Mountain Ash will adorn streets or parks along with differently colored *Ginkgo biloba*, maples, cherries birches or poplars.



Hello Autumn

“Autumn Appetite” and Fruit Picking

By: SAKURABA Satoshi

In Japan, it is said that autumn is better suited for various leisure activities because the temperature gradually drops to a comfortable range. We often say that “autumn is the best season for art” and “autumn is the season for sports.” We may be dedicating ourselves to drawing, picture appreciation, some sort of sports and so on. On the other hand, some people say that autumn is a perfect season to have a good appetite (autumn appetite; 食欲の秋). In autumn, as you may know, there is an abundance of food from harvest, so we can enjoy eating delicious food, including chestnuts (くり; 栗), Matsutake mushrooms (まつたけ; 松茸), saury (さんま; 秋刀魚) and others.

Autumn is especially an ideal time for harvesting various seasonal fruit. One of the best ways to enjoy is by fruit picking (くだもの狩り). There are plenty of farms and orchards in Hokkaido and some of them offer visitors to pick their own fruit. I think the most popular one may be apple picking. Admission fee for fruit picking varies among farms, but it would generally be around 1,000 yen.

The biggest advantage of fruit picking is the fact that you can enjoy fresh and sweet fruit. You can choose yourself and get the exact fruit you want, and also consult farmers on ripe fruit. Caring farmers might even be willing to share how to tell delicious fruit apart. The ones you eat at farms will be very sweet, definitely different from the fruit sold at supermarkets. You can even take some picked fruit home with you (but you have to pay extra) so that you can enjoy delicious fruit at home.

Because the fruit you can get by picking is scrumptious, you might end up consuming an extreme amount of food before you realize. Although autumn is the best season for eating, we should be careful not to eat too much.

(Photo) You can make an “apple tower” at a farm, but you must eat up before you leave.



AIC Friendship Party

This year's AIC Friendship Party was held on August 24th, Saturday at a Takasagodai Bowling Club (TBC) in Asahikawa. The originally planned event for this day was park golf, but due to rainy weather, AIC organized a bowling event instead. Twelve Asahikawa residents and twelve foreigners enjoyed each other's company through conversation, lunch, and bowling games.



photo 1) moving to the bowling alley by bus



photo 2) find the right shoes for victory!

Some of the participants of this year included 8 JICA participants from Africa, last year's exchange student to Asahikawa's sister city, Bloomington, Illinois (OKADA Masaki), and this year's exchange student to Asahikawa from Bloomington (SEKIGUCHI Anna).



photo 3) having fun getting to know each other



photo 4) strike, spare, or gutter ball?

AIC organizes many interesting events, such as this Friendship Party, in order to promote international interactions and understanding. Please check Asahikawa Info regularly for more upcoming events!



Movies ~ September



*Every Wednesday is "Ladies' Day." Admission is ¥1,000 (tax included) for women at all theaters.

*<Dinos Cinemas Only> Every Thursday is "Men's Day." Admission is ¥1,000 (tax included) for men.

*The 1st day of every month is "Movie Day" in Asahikawa. Admission (tax included) is ¥1,000 for Adults, ¥800 for Senior High School Students and Under at all theaters.

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

URL: <http://www.kadokawa-cineplex.co.jp/asahikawa/> (Japanese)

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

Now Showing

- Sadako 2D/3D (Japanese) PG12
- Man of Steel (English)
- White House Down (English)
- The Smurfs 2 (Japanese Dub)
- Shonen H (Japanese)
- World War Z 2D/3D (English)
- Star Trek Into Darkness (English)
- Pacific Rim 2D/3D (English/Japanese Dub)
- Kamen Rider Wizard X Zyuden Sentai Kyoryuger (Japanese)
- Nazo-toki wa Dinner no Ato de (Japanese)
- Kaze Tachinu (Japanese/Animation)
- The Lone Ranger (English/Japanese Dub)
- Monsters University (Japanese Dub/Animation 3D)
- Galileo: Manatsu no Hoteishiki (Japanese)
- Pokemon Best Wishes! Shinsoku no Genosect (Japanese/Animation)

Coming Soon

- Soreike! Ampanman (Japanese Animation)
- Space Pirate Captain Herlock 2D/3D (Japanese) 9/7
- Unforgiven (Japanese) 9/13
- The Wolverine -SAMURAI- (English) 9/13
- Ataru the first love & the last kill (Japanese)9/14
- Elysium (English) PG12 9/20
- Despicable Me 2 (Japanese Dub/Animation 3D) 9/21
- Shazai no Osama (Japanese) 9/28

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

URL: http://www.geodinos.jp/cinema/asa_schedule.php?StoreID=5 (Japanese)

Directions: Take Dohoku Bus No. 61, 62, 67 or 667 at Bus stop No. 18 in front of Feeeal Asahikawa (1-jo-dori 8-chome). Get off at "Nippou Seishi Mae."

Now Showing

- Pacific Rim 2D/3D (English/Japanese Dub)
- Star Trek Into Darkness 2D/3D (English)
- Gatchaman (Japanese)
- Kamen Rider Wizard X Zyuden Sentai Kyoryuger (Japanese)
- Monsters University (Japanese Dub/Animation 3D)
- World War Z (English)
- The Lone Ranger (English/Japanese Dub)
- Nazo-toki wa Dinner no Ato de (Japanese)
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Movie schedules change often. Please call the theater for confirmation and details.

The 2013 Asahikawa Tabe Marche

Ladies and gentlemen, you've been waiting long enough! The famous Asahikawa *Tabe Marche* is back this year, more enjoyable and fun than ever before! There will be a wide variety of Northern Hokkaido food, music, and awesome interaction with the local communities. Be sure to check it out and participate. Each day, there will be unique events going on at three locations, so get ready!

Date: September 14th (Saturday) - 16th (Monday · Holiday)

Venue: Asahikawa Kaimono Kouen Shopping Street, Tokiwa Park, and 7-jo Ryokudo

For Further Information, Please Call: 0166-73-9840

or Visit the official website (Japanese):

www.city.asahikawa.hokkaido.jp/files/keizaikoryu/marche/index.htm



Fun Fridays

Variety of interesting activities, such as games, discussions, introductions and quizzes, are held monthly. Meet new people, relax, relate, and communicate through English.

Dates: September 13th

Time: 1:00 ~ 3:00pm & 6:50 ~ 8:50pm, 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)

AIC Book Collection

If you have unwanted new or second-hand books in languages other than Japanese, the AIC would love to place them in our AIC book section.

To donate, contact AIC.
Tel: 25-7491

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.

Center Computers: The Asahikawa International Center (Feeeal Asahikawa 7F 1-jo-dori 8-chome) has two computers available for public use free of charge. There is a time limit for use and prior registration is necessary. Please feel free to come by and use them 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.****