

旭川 ASAHIKAWA Info

February 2013 VOL. 195

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Hokkaido News Top 5



February 2013

Compiled by TAKADA Nobuhiro

January 8

A group of people in Shari Town close to Shiretoko National Park in eastern Hokkaido is going to create a foundation to establish the "Shiretoko Nature College." The college will be a professional graduate school which trains experts in wildlife conservation, concerning animals such as brown bears and Yezo-shika deer in Hokkaido and black bears in mainland Japan. Their plan is to raise donations of two billion yen in total and found the college in 2016.

January 14

The National Science Museum in Tokyo put two stuffed specimens of an anaconda and another species of snake on display for the New Year. The specimens are part of the "Yubari Collection" consisting of 235 mammals, 369 birds, 36 reptiles and one amphibian which the bankrupt Yubari City in Hokkaido has transferred to the national museum for free. A curator at the museum said that the "Yubari Collection" is considered to be worth several hundred million yen.

January 15

A cross-country skiing course in the Kitasaito area situated next to JR Asahikawa Station was opened to the public to use during the winter season leading up to the Vasaloppet Japan competition in Asahikawa. The 2.5-kilometer course runs from the "CoCoDe" community center near Asahikawa Science Center to JR station along the Chubetsu River. A local resident skiing on the course said, "The course is really good because it is close to the city center and has a parking lot. There's also a wonderful view from the course."

January 16

The number of eating and drinking establishments in the Sanroku entertainment district in the vicinity of 3-jo-dori 6-chome in Asahikawa has dropped to around 900 from about 1,500 in the 1990s. Many customers have stopped visiting those businesses because of the ailing local economy. A Japanese-style pub owner said, "There's been a decline in the sales at my pub of about 10 percent every year for the past three years."

January 17

JR Hokkaido announced that the number of train service suspensions so far during this winter had reached 1,923. There have been more cancellations of trains during this winter than during the same time last year. JR Hokkaido explained that this is due to the heavier snowfall this year and the extra time required to remove hardened snow on train tracks because of temperatures being lower than usual.



For further information or to register for events contact:

Asahikawa International Committee
(SASAKI Mai, Kenton KNOP, or SAITO Emmy)

Location:

International Affairs Division, Civic and Community Services Dept.

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Special Thanks to KAWAI Tatsuo, Proofreader & Advisor

ULTRAMAN AND THE MYSTERIES OF SCIENCE~SCIENCE BATTLE STAGE

ウルトラマンと科学のふしぎ・サイエンスバトルステージ

Join everyone's favorite Ultra Heroes and allies of science for a fun and action-filled science learning event. The show begins with ZAP Spacy team member Rei (MINAMI Shota) and the friendly monster Booska conducting experiments to discover the true nature of light, the source of Ultraman's power. Next, using the power of light, the audience will aid the group of intergalactic heroes featuring Ultraman, Ultra Seven and more in a battle with fierce creatures from another world.

Date: February 2nd (Saturday)**Time:** 1st Show: Doors 10:00am, Show 10:30am, 2nd Show: Doors 2:00pm, Show 2:30pm**Venue:** Asahikawa Civic Culture Hall (7-jo 9-chome)**Admission:** Advance (ages 3 and older): ¥2,700, On 2/2: ¥3,000**Ticket Offices:** Gyokkodo, Taisetsu Crystal Hall, Shida Toys, Lawson Ticket, Ticket Pia, FM Rivere, Yoshida Toys**For Further Information Contact:** 0166-20-4004 (Event Office)

THE 54TH ANNUAL ASAHIKAWA WINTER FESTIVAL

第54回旭川冬まつり

The Asahikawa Winter Festival will encompass a wide variety of events, including exhibitions of the world's largest snow sculptures at Tokiwa Park and the 2013 World Ice Sculpture Contest at Heiwadori Shopping Park. A winter market selling delicious foods, long and winding snow slides and a spectacular fireworks display are just a few of the delights in store!

Date: February 6th (Wednesday) to February 11th (Monday-Holiday)**Venue:** Tokiwa Park, Heiwadori Shopping Park (Kaimono Koen)**Admission:** Free**For Further Information Contact:** 0166-25-7168 (Asahikawa Winter Festival Planning Committee)

AIKAWA NANASE CONCERT—HOKKAIDO TOUR SPECIAL LIVE & TALK!

相川七瀬コンサート

The popular rock singer AIKAWA Nanase is coming to Asahikawa as part of her Hokkaido tour accompanying the release of her first new album in four years. AIKAWA, whose 1996 debut single *Yume Miru Shoyo ja Irarenai* (Can't Be A Dreaming Girl) was featured in that year's *Kohaku Uta Gassen* (Red and White Song Contest), will put on a live concert and also open the stage for a chance to talk directly with her fans.

Date: February 8th (Friday)**Time:** Doors 6:30pm, Show 7:00pm**Venue:** Takasu Melody Hall (Takasu 2-jo 4-chome)**Admission:** All Seats: ¥4,000**Ticket Offices:** Gyokkodo, Yamaha Music, Taisetsu Crystal Hall, Takasu Melody Hall**For Tickets and Further Information Contact:** 0166-87-2500 (Takasu Melody Hall)

26TH ASAHIKAWA COMMERCIAL HIGH SCHOOL PERIODICAL CONCERT

旭川商業高等学校・第26回定期演奏会

Fresh from their performance in Sapporo in January, this year's concert from Asahikawa Commercial High School will be held across two days, and will feature selections from Orff's *Carmina Burana*, the hit musical *The Sound of Music* and the 4th Movement from *Symphony No. 1* by Brahms.

Date: February 9th (Saturday) and February 10th (Sunday)**Time:** 2/9: Doors 5:30pm, Show 6:00pm, 2/10: Doors 12:30pm, Show: 1:00pm**Venue:** Asahikawa Civic Culture Hall (7-jo 9-chome)**Admission:** Designated S-Seats: ¥1,500, Designated A-Seats: ¥1,300

Open Seating: ¥1,000, Student Open Seating: ¥500

Advance Ticket Offices: Yamaha Music, Lawson Ticket**For Further Information Contact (Weekdays 9am to 5pm):** 080-3296-7228 (Asahikawa Commercial High School)

12TH ANNUAL ASAHIKAWA “YUKI NO FURU MACHI WO” MUSIC FESTIVAL AND COMPETITION

第12回旭川“雪の降る街を”音楽祭・中田喜直記念コンクール

This festival will host the final selection process for the NAKADA Yoshinao Memorial Competition, held in honor of the famed composer. Participants from across Japan will compete by singing his beloved 1952 song *Yuki no Furu Machi Wo* (Memories of a Snowy Town). Following the competition will be the NAKADA Yoshinao Memorial Concert, featuring past competition winner HASHIMOTO Mika in recital.

Date: February 10th (Sunday)

Time: 1:00pm, Memorial Concert: 3:30pm

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

Admission: General: ¥1,000

Ticket Offices: Taisetsu Crystal Hall, Yamaha Music

For Further Information Contact: 0166-52-2659 (Event Executive Committee)



35TH ANNUAL OTOKOYAMA SAKE BREWERY OPEN HOUSE

第35回男山酒蔵開放

Otokoyama, one of Asahikawa’s world-famous sake breweries, is opening its doors to the public for a fun-filled open house. Free sake tastings, brewery tours and sales of special sake varieties available only at this event are just some of the activities planned. Don’t miss this chance to get an inside look at the rich tradition of Otokoyama sake.

Date: February 10th (Sunday)

Time: 10:00am to 3:00pm

Venue: Otokoyama Sake Brewery (Nagayama 2-jo 7-chome)

Admission: Free

For Further Information Contact: 0166-48-1931 (Otokoyama Sake Brewery)



KIKI&CRYSTAL OF JOY GOSPEL LIVE

KiKiアンド・クリスタル・オブ・ジョイ・ゴスペルライブ

The renowned gospel singer KiKi and Asahikawa-based gospel choir Crystal of Joy will put on an unforgettable night of joyful music at Taisetsu Crystal Hall. With a solo performance from KiKi in addition to a joint performance with Crystal of Joy, this is sure to be an incredible show that will lift the spirits of all who attend.

Date: February 23rd (Saturday)

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

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

Admission: General: ¥2,000,

Seniors/Disabled Persons/Students: ¥1,500 (¥500 extra on 2/23)

Ticket Offices: Kawai Showroom, Gyokkodo, Yamaha Music, Taisetsu Crystal Hall, Civic Culture Hall

For Further Information Contact: 0166-69-2000 (Taisetsu Crystal Hall)



24TH “CREATING THE NORTH” TRADITIONAL JAPANESE MUSIC PERFORMANCE

第24回「北を創る」旭川文化芸術協議会舞台公演

This concert of traditional Japanese music by Asahikawa-area performers will feature a wide variety of musical types, such as classical *nagauta* song, *shakuhachi* (bamboo flute) and *shamisen* (stringed instrument) performances, including one by KANNO Kozan, founder of his own style of *shamisen* playing. Those with an interest in the traditional music of Japan are highly encouraged to attend!

Date: February 24th (Sunday)

Time: Doors 10:30am, Show 11:00am to 3:30pm

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

Admission: All Seats: ¥1,000

For Further Information Contact: 0166-25-7331 (Asahikawa Civic Culture Hall)



EVENTS IN ASAHIKAWA FOR FEBRUARY



Hello Asahikawa!

Name: Elizabeth Fortnum

Hometown: Hull, United Kingdom

Interviewed: January 17th, 2013 by AIC

AIC: *Please tell us about your hometown.*

Elizabeth : My hometown is called Hull and it is in Yorkshire in the north of England. It's a fishing town and sits on the River Humber, which is an estuary of the North Sea. There are lots of museums, especially maritime museums that have exhibits on the fishing industry and whaling. We also have a big art gallery with lots of historical artworks and a transport museum. We have a large aquarium called "The Deep," which is the world's only "submarium." I'm still trying to discover the difference between an aquarium and a submarium, but I know there are lots of marine biologists who study at that site, so that's a big and famous attraction in my city.

AIC: *What brought you to Asahikawa?*

Elizabeth : I'm working on the JET (Japan Exchange and Teaching) Program and Asahikawa was selected for me as my city. I didn't know anything about Asahikawa before I came, but I'm very happy that I've been placed here. Maybe because it isn't that well-known outside of Japan, it's somewhere that I wouldn't have the chance to visit or wouldn't have known to visit, so I'm really thankful that I got to come here.

AIC: *What have been your impressions of Asahikawa so far?*

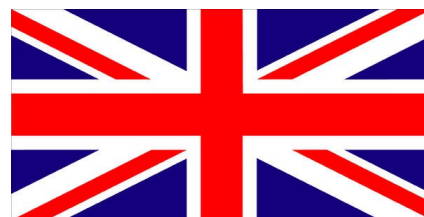
Elizabeth : I think the people here are very warm and welcoming and I feel much at home. The city has just the right amount of people I think and there is a lot to do downtown, with lots of nice cafés and restaurants. But where I live is just a little bit outside the city, so it's nice and calm but still it has a sense of community, so I really like it.

AIC: *How did you become interested in coming to Japan?*

Elizabeth : I had just graduated from university in illustration and had looked at some Japanese artists such as Hokusai, and they had a big influence on me with regards to effective use of space and composition in artwork. I feel this approach to art in Japan is somehow channeled into the environment and culture. What I saw in the artwork influenced me and I feel it in every area of the culture since I've been here. Even in the office environment at work, it's very odd but I just warm to the atmosphere. It's especially so being in this landscape, which played a big part in me wanting to come here. I can completely see why people would want to create things living in this kind of environment. Being an illustrator, sometimes people think that maybe I like manga and anime, but they're not things I really knew much about.

AIC: *I'd like to hear more about your illustrating work. How did you get involved with that?*

Elizabeth : I've just always drawn. I used to work in a café bar and always used to draw the customers in my sketchbook. I always enjoyed making things for people and just trying to make things look a little nicer. I like to interest people visually and try to make them use their imagination to believe in things. I am interested in working in illustrating books that have some educational value. My initial idea when I found out I was coming to Japan was to try to make children's books about Japan, in order to get English children interested in a culture that's quite apart from their own. Japan and England are very different. That's something I was really exposed to when I was a child, so I think it would be good for young children to have that experience too.



Elizabeth Fortnum Interview Part Two

Elizabeth : For instance, my niece enjoys reading things and sometimes I write things in Japanese and send them to her. Sometimes I send her Japanese books. Because she can recognize some simple *kanji*, while reading she sometimes says things like “oh, that means mouth!” They are simple things, but I feel they will have a good effect on her. I’m interested in doing that for Japanese children with English-language books and for English children with Japanese books, using illustrations.

AIC: *What kind of work are you doing now?*

Elizabeth : I am working as an ALT (Assistant Language Teacher) at Kita Senior High School in Asahikawa. I work with Japanese teachers of English in communication classes, reading classes, writing classes and conversation classes. Really, my job is to help the students to feel comfortable with expressing themselves through speaking and writing in English, and not to worry about making mistakes. I try to make them laugh and add a bit of fun to the lessons. I often tell them that I’m trying to learn Japanese and it’s very difficult, so I understand how it is for them learning English, but they just have to try. At the senior high school I get to work with some really talented students who I really enjoy. It helps that I can relate to them with teaching, because I understand how difficult it is to learn a new language.

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

Elizabeth : I like drawing, reading, and writing music as well. Before the snow came, I often rode my bike around a lot for the exercise, to explore, and for practical reasons like going from one place to the other. I like to be outside and often take my sketchbook with me, so everything I like to do comes together in that.

AIC: *You mentioned that you write music?*

Elizabeth : Just a little. I think I like to write poetry and sing. I would say my singing is better than my guitar playing ability. But it’s nice just to be able to make music. I was taught by my dad. I and my sister were often made to sing the harmonies to songs by The Beatles when we were younger.

AIC: *Are there any places in Japan that you want to visit?*

Elizabeth : I would like to visit Hiroshima, and one of the big cities that I haven’t been to is Kyoto. I would also like to go to the Shiretoko peninsula. I would just like to be able to spend a month off here taking trains across the country, just getting off when someplace looked good to see. But I would like to see a lot of Japan, and I think that’s probably possible. While I’m here I definitely want to make the most of traveling around during my holidays from school to see more.

AIC: *Thank you for your time, Elizabeth! We wish you the best in the future!*

Elizabeth : You’re welcome!

Life In Japan



Furoshiki By: IKEDA Ayumi

February 23rd is “*Furoshiki Day*.” The Kyoto *Furoshiki* (風呂敷 wrapping cloth) Association established this day and it is a kind of Japanese wordplay: $2(\text{tsu} \doteq \text{two}) + 2(\text{tsu} \doteq \text{two}) + 3(\text{mi}) = \text{tsutsumi}$, which means “a bundle.”

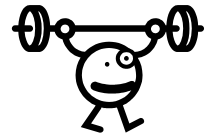
A *furoshiki* is a square cloth used to wrap things to carry. The etymology of *furoshiki* is literally “*furo* (bath)” and “*shiki* (lay),” or “to lay out in the bath.” During the Muromachi period, they were laid out on the floor of a bath room’s changing area. In the Edo period, the use of *furoshiki* gradually changed to wrapping up clothing and bathing equipment to carry. From then on, their use became wide-spread and they became essential carrying tools on various occasions such as marriage ceremonies, shrine visits, business, school, and so on until just about 40 years ago. Now that many kinds of bags are available, it is rare to see traditional *furoshiki* used for carrying purposes.

However, the merits of *furoshiki* are now being recognized once again. They are an excellent item to use when taking a bath, because they can be used not only for carrying clothes, but also as a clothes basket and a bath mat. Moreover, they accommodate the various sizes and shapes of goods, and are also reusable and foldable. What proves the versatility of the *furoshiki* is the image of a typical Japanese thief. They have to carry out as many things as possible of any size with no extra equipment, and for this reason, a *furoshiki* is most convenient. In addition, a variety of lessons on how to use *furoshiki* as wrapping for gifts, table coverings or other decorations have been recently featured in magazines and on television. In 2005, the first English-language book on *furoshiki*, which introduces 42 different ways of using them to wrap items, was published in Japan.

Although a *furoshiki* is a flat piece of cloth, when wrapped by hand, it becomes a tool with a variety of uses. Since Japan is prone to earthquakes due to active faults crossing vertically and horizontally beneath it, it might be a good idea to prepare a flashlight and *furoshiki* to keep at your bedside as an emergency kit.



Healthy Asahikawa



The Kenko Danshi Project **By: Kenton KNOP**

Asahikawa has the well-deserved reputation of being a city known for delicious food and plenty of entertainment. However, Asahikawa is facing a serious health crisis in the near future as a result of diseases that stem from lifestyle habits. Recent data collected by the Asahikawa City Health Center has shown that the proportion of men who die of heart attacks in Asahikawa is higher than that of Hokkaido and even the national average. The data also revealed a dramatic jump in the number of heart attack deaths among men aged 50 and above. If that wasn't alarming enough, men who are now in their 30s are especially at risk of developing serious health problems in the future. The city health center's data has shown that in Asahikawa, one in three men in their 30s are obese due to a variety of factors, such as eating an unbalanced diet, skipping breakfast, excess salt consumption and lack of exercise. On top of that, it is said that less than 10 percent of Asahikawa's men in their late 30s and 40s undergo regular health examinations. If left unaddressed, these lifestyle habits can lead to high blood pressure, high blood sugar levels and excess cholesterol, which damage and weaken blood vessels and can cause heart disease, heart attacks and can even affect blood flow to the brain.

In response to this growing concern, the Asahikawa City Health Center and the Liner community newspaper have unveiled the *Kenko Danshi* (Healthy Man) Project. With slogans like "you don't have to be perfect, just aim to add one healthy habit" and "the man who cares about his health is cool," this project stands in stark contrast with previous efforts to improve public health that came across as too strict. The idea is that by encouraging men in Asahikawa to change their lifestyles in simple and gradual ways, they will have an easier time keeping up those healthy habits for the long term. Here are a few of the project's recommendations that anyone can follow to get started:

- Leave some broth when eating ramen noodles.
- Eat something for breakfast.
- Switch to low-calorie varieties of beer and take a break from drinking alcohol for at least two days a week.
- Order a vegetable dish when eating out and eat more vegetables at home.
- Don't smoke.
- Walk or take the stairs.
- Pay attention to your figure and weigh yourself every day.
- Avoid staying up late.
- Go to the doctor for a health examination periodically.

To provide encouragement for anyone who wants to make a change for the better, the *Kenko Danshi* Project website's "Healthy Stars" page is featuring several men in the Asahikawa area who are taking positive steps to improve their health. Leading the charge is Asahikawa Mayor NISHIKAWA Masahito, who has taken up the challenge to practice healthy habits by using a pedometer to measure his daily number of steps in addition to using a scale every day to check his weight. All men in Asahikawa who are in their 20s, 30s or 40s are invited to complete a response form on the *Kenko Danshi* Project's website and share what they are doing to live a healthier lifestyle.

As Asahikawa faces the dual challenges of a declining birthrate and aging population like the rest of Japan, its working-age men have to remain fit and healthy more than ever in order to support themselves, their families, and the future of the city. With a new year having just begun, what better time than now to start thinking about how to make your lifestyle a healthier one? If you make some simple changes to improve your daily habits now, your future self will thank you!

Hello Wild Flowers

Wandering Among The Wildflowers Around Asahikawa

By: Hitoshi KUDOH

Lucy felt a little frightened, very cold and uneasy as well, as the snow was falling on. She looked back over her shoulder and there, between the dark tree-trunks, she could still see the open doorway of the wardrobe and even catch a glimpse of the empty room from which she had set out.

There came a faun named Tumnus and asked her, "Little girl, why are you weeping?"

"My stepmother told me to pick her some berries out of the snow field, but I cannot find any berry at all. That is why I am sad," replied Lucy.

"Oh, my! You are quite in the right place, my girl. You are in the country of Narumia(生る実野). People tend to think that all the vegetation had died down under the snow. But it is not true. Lots of herbs are surviving in green," said Tumnus. "Oh, really!?" cried out Lucy.

"Ask, and it shall be given. Just dig and clear away the snow here, and you can have them."

Lucy did so and there appeared green leaves of some plants. And lo, under the dense leaves, she found some translucent white berries and flower buds exactly there.

FUKKISÔ (富貴草) *Pachysandra terminalis***Family:** Buxaceae**Common name:** Japanese pachysandra, Japanese spurge, Kichijisô (吉祥草)**Description:** An evergreen creeping perennial. Light green stems are unbranched, erect towards their tips to 20~30cm.

Alternate leaves clustered at the ends of short stems. The leaves are spaced closely together towards the tips of the stems, forming pseudo-whorls. The oblanceolate dark green, waxy leaf blades are 5~10cm long.

Some stems terminate in solitary spikes of flowers about 3~4 cm on short stalks. The white flowers bloom during the spring and early summer for about 1 month. The spike has 15~25 staminate flowers along its upper portions, and 1~2 pistillate flowers at its bottom. The staminate flowers, 1cm long, consist of 4 appressed tepals and 4 prominent stamens without petals. The thick filaments are bright white and long. The pistillate flowers consist of 4~6 tepals and pistil with a pair of styles.

Fertile female flowers produce small white berries about 1 cm across.

Edible: (slightly toxic)**Medicinal:** asthma, common cold, tumour, eyewash, upset-stomach, diuretic**Habitat:** shady woods, hillsides, mountain bush**Distribution:** Hokkaido, Honshu, Shikoku, Kyushu. Korea, China.

Water Colour Painting of a Fukkisô
By Hitoshi KUDOH



Movies ~ February



*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

- The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (English)
- ONE PIECE FILM Z (Japanese/Animation)
- Yokai Ningen Bem (Japanese)
- Les Miserables (English)
- Ao no Exorcist (Japanese/Animation)
- Taken 2 (English)
- Looper (English)
- Ted (English/Japanese Dub) (15+)
- Tokyo Kazoku (Japanese)
- Tokumei Sentai Go-Busters Vs Kaizoku Sentai Gokaiger (Japanese)
- Life of Pi (English/Japanese Dub 3D)
- Strawberry Night (Japanese)
- Jack Reacher (English)

Coming Soon

- Kiroi Zo (Japanese) 2/2
- No-Otoko (Japanese) 2/9
- A Good Day to Die Hard (English) 2/14
- Yokomichi Yonosuke (Japanese) 2/23
- Sogen no Isu (Japanese) 2/23

★ **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 "Nippon Seishi Mae."

Now Showing

- Kyo, Koi wo Hajimemasu (Japanese) until 2/8
- The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (English)
- ONE PIECE FILM Z (Japanese/Animation)
- Les Miserables (English)
- Taken 2 (English)
- HUNTERxHUNTER Phantom Rouge (Japanese/Animation)
- Tokyo Kazoku (Japanese)
- Life of Pi (English/Japanese Dub 3D)
- Tsuya no Yoru (Japanese) (15+)
- Jack Reacher (English)
- Berserk: Ogon Jidai Hen III Korin (Japanese/Animation)
- Good Bye Debussy (Japanese)

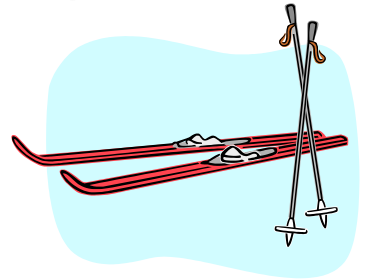
Coming Soon

- No-Otoko (Japanese) 2/9
- A Good Day to Die Hard (English) 2/14
- Yokomichi Yonosuke (Japanese) 2/23
- Flight (English) 3/1
- Django Unchained (English) 3/1
- Oz: The Great and Powerful (English) 3/8
- Cloud Atlas (English) 3/15
- Platina Data (Japanese) 3/16
- Himawari to Koinu no Nanoka-kan (Japanese) 3/16
- The Man Who Became King (Korean/Japanese Sub) 3/16
- Jack the Giant Slayer (English) 3/22
- Aibo X Day (Japanese) 3/23
- Bokutachi no Kokan-nikki (Japanese) 3/23
- Wreck-It Ralph (English/Animation) 3/23
- Dragon Ball Z: Battle of Gods (Japanese/Animation) 3/30

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

Vasaloppet Japan Cross-Country Skiing Seminar

Asahikawa is host to the annual Vasaloppet Japan cross-country skiing competition, and if you have never tried cross-country (Nordic) skiing before, this is the perfect chance to learn. Participants will receive step-by-step instruction on skiing technique and the proper use of equipment, and then will have the opportunity to put those skills into practice on a specially-made skiing track. All equipment will be provided; all you need to bring is something warm to wear! Limited to 20 participants.



Date & Time: February 11th (Monday/Holiday) 12:50pm to 3:00pm

Location: Asahikawa Community Center "CoCoDe" (Miyamae-dori)

Cost: Free

To Participate, Contact: Asahikawa Sports Division Tel: 0166-23-1944

Application Deadline: February 7th (Thursday)

AIC Volunteer Event

To help train our English-speaking volunteer guides, we at the AIC would like to welcome foreign residents living in the Asahikawa area to join us for a visit to the Otokoyama Sake Brewery's open house event. Come and enjoy free sake tastings and a guided tour through the brewery with our volunteers!

Date: February 10th (Sunday)

Time: 9:30am to 1:00pm

Meet in front of the "au Shop" at Feeeal Asahikawa

(1-jo-dori 8-chome) at 9:30am.

Fun Fridays

Leaders coordinate a variety of interesting activities such as games, discussions, introductions, and quizzes. Meet new people, relax, relate, and communicate through English.

Dates: February 8th, March 8th

Time: 1:00 ~ 3:00pm & 6:30 ~ 8:30pm, 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.

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 it 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.****