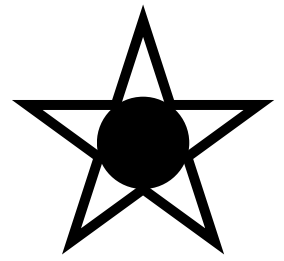


ASAHIKAWA INFO



December 2023, Volume 325

Hokkaido News Top 5

October 2023 - November 2023, compiled by the AIC

New City Hall Aims to Be Asahikawa's Symbol (11/7)

The new city hall building opened to the public on November 6th after three years of construction. Students from Chuo, Chichin, and Nisshou elementary school had a field trip to the new city hall building where they represented their schools in the ribbon-cutting ceremony. Many hope that the new city hall building would become a symbol of the city. Residents and students were able to carry on with their errands at city hall while being able to check out the new furniture, observatory deck, and the many other amenities the new building has to offer.

Many Are Hoping for Snow Dumping Prevention (11/11)

On November 10th, the four Asahikawa Snow Removal Centers were opened and the snow removal preparations are under way for the coming season. Many snow removal contractors are hoping that with the implementation of snow control countermeasure regulations, there would be snow dumping preventions. With aging workers and personnel shortages, many are seeking work environment improvements and labor-saving operations.

Cuts for The Express Kamui and Lilac Train's Non-Reserved Seating: Overall Price Increase Pending (11/18)

There has been recent concerns regarding the cuts made towards non-reserved seating for the Kamui and Lilac express trains for the Asahikawa-Sapporo line which could impact riders such as students, businesses, and tourists. The cuts will affect many riders that rely on the Asahikawa-Sapporo train. Many of them avail of the S-Kippu which is a 40% discount round-trip ticket sold for ¥5,550 which is in contrast to the one-way ticket at ¥2,860. With increased travel expenses for the impacted riders, there are some anxieties on how it will affect local industries. Some businesses are considering on alternatives such as buses as a countermeasure to these incoming price surges.

Even The Origins of the School Name Is from The Ainu Language (11/22)

Chikabumi Elementary School's 4th Graders welcomed the Asahikawa Chikappuni Ainu Cultural Preservation Society for a special class on Ainu culture. 61 students were able to develop a deeper understanding on Ainu dances and folk songs at their school gymnasium. Furthermore, some were even taught how to play the mukkuri which is the Ainu mouth harp. There, the students learned that even the origins of their school name comes from Ainu. Students were very inquisitive about the Ainu culture and posed several questions to the guest teachers.

Identifying Individual Bears Through DNA (11/25)

This year, Asahikawa City is embarking on counting and identifying brown bears in the region through DNA analysis. Through collected samples of fur and feces, the number of bears in a given habitat and their routes can be calculated. The city aims to collect and compile this data to better protect residents and local businesses from bears. The city plans to share this data with other neighboring local governments in order to better understand the presence of brown bears in the region.



For further information or to register for events, contact:

Asahikawa International Committee (AIC)(SUGANO Ayumi, SAITO Emmy, or MABILANGAN John)

Location:

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

Address:

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

Tel: (0166) 25-7491

Fax: (0166) 23-4924

Email: cir_kokusai@city.asahikawa.lg.jp

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December Events

Upcoming events and activities in Asahikawa and the rest of Hokkaido



Sapporo White Illumination
札幌ホワイトイルミネーション

Sapporo transforms into a winter wonderland with as lights illuminate the city. Experience the festive lights around the city!

Event Details

Date: ~ 3/14/2024 (Thursday) (Varies per location)

Time: 16:30~22:00

Location: Odori Park, Ekimae-jodori, Minami 1-jodori

For more information: <https://www.sapporo.travel/white-illumination/event/illumination/odori/>

Asahikawa Illumination : Machiakari

旭川市イルミネーション：街あかり

Twinkling lights shining the winter. 210,000 bulbs will be lit all around the city—1.5x bigger than last year!

Event Details

Date: ~3/3/2024 (Sunday)

Time: 16:30~23:00

Location: From Miyamae-Dori to 8-jo-dori 8 & 9-chome

For more information: <https://machiakari.atca.jp/>



Jin Oki Guitar Recital Featuring Yoshiaki Satou

沖仁ギター・リサイタル with 佐藤 芳明

Listen to the performance of one of the most prominent figures in Flamenco Guitar perform several iconic songs such as My Favorite Things, Jeux Inte

Event Details

Date: 12/16/2023 (Saturday)

Location: Taisetsu Crystal Music Hall (Kagura 3-jo 7-chome 1-45, Asahikawa)

Admission: ¥4,000 (General Admission), ¥2,500 (Students & Special Needs)

Ticket Office: Taisetsu Crystal Music Hall (Office)

Asahikawa Civic Culture Hall (7 jo-dori, 9-Chome, Asahikawa)

Inquiries: Taisetsu Crystal Hall 0166-69-2000

Taisetsu Arena 13th Free Opening Day (Ice Skating)

第13回道アークス大雪アリーナ：無料開放感謝Day

Come to Taisetsu Arena for a day full of skating for free! No need for ice skates since rentals will be free as well!

Event Details:

Date: 12/17 (Sunday)

Time: 9:00-15:00

Location: Taisetsu Arena (Kagura 4-jo 7-chome 1-52, Asahikawa)

Admission: FREE



December Events



U-39 Asahikawa Culture Artistic Gathering

A variety of artworks by local artists from a wide array of mediums will be wonderfully exhibited for 4 days. Submissions are accepted until 12.10.

Event Details

Date: 12/20 (Wednesday) ~ 12/24 (Sunday)

Time: 10:00~19:00 (18:00 on the 12/24)

Location: Civic Culture Hall Exhibition Room (7-jo-dori 9-Chome)

Contact for Submission or Queries : very.acag@gmail.com

And Once Again, The Autumn Bellflower Blooms

そして、またリンドウの花が咲く

Hinata is a 3rd year middle school student who lives with her mother. Recently her mother has been hiding things from her. To find the truth, she heads to her mother's hometown

Event Details

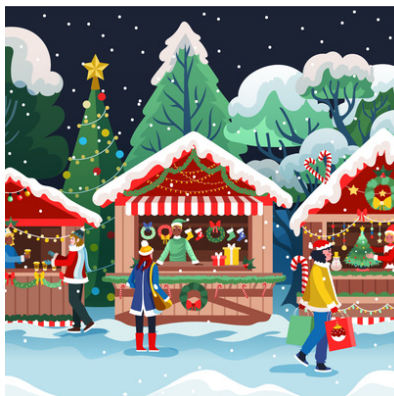
Date: 12/23 (Saturday) ~ 12/24 (Sunday)

Time: 19:00 (Saturday), 14:00 (Sunday)

Location: Community Support Center CoCoDe (Miyamae 1-jo 3-chome 3-30)

Admission: General Admission (¥2,000), U25 (¥1,500), High School Students and Younger (¥1,000)

Contact for Reservations or Queries : shiberiakichi@gmail.com



Christmas Market : Takibi Market

まちなかクリスマス：焚き火マーケット

Come visit Asahikawa's upcoming Christmas Market and check out the various pop-up shops offered this season. In addition, there will be a countdown for the lighting of 600 candles!

Date: 12/23 (Saturday)

Time: 10:00~15:00.

Location: GalleryPuruPuru & 7-Jo Kaimono Kouen (Shopping Street)

For questions, email : 708goshitsu@gmail.com

Hokkaido Sports Festival 2024

北海道大運動大会 2024

Join the Hokkaido Sports Festival for a day full of competitive fun! From Team Jump Rope to the T-Rex race, thrilling competition for a very exciting prize!

Date: 2/18/2024 (Sunday)

Time: 9:00-16:30

Location: Sapporo Dome (1 Hitsujigaoka, Toyohira-ku, Sapporo)

Entry: Registration deadline on 12/25/2023. Entry costs vary per competition. See website for more information.

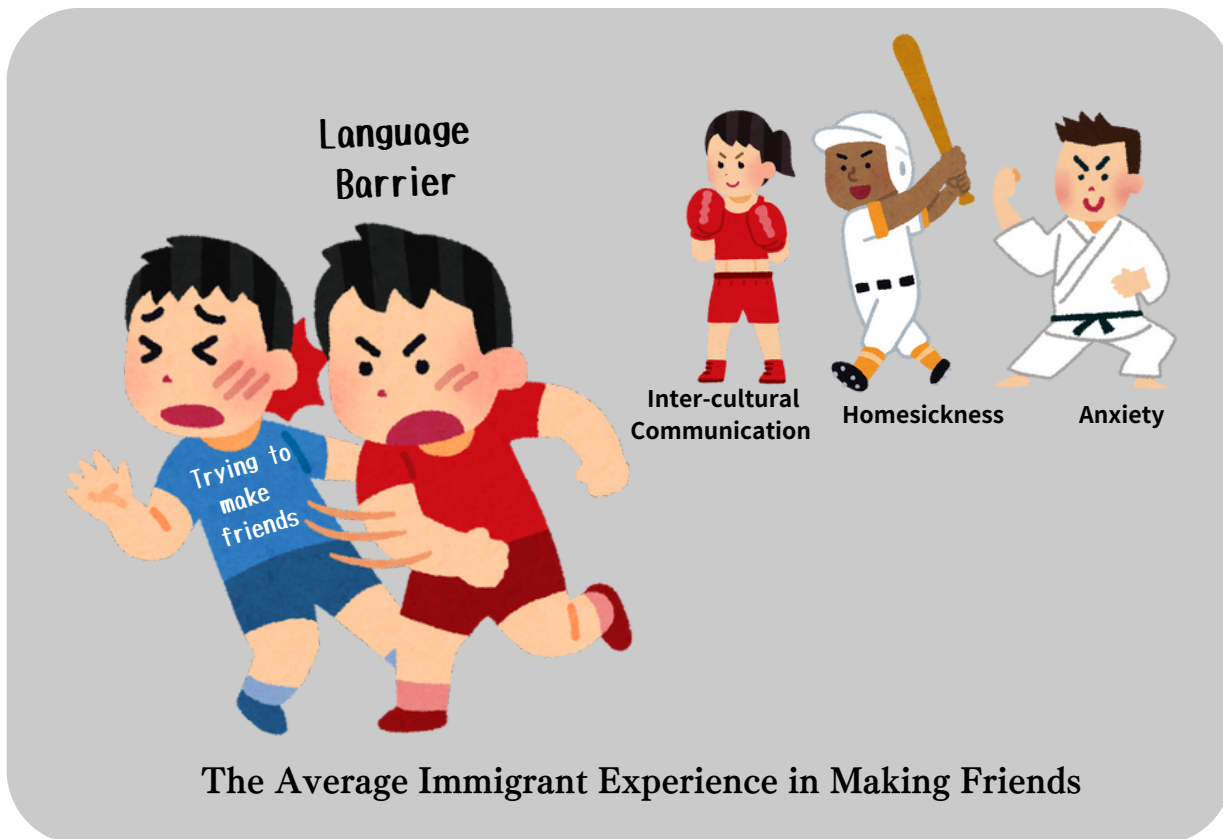
Registration Site: <https://h-daiundoukai.jp/>

For queries: 011-210-5732



Finding Community

By John Daniel Mabilangan



Intro

If you have ever lived abroad or currently live abroad, congratulations! You have either completed or currently in a journey of a lifetime! One of the challenges of living in a foreign country that could arguably be universal is connecting with people. When you live in a foreign country, building relationships with the locals are a right of passage to settling. Though many walls and barriers exist in making connections, they are surely surmountable with grit.

Tip 1: Work on That Language Skill

“When in Rome, do as the Romans do”, this famous proverb essentially means it’s best to follow the traditions and customs of the place you are visiting. In Japan,

people speak Japanese and so to connect with more people, having some control of the language will serve as an asset. To be able to use Japanese is to be able to not just expand your communication capacity and outreach, but also to expand resources and opportunities available to you.



Checkout the sites below to see the community centers in your area! (Japanese)

List of Community Centers: <https://www.city.asahikawa.hokkaido.jp/facility00/facility08/index.html>

List of Registered Local Circles: <https://asahikawa.manabi365.net/about/>

Tip 2: Find People Who Are Interested In International Exchange



In Japan, the most likely group of people that would be interested in becoming your friend would most likely be Japanese people interested in international culture. Most of them could be found either online or international/cultural community circles.

For instance, the **Asahikawa International Center** has a variety of events that foster International Exchange such as Fun Friday. Fun Friday is a monthly or bi-monthly course where Japanese locals studying Japanese can practice and use their English. There, Asahikawa residents are eager to learn English, find ways to use them, and develop connections with English-speaking residents of the city.

The center also offers occasional cooking courses that teach local residents to cook cuisines from all over the world. In these cooking courses, you are assigned with a group where you have to work together in order to create the dish being taught. Though the courses are primarily offered in Japanese, many of the fellow participants and attendees are more than flexible to help fill the communication gap.

By participating in international exchange events and activities, you will be able to meet members of the community that would be interested in getting to know you. From there, you will be able to have fun while developing new connections.



Tip 3: Check Out Community Circles

Throughout Asahikawa, there are various circles and activities throughout the city's community centers (公民館|kouminkan) and gymnasiums (体育館|taiikukan) that are open to the public. With exception to English circles, most of these community centers conduct their activities in Japanese so it is highly recommended to be conversational or higher to attend these events.

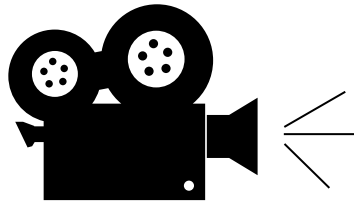
Gymnasiums offer a wide range of sports from basketball to badminton with occasional community competitions taking place. When it comes to sports, Japanese is not necessarily needed, but definitely would help when communicating with teammates or when playing matches. Community centers on the other hand, though most of these activities are held in Japanese, there is a variety of options from chorus circles, cooking clubs, and even karate. It is even possible to host your own activity at community centers by reserving a room at their website.

By being involved in the community whether through sports or circles, you will be able to build relationships with the locals of Asahikawa City and hopefully find a sense of belonging while in this wonderful city.

Checkout the sites below to see the community centers in your area! (Japanese)

List of Community Centers: <https://www.city.asahikawa.hokkaido.jp/facility00/facility08/index.html>

List of Registered Local Circles: <https://asahikawa.manabi365.net/about/>



MOVIES IN DECEMBER

**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.

Cineplex 7 Asahikawa Cinemas Only: Every Wednesday is Ladies' Day! Admission is ¥1,100 (tax included for women at all theaters).

CinePlex 7 Asahikawa: Nagayama 12-jo 3-chome Western Powers Nagayama

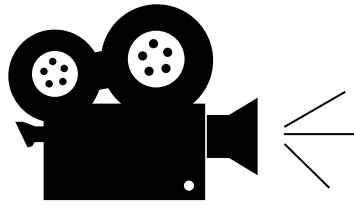
URL: <http://www.unitedcinemas.jp/asahikawa/index.html> (Japanese)

Now Showing

- Tonde Saitama: Biwako yori Ai wo Komete (Japanese)
- Kubi (Japanese/R15+)
- Plane (English/PG12)
- Kamui no Uta (Japanese/PG12)
- Houtei Yugi (Japanese)
- Seiyoku (Japanese)
- Godzilla Minus One (Japanese 4DX)
- The Silent Service (Japanese)
- Don't Call It Mystery (Japanese)
- How Do You Live? (Japanese/Anime)

Coming Soon

- Rascal Does Not Dream of a Knapsack Kid (Japanese/Anime) 12/1
- Lumberjack the Monster (Japanese/PG12) 12/1
- Rinjin X: Giwaku no Kanojo (Japanese) 12/1
- Retribution (English) 12/1
- Napoleon (English 4DX/PG12) 12/1
- I Wish I Could Meet You Again on the Hill Between That Flower Blooms (Japanese) 12/8
- Wonka (English 4DX) 12/8
- Totto-Chan: The Little Girl at the Window (Japanese/Anime) 12/8
- The Imaginary (Japanese/Anime) 12/15
- Wish (English/Anime) 12/15
- Spy x Family Code: White (Japanese/Anime) 12/22
- Kamen Rider the Winter Movie: Gotchard & Geats (Japanese) 12/22
- Expend4bles (English/R15+) 1/5
- Concrete Utopia (Korean) 1/5
- Aru Tozawareta Yuki no Sasou de (Japanese) 1/12
- Kizumotogatari: Koyomi Vamp (Japanese/Anime) 1/12
- Aquaman and the Lost Kingdom (English) 1/12
- Golden Kamui (Japanese) 1/19
- Mobile Suit Gundam SEED Freedom (Japanese/Anime) 1/26
- Poor Things (English/R18+) 1/26
- Silent Love (Japanese) 1/26



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Cineplex 7 Asahikawa Cinemas Only: Every Wednesday is Ladies' Day! Admission is ¥1,100 (tax included for women at all theaters).

Aeon Cinema: Miyashita-dori 7-chome / 0166-74-6411

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

Now Showing

- Kamui no Uta (Japanese/PG12)
- Tonde Saitama: Biwako yori Ai wo Komete (Japanese)
- Sylvanian Families: A Gift from Freya (Japanese)
- Kubi (Japanese/R15+)
- Kitaro Tanjo: Gegege no Nazo (Japanese/Anime)
- OUT (Japanese/PG12)
- Houtei Yugi (Japanese)
- The Marvels (English)
- Komada Joruisho he Yokoso (Japanese/Anime)
- Sumikko Gurashi: Tsugihagi Kojo no Fushigi na Ko (Japanese/Anime)
- Godzilla Minus One (Japanese)
- Analog (Japanese)
- Don't Call It Mystery (Japanese)
- How Do You Live? (Japanese/Anime)

Coming Soon

- Lumberjack the Monster (Japanese/PG12) 12/1
- The Exorcist: Believer (English/PG12) 12/1
- Totto-Chan: The Little Girl at the Window (Japanese/Anime) 12/8
- I Wish I Could Meet You Again on the Hill Between That Flower Blooms (Japanese) 12/8
- My Next Life as a Villainess: All Routes Lead to Doom! (Japanese/Anime) 12/8
- Wonka (English 4DX) 12/8
- The Imaginary (Japanese/Anime) 12/15
- Wish (English, Japanese/Anime) 12/15
- PAW Patrol: The Mighty Movie (Japanese/Anime) 12/15
- Spy x Family Code: White (Japanese/Anime) 12/22
- Kyokaisyaku Momotaro (Japanese) 12/29
- Haikyuu the Movie: The Battle at the Garbage Dump (Japanese/Anime) 2/16

AIC BULLETIN BOARD

Need Assistance?



If you ever find yourself in need of assistance, know that the Hokkaido Foreign Resident Support Center is there for you! They are able to provide you with consultation services in various languages (Japanese, English, Chinese, Korean, Tagalog, Vietnamese, Russian, Indonesian, Thai, Nepalese, Burmese) on residence procedures, employment, medical care, welfare, childbirth, childcare, education, and more for FREE! Call them at **011-200-9595** or go to: www.hiecc.or.jp/soudan



Interesting activities such as quizzes, discussions, songs, games, handicrafts and much more, all in English! Come meet new people, relax and relate on Fun Fridays!

Dates: December 8th & 22nd, January 12th & 26th, February 9th & 23rd

Times: 1:00pm-2:00pm ~Afternoon~ 2nd and 4th Friday of the month
6:30-8:30pm ~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 an afternoon visit.



The Asahikawa International Center (Feeeal Asahikawa 7F 1-jo-dori 8-chome) has free Wi-Fi available for public use. If you reside in Asahikawa, registration for a user card is required. 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/shell, offers for culture/language exchange, or write an essay about your life in Asahikawa or your hometown. The article should not be profit-related! Please send your submissions to us at the AIC.



Asahikawa International Committee

Asahikawa International Center Feeeal Asahikawa 7F, 1-jo-dori 8-chome,
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****The opinions expressed in the essays are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the AIC or the City of Asahikawa.****