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### For further information or to register for events, contact:

Asahikawa International Committee (AIC)  
(SUGANO Ayumi, SAITO Emmy, or GONZALEZ Gabriel)

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International/City Affairs Division,  
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## Hokkaido News Top 5

*December 2022 - January 2023, compiled by the AIC*

### Asahikawa Winter Festival Reopens with Balcony Sculpture, (12/22)

The 64th Asahikawa Winter Festival will be taking place from 2/7-2/12, with the inclusion of its viewing balcony snow sculpture that doubles as seating for stage events. Food and drink booths will be set up in regulation with COVID-19 prevention measures and the city is currently looking for citizens interested in making smaller-scale snow sculptures. People of all ages will be able to sign-up for on-stage dance and karaoke performances, potential quiz bowls, and more.

### Kamikawa Sees 71.9% Growth in Tourism, (12/30)

The Kamikawa General Subprefectural Bureau has revealed that the number of tourists that visited the Kamikawa District in the first half of the 2022 fiscal year grew by 71.9% in comparison to the same time period last year. Although numbers had been decreasing due to COVID-19, the area has begun to see an increase for the first time in three years. According to the bureau, the laxing of pandemic restrictions, hosting of events, and municipal initiatives such as travel discounts have aided in the reversal of previous trends.

### Capture-and-Kills of Brown Bears Reaches Peak at 1,056, (12/31)

Hokkaido has reported that 1,056 capture-and-kills of brown bears were made in 2022, either by extermination or hunting. Public records since 1962 show this is the first time it surpassed 1,000 and is the second year in a row that the highest killings on record has been updated. Fourteen people were killed by bear attacks and damages to agricultural produce resulting in a loss of 262 million yen were both also at an all-time high. While the Hokkaido brown bear population faced near extinction in the past, today their numbers do not show signs of stopping.

### Winter Garden Finds Fans Among Children, (1/14)

The Kitasaito Asahikawa Winter Garden opened on 1/14 in the area of the JR Asahikawa Station with winter fun and games for all. The "YukkiRink" ice-skating rink held its opening ceremony the day prior on the station's main square. The mayor of Asahikawa announced his hopes to see children and parents enjoy the rink, followed by a lighting of the rink and a skate performance by seven elementary schoolers along with Yukkirin, one of Asahikawa's mascots. The rink will be open until 2/12 with no entrance fee and free skate rentals.

### Annual Umaoi Begin with Wishes of Safe Deliveries, (1/17)

The *umaoi*, meant to help farm horses get exercise in the winter months, took place on 1/16 in Otofuke at the Livestock Breeding Center on Tokachi Farm. Young and pregnant horses run around the 800 m field track every year to help ease birthing in mares and build up strength in young horses. Free public viewing has allowed visitors to capture the horses on camera as the 1-ton animals ran rumbling past in the snow. The *umaoi* will continue until the beginning of April, but public viewings are only until 2/24, weekdays 9:30-10:30.

**Read the latest issue of Asahikawa Info and get to know the AIC on our website:**

<http://asahikawaaic.jp/en/>

## Uaynukor kotan a=kar: Ainu language and history of the National Ainu Museum and Park

ウアイヌコロ コタン アカラ 民族共生象徴空間(ウポポイ)のことばと歴史

Discover the history behind the National Ainu Museum and the lake upon which it is set, alongside exhibition panels fully translated into the Ainu language.

Date: Until 2/12 (Sunday)

Time: 9:00-17:00, Closed: Mondays (The following day if Monday is a holiday)

Place: National Ainu Museum (Shiraoi, Wakakusu-cho 2-chome)

Admission: Adult ¥1,200(\*¥960), High school student ¥600(\*¥480), Middle school students and under FREE (\*Groups of 20+)

For more information, contact: <https://nam.go.jp/>

## Art and Craft from the 1920's: Europe, Japan, Asahikawa

モダンの芸術 100年前のヨーロッパ、日本、旭川

Dive into the world of art and craft from 100 years ago, when we were between World Wars and art flourished in traditional and new forms.

Date: Until 3/12 (Sunday)

Time: 9:30-17:00 (Entry ends at 16:30), Closed: Mondays

Place: Hokkaido Asahikawa Museum of Art (Asahikawa, inside Tokiwa Park)

Admission: General ¥800(\*¥600), University and high school students ¥500(\*¥400), Middle school and elementary students ¥300(\*¥200) (\*Groups of 10+)

For more information, contact: 0166-25-2577 (Hokkaido Asahikawa Museum of Art)

## Ryunosuke Akutagawa in Asahikawa, Mini-Exhibit

ミニ展示「旭川の芥川龍之介」

The world-famous Japanese writer made many travels in his lifetime throughout Japan, including Asahikawa. Learn more about his time here, just two months before his death.

Date: Until 3/31 (Friday)

Time: 10:00-16:00, Closed: Sundays, Mondays, Holidays & New Year's

Place: Asahikawa Literary Museum (Asahikawa, inside Tokiwa Park)

Admission: FREE

For more information, contact: 0166-22-3334 (Asahikawa Literary Museum)

## 60th Anniversary Sanrio Exhibition: The Beginning of Kawaii

永遠の「カワイイ」はここからはじまった サンリオ創立60周年の大博覧会開催

Learn about how Sanrio came to define "kawaii" with its over 450 characters and share it with the world in this exhibition celebrating the company's 60th anniversary.

Date: From 2/11 (Saturday) until 4/2 (Sunday)

Time: 9:30-17:00 (Entry ends at 16:30), Closed: Mondays

Place: Hokkaido Museum of Modern Art (Sapporo, Chuo-ku Kita 1-jo, Nishi 17-chome)

Admission: General ¥1,600(\*¥1,400), Middle school and high school student ¥1,100(\*¥900), Elementary school student ¥800(\*¥600), Ages 3 to pre-elementary ¥400(\*¥300), Ages 2 and below FREE (\*Presale pricing, until 2/10)

For more information, contact: 011-644-6882 (Hokkaido Museum of Modern Art)



## Sugawara Natsuko Piano Recital

### 菅原奈津子ピアノリサイタル

Listen to the musical stylings of pianist Natsuko Sugawara, a graduate of music studies at Ferris University performing a program with both classical and Japanese pieces.

Date: 2/12 (Sunday)

Time: 15:00

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

Admission: ¥1,000

Ticket Office: Coach & Four (Music Corner), Asahikawa Taisetsu Crystal Hall (Museum Shop)

For more information, contact: 0166-52-2659 (Sugano)



## 2022 P-Newcomer Award Puppet Performance

### 2022 P新人賞 Puppet Performance

Watch newcomer puppeteers weave captivating stories at this competition where both judges and the audience decide who deserves to be named masters of the craft!

Date: 2/18 (Saturday), 2/19 (Sunday)

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

Place: Sampo Japan Puppet Theater Himawari Hall (Aichi Prefecture, Nagoya, Naka-ku Marunouchi 3-22-21)

Admission: (Presale) ¥2,200, (Day of) ¥2,500

Ticket Office: Sampo Japan Nagoya Building 8F (052-212-7229)

For more information, contact: mail@aichi-puppet.net (Aichi Puppet Theater Center)



## The Last Orderly: The Tale of Kikuya Sakae

### 最後の伝令 菊谷栄物語

Relive the true story of Kikuya Sakae, a writer of revue shows who teamed up with the famous comedian Enoken, in this play depicting his last days before being sent to war.

Date: 2/21 (Tuesday), 2/22 (Wednesday)

Time: (Tuesday) 18:30~, (Wednesday) 13:30~

Place: Asahikawa Public Hall (Asahikawa, inside Tokiwa Park)

Admission: Contact theater for membership fee

For more information, contact: 0166-23-1655 (Asahikawa Civic Theater)



## 32nd "Creating the North" Stage Performance

### 第32回「北を創る」舞台公演

Asahikawa reveals its artistic diversity in this show offering performances of Western dance, Japanese dance and Japanese music.

Date: 2/26 (Saturday)

Time: (Opens) 10:00, (Starts) 10:30

Place: Asahikawa Civic Culture Hall (Large Hall), (Asahikawa, 7-jo-dori 9-chome)

Admission: General ¥1,000, Elementary student and under FREE

For more information, contact: 0166-31-4328 (Asahikawa Cultural Arts Council)



# Asahikawa Info

**AIC: Please tell us about yourself and where you are from.**

**Samuel:** My name is Samuel Culver! I am from Missouri, which is in the middle of the United States. I came to Japan in August of 2022 with my wife and have been working as an Assistant Language Teacher (ALT) for the junior high schools in Shibetsu City, which is about an hour north of Asahikawa.

**AIC: How did you first get interested in Japan?**

**Samuel:** There are many things that drew my interest. When I was young, I really enjoyed playing Pokemon. As I got older and started researching more about where Pokemon came from, I got more interested in the culture of Japan and in its food and media. When I was a teenager, I found out about the JET Program and decided that it was my dream job to do after I graduated college.

**AIC: Is this your first time in Japan? How long have you been in Japan?**



**Name: Samuel Culver**

**Home Country: USA**

**Interviewed: 2022/1/14**

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](mailto:cir_kokusai@city.asahikawa.hokkaido.jp)

## Hello, Asahikawa!

I visited Japan on a two-week homestay in 2015 in a city called Higashimurayama located in the Tokyo prefecture. It was an amazing experience! I still talk with my host mother and was able to meet up with the family during my visit to Tokyo. I was so excited to see them after seven years!

**AIC: What brings you to Asahikawa in particular?**

**Samuel:** Although my wife and I live in Shibetsu, we often visit Asahikawa. We are big fans of the Aeon Mall and its movie theater! Although our ability to speak and understand Japanese is very weak, we still enjoy going to the movies when we can! I recently found a vegan ramen restaurant that is located near the station that serves a delicious bowl of matcha salt ramen. We are already planning a trip to have it again! I also have enjoyed the festivals in Asahikawa. We were able to go to Tabemarche and it was so much fun! I am really excited for the Winter Festival.

**AIC: What kind of work do you do?**

**Samuel:** I am an assistant language teacher at the junior high school level. So I help students who are learning English by being a native speaker! Students will often listen to me read and then will ask questions or we will play games that are focused on their current unit and grammar points.

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

**Samuel:** I really enjoy playing video games; as mentioned earlier, I am a very big Pokemon fan, but I have also recently gotten into reading. I don't have a particular favorite genre yet! College made me feel burnt out on reading, so I decided to just read anything that seemed slightly interesting. I've read a

few biographies and YA novels during my desk-warming days and have recently gotten into reading Stephen King. I have also gotten into baking. My wife does it professionally, but I've learned to make cornbread and banana bread on my own and have it taste pretty good and not be burnt!

**AIC: Do you have any favorite Japanese foods?**

**Samuel:** I have several favorite Japanese foods. My all-time favorite dish is curry and rice! I love how many different ways there are to make it, but no matter where I eat it, it always makes me feel like I am home. It's my comfort food! Lawson's karaage chicken is another fan favorite of mine. We have also found a corn porridge mix at the store that I can only describe as the epitome of winter comfort.

**AIC: Any places you would recommend to others (restaurants, sight-seeing, etc.)?**

**Samuel:** I highly recommend Vegan Ramen めぐり (meguri)! It is delicious and a great option for people who are vegetarian. I have had their spicy salt ramen and their matcha salt ramen, both were absolutely delicious! I can't handle spicy food well, but the taste was well worth the burn.

**AIC: What have been your impressions of Asahikawa and how does it compare to your hometown?**

**Samuel:** There is a suburb of Kansas City that reminds me of Asahikawa, which is probably why we enjoy visiting as often as we do! Shibetsu is rather quiet, so it is nice to see the hustle and bustle of the city! Asahikawa always has a high energy to it; even when we got trapped because of a blizzard that canceled the trains, we were able to enjoy our time with some good food!

**AIC: Do you have any goals or things you are looking forward to doing here?**

**Samuel:** Asahikawa is a wonderful place. My goal is to explore more of it in the spring and summer when the weather is a bit more favorable! Missouri doesn't get a lot of snow, so it has been a bit of a learning curve trying to adjust to the Hokkaido winters!

**AIC: Is there anything else you would like to say to our readers?**

**Samuel:** I want to encourage readers to go out and try new foods and new places! Break out of your comfort zone and try new things, you never know what you might find!

**AIC: Thank you so much!**



# 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.

**Cineplex 7 Asahikawa and Dinos 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](http://cinema.aeoncinema.com/wm/asahikawa) (Japanese)

## Now Showing

- The Tatami Time Machine Blues (Japanese/Anime)
- The Legend & Butterfly (Japanese/PG12)
- Kin no Kuni Mizu no Kuni (Japanese/Anime)
- Dream Horse (English)
- Shin Stigmatized Properties Pt2 (Japanese/R18+) ~2/2
- Sword Art Online Progressive: Scherzo of Deep Night (Japanese/Anime) ~2/2
- Flag Day (English/PG12) ~2/2
- Aikatsu! 10th Story ~Mirai e no Starway~ (Japanese/Anime)
- Ichikei's Crow (Japanese)
- And So I'm at a Loss (Japanese)
- Yokai Watch: Jibanyan vs. Komasan (Japanese/Anime)
- Uso Happyaku Naniwa Yume no Jin (Japanese)
- Detective Conan-Haibara Ai Monogatari: Kurogane no Mystery Train (Japanese/Anime)
- Lonely Castle in the Mirror (Japanese/Anime)
- Avatar: The Way of Water (English)
- Dr. Koto's Clinic (Japanese)
- From Siberia with Love (Japanese)
- The First Slam Dunk (Japanese/Anime)
- Suzume no Tojimari (Japanese/Anime)

## Coming Soon

- Shikakenin Fujieda Baian (Japanese) 2/3
- Damon Slayer: To the Swordsmith Village (Japanese PG12/Anime) 2/3~3/30
- #Manhole (Japanese/PG12) 2/10
- Babylon (English/R15+) 2/10
- Shylock no Kodomotachi (Japanese) 2/17
- Blue Giant (Japanese/Anime) 2/17
- Ant-Man and the Wasp: Quantumania (English) 2/17
- Yudo (Japanese) 2/23
- Ultraman Decker Finale: Journey to Beyond (Japanese) 2/23
- Scroll (Japanese) 2/24
- Doraemon: Nobita's Sky Utopia (Japanese/Anime) 3/3
- And Yet, You are So Sweet (Japanese) 3/3
- Everything Everywhere All at Once (English) 3/3
- The Fabelmans (English) 3/3
- Thomas the Tank Engine Movie (Japanese/Anime) 3/10
- My Happy Marriage (Japanese) 3/17
- Puss in Boots: The Last Wish (English/Anime) 3/17
- Lyle, Lyle, Crocodile (English/Anime) 3/24
- Gridman Universe (Japanese) 3/24
- Knock at the Cabin (English) 4/7

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

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**CinePlex 7 Asahikawa:** Nagayama 12-jo 3-chome Western Powers Nagayama  
0166-49-1000 / URL: <http://www.unitedcinemas.jp/asahikawa/index.html> (Japanese)

## Now Showing

- The Banshees of Inisherin (English/PG12)
- The Legend & Butterfly (Japanese/PG12)
- Kin no Kuni Mizu no Kuni (Japanese/Anime)
- Kuroko's Basketball: Last Game (Japanese 4DX/Anime)
- The Northman (English/PG12)
- Ichikei's Crow (Japanese)
- And So I'm at a Loss (Japanese)
- Familia (Japanese/PG12)
- Black Night Parade (Japanese)
- Lonely Castle in the Mirror (Japanese/Anime)
- Kaguya-sama wa Kokurasetai: First Kiss wa Owaranai (Japanese/Anime)
- Avatar: The Way of Water (English 4DX)
- Dr. Koto's Clinic (Japanese)
- From Siberia with Love (Japanese)
- The First Slam Dunk (Japanese/Anime)
- Suzume no Tojimari (Japanese/Anime)

## Coming Soon

- Darwin's Amazing Animals (Japanese) 2/3
- Damon Slayer: To the Swordsmith Village (Japanese PG12/Anime) 2/3
- Shylock no Kodomotachi (Japanese) 2/17
- Ant-Man and the Wasp: Quantumania (English 4DX) 2/17
- Decision of Leave (Korean) 2/17
- Yudo (Japanese) 2/23
- Empire of Light (English/PG12) 2/23
- Three Thousand Years of Longing (English/PG12) 2/23
- Doraemon: Nobita's Sky Utopia (Japanese/Anime) 3/3
- My Happy Marriage (Japanese) 3/17
- Shazam! Fury of the Gods (English) 3/17
- Do Unto Others (Japanese) 3/24
- Lyle, Lyle, Crocodile (English/Anime) PG12 3/24
- Black Clover: Sword of the Wizard King (Japanese/Anime) 3/31
- Token Ranbu 2 (Japanese) 3/31
- Dungeons & Dragons: Honor Among Thieves (English) 3/31

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

# AIC Bulletin Board

## Need Help?

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](http://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:** February 10th & 24th, March 10th & 24th, April 14th & 28th  
**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)



北海道 外国人 相談 センター  
Hokkaido Foreign Resident Support Center  
北海道外国人咨询中心 홋카이도 외국인 상담 센터  
Trung tâm hỗ trợ người nước ngoài Hokkaido

ASK US ANYTHING!

OPEN MON~FRI 9:00-17:00  
CLOSED WEEKDAYS 12:00-13:00  
AND SAT, SUN, & PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

CONTACT US!  
011-200-9595  
support@hiecc.or.jp  
www.hiecc.or.jp/soudan

## Fun Fridays!

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

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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.\*\*