

AIZU WAKAMATSU INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION MONTHLY ENGLISH NEWSLETTER

# SynthesAizu

July 2021  
Volume 1 Issue 7

## Association News

### Update: Aizu's Covid-19 Vaccine Rollout

#### Vaccination Passes for Aizu Residents Ages 16 - 64 to be Distributed This Month

Aizu Wakamatsu city will soon begin distributing vaccine passes by post to all residents between the ages of 16 and 64. Vaccine passes are to be sent out starting July 15, and can be expected to arrive by July 21st. Older residents and those with underlying health complications will be prioritized for earlier vaccination. Please remember to make a reservation during or after the period indicated on your vaccine pass.

#### Vaccine Reservations Can Now be Made Online

Until recently, reservations to receive the coronavirus vaccine could only be made by phone. For obvious reasons, the city has finally implemented an online reservation system. Reservations to receive a vaccine can now be made through the Aizu Wakamatsu city homepage.

#### 78% of Aizu's Elderly Have Received at Least One Dose

According to a report from the city office, 27,961 elderly people in Aizu had received at least one dose of the coronavirus vaccine as of June 20th. This number accounts for 78% of Aizu's 65 and over population.

**\*Once you receive a vaccine pass, please do not hesitate to contact the AWIA if you need any assistance making a reservation.**

### Caption Contest Winner!

Thank you to everyone who participated in last month's caption contest! After careful consideration, we are pleased to announce the winning caption, submitted by Veronica on Instagram! Her lighthearted and timely caption resonated with all of the staff at the AWIA.



*"Air Hug"*

### Former Association President Mr. Suzuki's Retirement Ceremony



After more than 20 years of service, former Association president Mr. Kensuke Suzuki has retired from his position at the AWIA. When the association first opened, he served for many years as vice-president, before later taking on the role of association president. Come join us on July 10th for a ceremony commemorating Mr. Suzuki's retirement, where we'll take a trip down memory lane through the history of the AWIA.

**Date:** July 10th, (Sat) 14:00-15:30

**Place:** AiCT Building (Aizu-Wakamatsu, Sakae-machi, 1-77)  
Free Parking Available

**Schedule:** 1) Mr. Suzuki's speech, "Now, as I Remember"  
2) Video Messages from previous CIRs

**Capacity:** 30 Guests

**Sign-Up:** Contact the AWIA by Friday, July 9th

**\*The AWIA office will be closed during the ceremony.**



会津若松市国際交流協会

AIZU WAKAMATSU INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION

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EMAIL: mail@awia.jp

## National Holiday Changes from July through October

To accommodate the 2020 Olympic and Paralympic games, several national holidays that normally occur during the summer months have been moved. Marine Day, Sports Day, and Mountain Day have all been shifted to different dates. These changes were announced by the national government in mid-December of 2020, so most 2021 calendars do not reflect the change. More information can be found here (Japanese):

<https://www.kantei.go.jp/jp/headline/tokyo2020/shukujitsu.html>

Holiday	Original Date	2021 Date
Marine Day	July 19th (Mon)	<b>July 22nd (Thu)</b>
Sports Day	October 11th (Mon)	<b>July 23rd (Fri)</b>
Mountain Day	August 11th (Wed)	<b>August 8th (Sun)</b>

## Introducing: The Akabeko Salon!

We are pleased to announce that the AWIA recently joined hands with the Aizu Area Information Center to create a new community space for foreign residents in Aizu! The new "Akabeko Salon" is a free-to-use space where visitors can exchange local information in various languages, learn about Japanese culture, and make new friends! Mrs. Emilie, originally from France, will be managing the salon and hosting monthly events for locals both international and Japanese to meet and enjoy doing different activities together.

### Akabeko Salon Walk-in Hours

Tuesday, Thursday,  
Saturday  
10:00 - 16:00

### July Event!

#### Tanabata Paper Windchime Workshop!

Date: July 17th (Sat)  
Session A: 14:00 - 14:45  
Session B: 15:00 - 15:45  
Capacity: 5 participants per session  
Sign-Up: [cam@bekonon.com](mailto:cam@bekonon.com)

**Free!**



Mrs. Emilie Bouquet Nanko

**ACCESS:** The Akabeko Salon is located in the Aizu Area Information Center, across from the central post office. Aizu-Wakamatsu City, Omachi 1-Chome, 9-29 (1-min walk from the Yubinkyoku-Mae bus stop)



## Summer Sky Festival in Inawashiro!



The second annual Summer Sky Festival will be held this summer on the banks of Lake Inawashiro! This classic outdoor summer festival will have a wide range of events, from local vendors to live performances, barbeque, outdoor fitness workshops, and more! The international association will also be joining in on the fun, with our very own "International Zone" at the event! The International Zone will have a total of 10 booths, including 1 AWIA booth, and 9 booths available to showcase Fukushima's international community.

## Now Recruiting Festival Booths and Vendors!

**Theme:** Discover an Unknown Aizu!

**Dates:** August 28th, (Sat) 10:00 - 18:30, and August 29th, (Sun) 10:00 - 15:00\*\*

**Place:** Tenjihama Auto Campground in Inawashiro

**Eligibility:** Individuals, groups, or businesses operating within Fukushima Prefecture

**Concepts:** 1) Exhibition Booths - Booths aimed at introducing different countries, cultures, or groups involved in international exchange.

2) Vendor Booths - Booths selling various international food, drinks, and/or goods.

**Fees:** Basic Supplies (tent, tent signs, tables, chairs, power outlet, etc.) - **FREE**

Other Supplies (Other equipment, sales tools, decorations, etc. are the responsibility of the vendor.)

**Apply:** To apply, please contact the AWIA via phone or email by **July 20th (Tue)**.

\*\*Times shown above are subject to change.

This event is sponsored by the "Gokujo no Aizu" Project Association and the Department of Tourism in Aizu Wakamatsu

\*Booths can be reserved for one or both days of the festival.



## Member Spotlight: Kimura Yūta

Troubled by the amount of food waste he saw happening around the world, Yūta Kimura has long dreamed of working in a country suffering from hunger and poverty. In 2019, he enrolled in the Asian Rural Institute, located in Tochigi Prefecture. There, he studied organic farming and livestock care, before later joining the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). Every year, JICA dispatches representatives to developing countries around the world to share agricultural technologies and techniques. After many years of preparation and waiting, Kimura has finally been scheduled for dispatch to Kenya later this summer. As he gears up for his journey, Kimura shares with us the formative experience he had during his time at the Asian Rural Institute.



Yūta Kimura (left) with a friend from Ghana

### “That We May Live Together”

“That we may live together.” This is the motto of the Asian Rural Institute (ARI). Founded in Tochigi prefecture in 1973, the school aims to provide a place for students from around the world to become “Rural Leaders,” capable of guiding agricultural industries in their home countries.

The curriculum of study at ARI takes place over 9 months across all four seasons. Students study topics like organic farming, livestock, environmental concerns, religion, gender, poverty, and a wide range of social issues present both within Japan and around the world. The curriculum encourages students to foster a mindset of “servant leadership,” which enables them to return to their home countries as rural leaders, capable of implementing the skills and knowledge they have gained from their studies directly into their local industries. If you’re curious to learn more, please check out the Asian Rural Institute homepage.

Now, with the serious introductions out of the way, I’d like to tell you about my year and a half of living and studying at ARI! I was motivated to attend ARI because I was interested in International Cooperation, and I wanted to fill the gap in my knowledge regarding manufacturing and agriculture. When I arrived on campus, my first impression was that it was a place like no other. Despite being located in Japan, it felt nothing like Japan! All the students spoke English as a common language, so each day was like a rollercoaster ride.

Every day began with radio calisthenics, and from morning until night the other students and I shared meals and living spaces with people whose countries and cultures were all completely different from our own. But the diversity and variety was what made the experience so much fun, and filled each day with rich new experiences. I could feel my mind opening to new possibilities, and I met new people that I would have never had the chance to meet otherwise. Through those new friendships, I also learned things that no amount of classroom study or field training could have taught me. The memory of my dynamic experience at ARI, and the incredibly valuable friendships I made there will surely be with me for the rest of my life. Even now, my friends from ARI and I remain connected by sharing reports and new information with each other. After all, we believe in sharing ideas and working together, “so that we may live together.”

I encourage everyone to contemplate this idea of working “so that we may live together.” There have been so many uncertainties during the Covid era, but with a bit of luck, I’ll be headed to Kenya as a JICA representative later this summer. As I consider how I can make a positive difference in the local community, and how I can convey the joys of learning and discovery, I will do my best to contribute to “a future where we live together.”

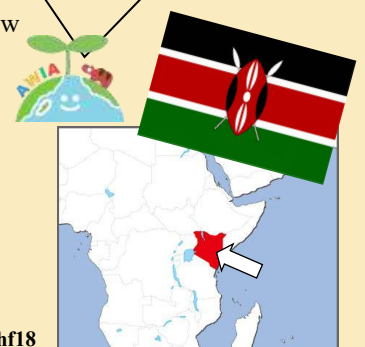
From all of us at the AWIA, we wish Yūta good health and good luck on his journey in Kenya!



Check out the video below to learn more about the Asian Rural Institute!



<https://youtu.be/NBIFLK5hf18>



## Events in July\*

1	TH	18:30 Japanese Conversation Class (Night)
2	FR	10:00 Japanese Conversation Class (Day)
3	SA	Aizu Gastronomy Walking Tour
4	SU	Closed
5	MO	Closed
6	TU	13:30 Nihongo Salon
7	WE	Tanabata
8	TH	18:30 Japanese Conversation Class (Night)
9	FR	10:00 Japanese Conversation Class (Day)
10	SA	President Suzuki's Retirement Ceremony
11	SU	10:00 HS Student's Intl. Exchange Wksh 10:00 Children's Nihongo Hiroba
12	MO	Closed
13	TU	13:30 Nihongo Salon
14	WE	
15	TH	18:30 Japanese Conversation Class (Night)
16	FR	10:00 Japanese Conversation Class (Day)
17	SA	10:00 HS Student's Intl. Exchange Wksh 14:00 Akabeko Salon Tanabata Event
18	SU	Closed
19	MO	Closed
20	TU	13:30 Nihongo Salon
21	WE	
22	TH	Ocean Day
23	FR	Sports Day - 2020 Tokyo Olympics Begin
24	SA	
25	SU	10:00 Children's Nihongo Hiroba
26	MO	Closed
27	TU	13:30 Nihongo Salon
28	WE	
29	TH	18:30 Japanese Conversation Class (Night)
30	FR	
31	SA	13:30 Newsletter Release Preparation

\*Events are subject to change depending on the Covid situation in the greater Aizu area.



## Other Information

### Aizu's "Shoku no Jin" Summer Theme

Aizu's "Shoku no Jin" is a year-round food festival that challenges restaurants and businesses to highlight local products by setting a menu "theme" for each season. The theme for summer is "Tomatoes."



Starting July 1st and running through the end of September, 74 local restaurants, shops, and hotels will be offering limited-time menu items that feature locally-grown tomatoes.



Visit the Shoku no Jin homepage (Japanese) for details about participating shops and menu offerings:  
<https://aizu-shokuno-jin.jp/>

### Online Japanese Lessons

Study Japanese from home at the time that works best for you! Our volunteer teachers will work with you to match your language level and study goals. Most lessons are 1-on-1, but there may be cases where class slots have 2 or more students.

### 12 Lessons for 4,000JPY!

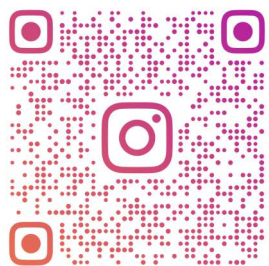
**Time:** Choose your preferred 1-hour time slot anytime between 10:00 and 20:30 one day per week.\*

**Number of Classes:** 12 Sessions / 1hr per session

**Cost:** 4,000JPY for 12 sessions (AWIA member exclusive price)

**Sign-Up:** Contact the AWIA by phone or email to register!

\*When registering, please inform us of your top 3 preferred time slots. There may be cases where a student's first choice time slot is unavailable.



### We're on Instagram!

Follow us for photos and news about our upcoming events!



AWIA\_PHOTO

<http://facebook.com/awiajp>



Visit our Facebook page for the latest updates in multiple languages!

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