

Events in January

1	SU	Closed
2	MO	Closed
3	TU	Closed
4	WE	
5	TH	
6	FR	
7	SA	
8	SU	
9	MO	Closed
10	TU	
11	WE	
12	TH	
13	FR	
14	SA	15:00 Bowling Tournament (14:00~ AWIA Office Temp.Closed)
15	SU	Closed
16	MO	Closed
17	TU	
18	WE	
19	TH	
20	FR	
21	SA	10:00 FIND English Conversation Club 10:00-17:00 Satellite JICA Desk
22	SU	10:00 Children's Nihongo Hiroba
23	MO	Closed
24	TU	
25	WE	
26	TH	
27	FR	
28	SA	13:30 Newsletter Preparation
29	SU	
30	MO	Closed
31	TU	

Want to Learn Kendo?

Want to learn Kendo? Worried about your Japanese level? No problem! Josai Kendo Club is accepting new members! It's a great chance to try out a new sport! They are a children's club, so they are perfect for new learners. Join for a trial lesson! Open to everyone.

Find them on facebook for more information and practice dates - [jyosai.kendo](https://www.facebook.com/jyosai.kendo)

When:	Tues/Thurs - 19:00-21:00 Sat - 18:00-21:00
Where:	Koganei Elementary School Gym
Price:	Start Fee: 3000yen Practice Fee: 3000yen/month



Those who liked our Naginata event in June, check it out!
Naginata is always welcoming new members as well.

Contact us for more details. - mail@awia.jp

Happy New Year from AWIA

Happy New Year! Thank you so much for all your support in the last year. We had quite a busy year. We held our International Festival in October for the first time in four years. Thanks to all of our volunteers, and all the participants, it was absolutely fantastic.

Next year will be even better!

We have many things we want to do so, please look forward to it!

From Erika

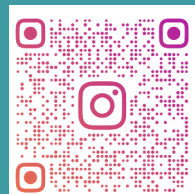
**STOP BY OUR OFFICE
ANY TIME!**

Our doors are always open!
This month, stop by anytime and write
your New Years Resolutions to decorate the office.
We would love to hear your hopes and goals for the New Year.

Call for Newsletter Volunteers!

Come hang out with us while we fold, stamp, and pack our monthly publications for mailing! Chat with other AWIA members and enjoy this casual volunteer activity.
No need to sign up, just drop by if you can!

Date: January 28, Saturday **Time:** 13:30~
Place: AizuWakamatsu International Association Office



We're on Instagram!

Follow us for photos and news about
our upcoming events!



AWIA_PHOTO

[http://facebook.com/awiajp](https://facebook.com/awiajp)



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

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AIZU WAKAMATSU INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION MONTHLY ENGLISH NEWSLETTER

SynthesAizu

January 2023
Volume 3 Issue 1

Association News

Aizu Wakamatsu International Association Bowling Tournament

It's time for bowling! Come and ring in the New Year by knocking down some pins! This event is open to members and non-members alike. AWIA will be organizing teams, so free to join on your own or as a group. Join with your friends!



Sign-up by email

We will play two games, and winners will be determined from both team and individual scores, so players of all skill levels are encouraged to participate~ **Beginners welcome!**



Sign up by phone or email by
Jan 10th -

Tell us your name, age, skill
level, contact info etc.

mail@awia.jp

(The AWIA office will be closed during this event.)

Date:	Jan 14th (Sat) 15:00~17:00
Time:	Registration: 14:30 Game start: 15:00
Place:	Bowl Sunshine 7-25 Asahimachi, Aizuwakamatsu
Spots:	Limited to ~30 people
Price:	Adult: ¥1400 Post Secondary Student: ¥1300 (Bring your Student ID) Junior/High School: ¥1100 Elementary and under: ¥1050 AWIA Member Discount: ¥100 (Also applicable to New Members and children under age 16 of members)



"FIND" English Conversation Club

AWIA member-led "FIND" is meeting again! FIND is a great way to meet people from all walks of life interested in speaking English. Play games, do activities, and talk about different things. Contact the AWIA to join!

Date/Time	Saturday, Jan 21st 10:00~11:30
Place	Aizu Wakamatsu City Learning Center 3F Room 5/6
Sign Up	Contact mail@awia.jp by Friday, Jan 20th



International Parents LINE group

Have a young family and are looking to connect with other young families? Join the AWIA's International Parents LINE group. We share information about child rearing and children's events in and around Aizu.

Contact us to join - mail@awia.jp

★ The Aizu Wakamatsu International Association will be closed from Dec 29 - Jan 3 for New Years. ★



会津若松市国際交流協会

AIZU WAKAMATSU INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION

TEL (0242) 27-3703

EMAIL: mail@awia.jp

This Month in Aizu

Yanaizu's New Year's Festival

Ring in the New Year at the Temple from the Akabeko legend. The Yanaizu Nanokado Hadakamairi happens every year on Jan. 7th. Watch men participate in an old tradition of warding off bad luck and illness by climbing up the Temple bell rope wearing only a loincloth!



Where:	Yanaizu's Enzoji Temple
When:	Jan 7th (Sat) - 20:30
Access:	Free Bus: 18:00 - Departs Wakamatsu Station 22:00 - Departs Yanaizu Tourist Centre 55 spots - No reservations (First come, first served.)

Ring in the New Year - Literally!

Ring the bell at Tsuruga-jo Castle for good luck in the new year. It is tradition to ring a Temple Bell 108 times at midnight. Try it yourself!
Details: New Years (23:30 Dec 31st) - First 108 People
Place: Tsuruga-jo Castle Park - Castle Bell near the Tourist Information Centre



FREE COVID-19 Test Kits

Fukushima Prefecture is still providing free COVID-19 tests to residents who are showing symptoms, or have recently been in close contact with someone with COVID-19. At time of printing, available until Dec 31st (Program has been extended multiple times.)

- Those with a risk for severe symptoms should seek medical attention.

Deadline	Dec 31st 2022 (May be extended)
Eligibility	① Close contact with infected person ② Showing mild symptoms
Apply:	Fukushima Pref. COVID-19 Kit Distribution Centre - https://fukushima-testkit.jp
Online	
By Phone	0120-941-546 (9:00-19:00)

Aizu's Tokaichi New Year's Market

Head over to the Shinmei shopping district for rows of food stalls and merchants selling goods for the New Year! You can find many things, including 'daruma' dolls, 'akabeko,' and 'okiagari koboshi.' It is an Aizu tradition for families to buy an okiagari koboshi doll for each member of the family, plus one. The extra doll is said to bring prosperity to the family in the new year. Don't forget to test out the okiagari koboshi's 'get-up' power by gently tossing it onto the little tray at the stall.



Tuesday, January 10th - 08:00 - 20:00

Shinmei-dori, Shiyakushomae-dori, Chuo-dori, Omachi-dori

Child Support Benefit

The City of Aizu Wakamatsu will be giving parents a one time payment of ¥20,000 to help with the rising cost of living.

Parents will be sent an Application Guide. Read it and if needed, send in the necessary documents to receive payment.

- **Eligibility:** Children born: April 2nd 2004 - April 1st 2023, and registered as a resident of Aizuwakamatsu before or on April 1st 2023

- **For Questions and More Info - Contact:**
AizuWakamatsu Child Support Division (39-1243)



Sign up for the City Newsletter

Every month the City also puts out an English Newsletter with important information for residents, such as: COVID Vaccine info, Child Support Benefits, Emergency Prep. tips, etc. We try to keep you updated, but we can't include everything. Sign up to get a copy delivered to your house!

Email us with your:

Name, Address, and Phone
Number to sign-up

mail@awia.jp



FREE! - sign up
by email

Member Spotlight: Addison Hoggard

Addison Likes:

Aizu's Nature & People

Favourite Restaurant:

Kontsh - for its
vegetarian options



What sort of things do you write?

These days, I mainly focus on writing poetry, although I also write short stories from time to time. At different times in my life I've been fixated with different ideas, all of which come through in my writing. The subject of my poetry changes to reflect whatever I'm obsessed with at the time. Right now, I find myself writing about the idea of home and all that that means. The home that I've left back in North Carolina and my new home here in Aizuwakamatsu. Through writing about these two places, I've found that the two are more similar than you'd think.

What made you interested in writing?

I've been writing for as long as I can remember. When I was a toddler, I would sit under my grandma's desk and tell her stories to type out on the computer. When I started school, any free time I had I would spend writing simple little stories and poems in my notebooks. I fell in love with words and sounds, which is also how I'd explain my love of languages. I always felt that there was something powerful about words, the way we use them to convey our emotions, our thoughts, and yes, to tell stories.

Writing has always been a passion of mine. However, I have to admit that I'm surprised it's something that I've come to pursue seriously in my life. Even my decision to study Creative Writing in university was something that I used to call a passion project. I did a double major in college with Creative Writing and French, and to me, French was always the degree that would influence my professional career, not writing.

As I'm sure you're all aware, nothing goes as planned. My concentration in my writing degree was always prose (short stories, to be more specific), so imagine my surprise when the first poem I submitted on a whim was not only accepted for publication, but also submitted by the magazine to the Best of the Net award in 2018. This launched me into an unexpected career as a poet that has been ongoing ever since. To this day, I've only ever published poetry, despite never thinking of myself as a poet before.

Addison Hoggard is an ALT living in Aizuwakamatsu. He's from Aulander, North Carolina, USA, and has had a passion for teaching and writing since he was young. After going to University, he discovered a love for language learning and made the decision to study Creative Writing and French. Studying a new language opened up the world to him, allowing him to meet new people and see the world in a new way. Before coming to Japan, he even spent some time living in Brazil! Now, he is enjoying his life in Aizuwakamatsu and found a way to balance both his passions: writing and teaching.

Addison recently had some writing published, so we asked him a few questions.



What inspires you?

I tend to be inspired by my relationships with different people in my life more than anything else. I really love to spend time thinking about the people in my life, and sometimes those thoughts and feelings manifest as poetry. Another

constant source of inspiration for me is the natural world. I find that, when living abroad, the thing I pay the most attention to is the differences in nature and geography. For example, I remember when I was living in Brazil, I was just obsessed by how colorful and vibrant the nature is there compared to back at home. Not to say that North Carolina's nature isn't beautiful, because it is, but there's something about the Brazilian landscape that really did it for me.

How does it feel having your writing out there?

It feels incredible and a bit unreal at the same time. I never expected that I'd have the opportunity for my work to find a home where it could be read widely, so it's still a bit shocking for me to think about. Doubly so because of what I mentioned before, about my poetry career being almost accidental. It just makes me feel overwhelmingly happy that people like my writing and that, through my poetry, I can share a bit of my own human experience with the world.

