

AIZU WAKAMATSU INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION MONTHLY ENGLISH NEWSLETTER

SynthesAizu

September 2023
Volume 3 Issue 9

Association News

PRESIDENTS PASSING: We are sad to announce that the President of AWIA, MIYAZAWA Yoichi has suddenly passed. Though he was only president for a short time, he was an important figure in the community and will be missed.

Announcements:

Office Moving in 2026

The AizuWakamatsu International Association Office will be moving in 2026. AizuWakamatsu City is rebuilding City Hall and after moving over, AWIA will be moving into the 2nd Sakaemachi Building (across the street from the Keikodo.) Talks are still underway, so many things are still undecided, but we hope to maintain the easy atmosphere of AWIA that you have come to know and enjoy.



Escalator: Out of Service

The escalators at the Lion D'or Garden Building (AWIA Office Building) will no longer be in service from October 1st 2023. We are sorry for the inconvenience. Visitors are welcome to use the elevator at the rear entrance of the building (near the temple.)

Please make sure you greet the security guard on your way in! They may ask you where you are headed.



Aizu Bandaisan Dance!

Come dance with us!

Dance the Aizu Bandaisan Dance along Shinmei Dori St. with AWIA. Come in yukata, traditional clothing, or a costume! We'll have Happi (festival jacket) for people to wear on a first come first serve basis. Even if it's your first time, you'll become a dancing master before you know it! Everyone is welcome!



Date: **Sept 22nd 19:00-20:00** @ Shinmei Dori Street

Meet: **18:50** - outside of Daiso in the AWIA Building
(2-14 Sakaemachi, Lion D'or Garden Bldg.)

Cost: **FREE** - No sign-up necessary!



Aizu Matsuri Multilingual Info Desk

Every year during the Aizu Matsuri, the AWIA hosts a booth on the Castle grounds and gives FREE English tours to visitors. Come by and learn about the Castle during the Festival!

Date: **Sept 23rd (Sat)** 9:00-15:00

Place: Beside the Inari Jinja Shrine



Looking for Volunteers - Sept 23rd:

Want to help out and/or give tours to others? Join us in the morning, afternoon or all day!

Volunteer sign-up deadline: Sept 21st (Thu)

(Lunch provided for volunteers who want it.)

Lunch order deadline: Sept 7th (Thu)

If you want to brush up on your knowledge about the Castle grounds, join our guide training session!

Training Day: Sept 10th (Sun) 10:00-11:30

Meet: Tsuruga-jo Tourist Information

Sign-up deadline: Sept 9th (Sat)

(*rain or shine! (will be cancelled if heavy rain))



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

Tsuruga-jo Free English Tours!

Enjoy a **FREE** tour of the Castle grounds! Select days from **September to November**

Can't make it to our booth on Sept 23rd during the Aizu Matsuri? Get a tour on another day! A volunteer guide will show you around the Castle grounds, giving you an in-depth look at the history of the Castle. Maybe you'll learn something you never expected!

Place: Tsuruga-jo Tourist Information Centre (観光案内所)

Time: 10:00-15:00 - no reservation needed!

Free!



This Month:
10:00 - 15:00

DATE	DAY
Sept 1	FRI
Sept 9	SAT
Sept 15	FRI
Sept 22	FRI
Sept 24	SUN
Sept 29	FRI

Become an Aizu PR Spokesperson!

Love Aizu? Become a SamurAizu Ambassador! The Aizu Tourism Bureau is looking for 3-5 people to contribute to the Official English Instagram: [@samuraizu](https://www.instagram.com/samuraizu). Take pictures of the Aizu you love and upload them to the instagram a few times a month to promote Aizu to the world! Get ¥10,000 and an AizuWakamatsu Original Happi for your efforts! Sign-up is first come, first served. Looking for people who can commit for the 6 month period.



Period: Oct 2023 - March 31 2024

Orientation: Sept 30th (Sat) @ AWIA Office

Contact: AWIA (mail@awia.jp) by Sept 27 (Wed)

Tell us: Your name, nationality, phone #, and your reason for signing up. **Japanese not required to volunteer**

6th AizuWakamatsu Onsen and Gastronomy Walking Tour

10/8th - Enjoy food and drink!

Enjoy walking, good food, and sake? Check out the food and sights of AizuWakamatsu! This walking tour will take you through the city, from Nanukamachi, to Tsuruga-jo, and finally to Higashiyama Onsen. Enjoy sake from a variety of breweries, and delicious dishes with local products! Discount for a trip to an onsen also included!

- ◆ **Date:** Oct 8th 2023
- ◆ **Start:** Groups leave every 15mins from 9:30-11:45
- ◆ **End:** 15:30
- ◆ **Route:** Suehiro Brewery → Higashiyama Onsen (7.5km)
- ◆ **Cost:** (Adult) ¥3500 (Child) ¥2500
- ◆ **Sign-up:** <https://onsen-gastronomy.com/eventinfo/2023-10-08aiduwakamatsu>



Autumn Japanese Classes

Give your Japanese skills a boost!

The Autumn session of Japanese language courses has started! With the aid of our experienced volunteer teachers, we offer courses from beginner level to advanced. Our classes strike a balance between reading, writing, and conversational skills. Class sizes are small, and some students may even have 1 on 1 lessons! Online lessons are also available on request.

Day	Friday Morning (12 classes)	Thursday Evening (12 classes)
Time	10:00-11:30	18:30-20:00
Course Duration	Sep 1-Nov 24 (no class Nov 3)	Sep 7-Nov 30 (no class Nov 23)
Fee (for all 12 classes)	AWIA members ¥4,000 Non-members ¥6,000	
Place	Aizu City Learning Centre	
Apply	Contact AWIA at mail@awia.jp	

Aizu COVID-19 Vaccine/Booster Updates

While the situation has calmed down, it is still important to protect yourself against infection. (Vaccines are not mandatory.)

If you are high risk for complications from COVID-19, you will have been part of the Spring Booster group and have received a booster already this year. You will be able to get your next booster 3 months after your last shot. Vouchers for the next booster will be sent out by eligibility starting Sept 11th (Mon.)

If you are not high-risk, and were last vaccinated/boosted between Sept 16 2022 - May 7th 2023, your next voucher will be sent out starting Oct 10 (Tue). They will be sent out by age, so please keep an eye out.



Aizu Matsuri

Aizu Matsuri Main Events

Check out these fun things all weekend!

- Sept 22:** Children's Lantern Parade 18:00-19:00
(Tsuruga-jo Castle → Shinmei Dori)
Aizu Bandaisan Dance 19:00-20:30
- Sept 23:** Aizu Clan Parade 9:25~15:30
Aizu Bandaisan Dance 19:00-20:30
- Sept 24:** Nisshinkan Children's Parade and
Marching Band Parade 9:30~11:30
(Ikki Elem. → Tsuruga-jo Castle)

Don't miss the largest festival in Aizu!

<https://www.aizukanko.com/kk/festival/aizu-matsuri>

Aizu Clan Parade

9/23 9:25~15:30

The Aizu Matsuri is here! Come watch the highlight of the festival!

Consisting of around 500 people, participants include local Junior High and High School students, as well as representatives and decedents of famous players in Aizu's history.

While the parade is going around the city, you can enjoy various stage performances at the Castle!



One Year In: An Interview with CIR Erika!

I've been a CIR at the AWIA for a year now, and I've really enjoyed it! I get to wear my gyoza and pizza shaped earrings, as well as sweaters to match events, which people seem to enjoy. I really love Aizu, and Fukushima history, so I visited the Tajima Gionsai, and the Soma Nomaioi Horse Festival this summer. Nakamura-san interviewed me about my year here, and my thoughts about other things.

What were you like growing up?

I was pretty shy. I liked reading, and riding my bike. I'm really close with my twin sister, so we were together all the time. We even studied Japanese together. After discovering it at around... 15? We used it as a way to talk to each other without our mother knowing what we were saying. She didn't like that at all, haha

Why did you want to learn Japanese?

I've always liked studying languages. When heard Japanese for the first time, I knew I wanted to learn how to speak it. Then, I discovered the boyband, Arashi. I learned Japanese by listening to their music, and watching their TV shows. I actually learned how to read hiragana and katakana thanks to their variety TV shows.

How do you feel, one year in as a CIR? Be honest!

(after a long pause) It's quite different from being an ALT. Because I get to do a lot of things and meet many people, I can still utilize the skills I gained as an ALT, but I also needed to learn a lot. When I started last year, I was thrown into preparations for the International Festival, alongside Hello World Club, Tour Guide Training, newsletter making, and translating and interpreting. Everyday was something new! I learned a lot, and I really feel like I got to see how great the international community is here.

So busy! Even so, you've started a lot of new events?

I wanted to try new things! Before I started here, I was a member, and while there were events I could volunteer at, I felt like there weren't many that I could join. I want to host events that I find fun, ha ha These events can help build a closer community, so people will have others to turn to in



Erika doing her signature pose at the Christmas Movie BINGO (Dec 2022)

times of need. This past year, I hosted the Christmas Movie Bingo, Chit-chat with Erika, and a Board Game Day, among others.

What about the Japanese Conversation Circle 'AtsuHana'?

When I came to Japan, I wanted a place to chat in Japanese, so when Mumu (AWIA member Murota Ayaka) wanted to start a Japanese conversation event, I was all for it. I wanted to help people to chat and have fun. I feel like many people don't actually get to use much Japanese in their daily lives, and it's really difficult to make Japanese friends. So, we started AtsuHana. I feel like my Japanese has become much more natural. I'm really grateful to the other AWIA staff, and all the people who have come chat with me!

How can we speak easier to understand Japanese?

I've been learning Japanese for over 10 years now, and I still struggle with it. Compound words, and keigo (ultra-formal) Japanese is just so hard to get. Heading into stores, I still dread the 'ah, it's a foreigner' reaction some people have because they're stressed about having to use English. BUT! I'd like more Japanese people to know that they don't have to use English! Just be more aware of the Japanese they're using, and I think it'll be easier for everyone, and they might be able to make a friend, haha

I really like speaking Japanese. So much so, that being able to speak it all the time is one of the reasons I've decided to live in Japan. I wouldn't be able to speak it everyday in Canada (though I guess I could speak Japanese with my twin, ha ha)

Events in September

1	FR	10:00 Japanese Conversation Class (AM)
2	SA	10:00 FIND: English Convo. Club
3	SU	Closed 13:00 Japanese Speech Contest
4	MO	Closed
5	TU	
6	WE	
7	TH	18:30 Japanese Conversation Class (PM)
8	FR	10:00 Japanese Conversation Class (AM)
9	SA	10:00 Explore Nanukamachi
10	SU	Closed 10:00 Children's Nihongo Hiroba 10:00 Tsuruga-jo Guide Training
11	MO	Closed
12	TU	
13	WE	
14	TH	18:30 Japanese Conversation Class (PM)
15	FR	10:00 Japanese Conversation Class (AM)
16	SA	10:00 Explore Nanukamachi 10:00 Satellite JICA Desk
17	SU	Closed
18	MO	Closed
19	TU	
20	WE	
21	TH	18:30 Japanese Conversation Class (PM)
22	FR	10:00 Japanese Conversation Class (AM) 19:00 Aizu Bandaisan Dance
23	SA	Closed: Autumn Equinox 10:00 Aizu Festival Multilingual Desk
24	SU	Closed 10:00 Children's Nihongo Hiroba
25	MO	Closed
26	TU	
27	WE	
28	TH	18:30 Japanese Conversation Class (PM)
29	FR	10:00 Japanese Conversation Class (AM)
30	SA	13:30 Newsletter Preparation

Other Information

FIND: English Convo. Club

Come meet people and chat in English! Anyone is welcome, no matter your English level. Play a game, then have time for free talk. Why not speak English with people from all walks of life and maybe make some new friends?

When	Saturday, September 2nd 10:00~11:30
Place	Aizu City Learning Centre (Keikodo) 3F Rm 1
Sign Up	Contact mail@awia.jp by Friday Sept 1st



*Due to the nature of FIND, we ask that participants wear masks.
Thank you for your understanding.*

Japanese Speech Contest!

The first Fukushima Japanese Speech Contest is here! Come and cheer your fellow residents on!

Date: Sept 3rd (Sun) 13:00

Place: Aizu Bunka Centre (Joto-machi 14-52)



Explore Nanukamachi *in Japanese!*

Work with Japanese teachers and others to learn how to interview! Check out Nanukamachi, take pictures, and use your new skills to interview shop owners! Enjoy the Taisho Era atmosphere and try something new. Your efforts will be recorded and cut into a radio program! Busy? Feel free to join just 1 day! Sign up now @ mail@awia.jp

Organizer	Fukushima Multi-language Forum
When	Sept 9 th (Sat) + Sept 16 th (Sat) 10:00~16:00 (1hr lunch break)
Meet At	Sept 9 th Keikodo Rm 5/6 • Sept 16 th Keikodo Rm 1
Cost	Free! (lunch not provided)

Call for Newsletter Volunteers!

Come help us fold, stamp, and pack our monthly publications for mailing! No need to sign up, just drop by if you can!

Date: September 30th, Saturday **Time:** 13:30~

Place: Aizu Wakamatsu International Association Office



We're on Instagram!

Follow us for photos and news about our upcoming events!

AWIA_PHOTO

<https://facebook.com/awiajp>



Visit our Facebook page for updates in multiple languages!



Use this QR Code and access our email form to sign-up for events

965-0871 Fukushima-ken, Aizu Wakamatsu-shi, Sakae-machi 2-14, Lion D'or Garden 5th Floor

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