

AIZU WAKAMATSU INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION MONTHLY ENGLISH NEWSLETTER

SynthesAizu

February 2025
Volume 5 Issue 2

Association News

Chit-chat with Kobayashi!

KOBAYASHI Shinji has been a staff at AWIA since 1999. He will be retiring this year at the end of March. This is the perfect opportunity to ask him questions before he retires.

You may learn something new!

Date: February 8th (Sat) 10:00-11:30

Place: Aizu Keikodo 3F Rm 1

Cost: Free **Limit:** 30 people

Sign-up: Contact AWIA by Feb 7th (Fri)
mail@awia.jp



Message from Kobayashi:

"I hope to use this opportunity to share my experiences with the Aizuwakamatsu International Association over the last 25 years. I want to look back on the years as I share with you the things I've learned, as well as some funny stories. I hope we can take this opportunity to enjoy a casual time together."

'Little Trip' Series Paraguay

Learn about Paraguay! The host, IWAMOTO-san used to be a student member at AWIA and she is participating in a rural development project with her university. She'll teach us about food culture, tea, music, dance, and her experience with her homestay in Paraguay. She'll also teach us about Ñandutí (traditional lace) and the situation of women living in rural areas with a workshop, quiz and more!



Host: IWAMOTO Hinako and others. (Students at Yokohama National University: College of Urban Sciences)

Date: March 8th - 14:00-15:30

Place: Aizu Keikodo Rm 1

Limit: 30 people **Cost:** Free!

Sign-Up: contact AWIA (mail@awia.jp)
Before Mar 7th (Fri)



ChAT!吧 (ChAT-ba) Chinese Convo. Club.

ChAT-ba : 'Ch': Chinese, 'A': Aizu, 'T': Together, and '吧/-ba': 'Let's!' in Chinese.

Interested in speaking Chinese with other learners, and interacting with Chinese people? Join our Chinese Conversation Circle ChAT-ba! Beginners welcome!

This time is a special event. The theme is: 'New Year's.'

Come drink tea and chat!

Date: February 8th (Sat) 13:30-15:00

Place: AWIA Office (Sakae-machi 2-14)

Limit: 15 people

Sign-up by Feb 7th - mail@awia.jp



FIND English Convo. Club

Why not come and speak English with people from all walks of life? Everyone is welcome, no matter your English level. Enjoy activities and free talk in this casual event.



We're looking for a new name for FIND from April.
Let us know if you have a suggestion!

When	Saturday, February 15th 10:00~11:30
Place	City Learning Centre (Keikodo) 3F Rm 1
Sign Up	Contact mail@awia.jp by Friday, Feb 14th

AtsuHana Japanese Convo. Club.

Speak Japanese in a casual way with many people and have fun with Japanese culture. Join us next month!

When	Saturday, March 8th 10:00-11:30
Place	City Learning Centre (Keikodo) 3F Rm 1
Sign-up	Contact mail@awia.jp by Friday, March 7th



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

Aizu Painted Candle Festival

Feb 7th-8th (Fri-Sat) ~17:30-20:30

(17:00 - lighting ceremony)

Place: Tsuruga-jo Castle and Oyakuen etc.

Highlights: Come see the Tsuruga-jo Castle grounds decorated by beautiful hand-painted candles. The theme this year is 'Connecting Lights, Broadening Connections.' The castle grounds will be covered in lanterns. You can only see this beautiful sight once a year!



More Details:

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

Ouchijuku Snow Festival

Feb 8th-9th (Sat-Sun)

Place: Shimogo-machi, Ouchijuku

Highlights: Enjoy lanterns made entirely out of snow, and try out some negisoba! Performances are happening all day with fireworks at 18:00 on Saturday. The schedule also has bus and train times.

More Info:

<https://ouchi-juku.com/detail/622/index.html>
(for details in English, check the 2024 Schedule)
<https://ouchi-juku.com/detail/622/news/event-152500.html>

Tadami 52nd Annual Snow Festival

Feb 7th-9th (Fri-Sun)

Place: Near Tadami Station

Highlights: Enjoy the train ride out to Tadami on the beautiful Tadami Line! Enjoy a variety of shows throughout the weekend, and check out the Huge Snow Sculpture! They will be holding Projection Mapping shows each night, and fireworks on Saturday night at 19:30!



Fri: Pre-Fest Sat + Sun: Main Festival

More details: <https://tadamisnowfes.com/>

Access:

Train: Tadami Line(~2hrs 50mins from Wakamatsu Stn.)
Car: R252(~1hr 50mins from Aizuwakamatsu)

NishiAizu Snow Festival

Feb 8th-9th (Sat-Sun)

Time: Feb 8 (15:00-18:30), Feb 9 (10:00-15:00)

Place: NishiAizu Sayuri Park
(Nishiaizu-machi, Tosejima nishibayashi otsu 2529-10)



Highlights: Each year this festival gets bigger and better. Enjoy stage performance of music and comedy! Join in the National Kiri-geta (locally crafted wooden shoe) kicking contest! You can't get that anywhere else. Enjoy local products and snow activities in NishiAizu.

More Details:

<https://www.town.nishiaizu.fukushima.jp/site/kanko/6672.html>

Showa-mura Snow Festival

Feb 23 (Sun) 10:00-15:00

Place: Michi-no-Eki, Karamushi Ori no Sato Showa

Highlights: Enjoy a day of traditional arts and snow! Take part in the tradition of snow bleaching the locally produced plant-fibre cloth - Karamushi. Other festivities include a traditional performance, and tug-o'-war in the snow. Take the opportunity to visit the Karamushi Museum and even make your own woven coaster using the karamushi plant fibres!

More Details:

<https://showakanko.or.jp/events/snowfes/>

Access:

Shuttle Bus: Free
From Tajima Station: 9:50 (~10:50 arrival at Festival)
Return: 13:40 (~14:30 arrival at Tajima Stn.)

RESERVATION REQUIRED (open from Feb 1st)
Contact: TEL: [0241-57-3700](tel:0241-57-3700) (9:00-17:00)
First Come, First Served. Space Limited.

Environmental Lecture

Observing Field Signs

Feb 15th (Sat) 9:30-11:30



Learn and observe the movement of animals living in the wintery mountains!
Lecture free, but in Japanese only.

Place: Kodomo no Mori/Children's Forest (Odayama)
(Mondenmachi Ōaza Kuroiwa, Hanamigaoka-422-2)

Lecturer: NPO Co. Wakaba Nature School
Mr. IGARASHI Satoru

Participants: People aged 6 and up (Elem. 3rd year students and younger must be accompanied by a guardian)

Limited to: 24 people

Deadline: February 13th (Thu)

Sign-up/Contact: Environmental

Lifestyle Department (0242-39-1221)

(or contact AWIA and we can help you sign-up)



Looking Back on Events!



AWIA has held some fun events in the last few months! We've picked a few to highlight so we can look back on the fun we had. Each event is an opportunity to meet new people, have fun, learn something new, and share culture! Let's continue to bring Aizu closer together, making new friendships, precious memories, and building community. Join us next time!!



New Year's Potluck Party

On Jan 19th, AWIA members got together to welcome in the new year with good food, good company, and good vibes! Members shared delicious international and home cooked foods such as Japanese dishes, Thai food, spicy Chinese cooking, American soul food, handmade sweets, and more!



So much good food!!



With Japanese New Year games and calligraphy, we shared culture, traditions and friendship until we left with full stomachs, warm hearts, and new friends for the year ahead.

Why not join us for our Hanami Potluck in April?

AtsuHana - Special Collab.



In our first *Atsuhana*: Japanese Conversation Circle of 2025 on Jan 11th, we worked with the Disaster Response Division of AizuWakamatsu City to put together a hands-on event to think about disaster preparedness.

Participants received hazard maps, tips for safe evacuation, and got to assemble some cardboard beds and partitions used at evacuation centers. There were even some emergency foods for us to try! For free-talk we discussed experiences, and concerns about disasters in Aizu in Japanese. It was great to talk to the City employees directly and some participants felt reassured by the new knowledge.



Let's try some emergency foods and think about stocking up at home!



A real up-close experience with things you'll find at an evacuation center.



Children's Storybook Time



Held twice a year in collaboration with the Aizu Library, Children's Storybook time is a great way for members/volunteers to share their favorite childhood storybooks and games in their native/alternative languages with the young children of Aizu.

On November 17th (Sun) 2024, we heard stories in French, Chinese, and English! Each story was read first in their respective language, followed by a Japanese translation. The children enjoyed games from overseas, and experienced new stories and languages from around the world.

This event is held every year in June and November. Each session has 3 readers: one English and two other languages that change each time. Volunteers always enjoy the opportunity to reminisce about their childhood and share a small part of their culture and language.



Playing a word-picture matching game in French!



A fun story in English!



Counting on your fingers in Chinese!



Chinese version of duck-duck-goose (dropping the handkerchief game)

Events in February

1	SA	15:00 Kodomo Nihongo Hiroba
2	SU	Closed
3	MO	Closed
4	TU	
5	WE	
6	TH	
7	FR	
8	SA	10:00 Chit-Chat with Kobayashi 13:30 ChAT-ba
9	SU	Closed
10	MO	Closed
11	TU	Closed (National Foundation Day)
12	WE	
13	TH	
14	FR	
15	SA	10:00 FIND: English Convo. Circle 10:00 JICA Desk 13:00 Kanji-kai Meeting 15:00 Kodomo Nihongo Hiroba
16	SU	Closed
17	MO	Closed
18	TU	
19	WE	
20	TH	
21	FR	
22	SA	13:30 Newsletter Preparation
23	SU	Closed (Emperor's Birthday)
24	MO	Closed (Holiday in lieu)
25	TU	
26	WE	
27	TH	
28	FR	

Other Information

Sukagawa Sports Recreation

Feb 23rd (Sun) 10:00 - 12:00

The Sukagawa Basketball Academy will be hosting a day for sports. Join the youth of the Basketball Academy and others in a day of recreation! Enjoy 'baton relay', tug o' war, a scavenger hunt relay, basketball and more!

Hosted by: SABC-chronus

Supported by: Sukagawa City, Sukagawa Sports Promotion Assoc., Fukushima International Assoc.

Place: Sukagawa City Sports Hall
(60 Nakasone, Sukagawa, Fukushima 962-0804)

Cost: Free!

How to Sign-up: Sign-up individually via QR code

Sign-up Deadline: Feb 10th (Mon)

Contact: SABC-chronus SUZUKI Hitomi-san

TEL 090-4550-1944

EMAIL basketball@sabc-chronus.com



'MyRide' - Dokodemo Bus

Use the 'MyRide - Dokodemo Bus' to get around Aizuwakamatsu! Use the app to book your bus and get on and off where you want! It will be starting full-scale operation from February 1st 2025. For more info about how to book, and things to know before using, please check the Aizu Bus Homepage.

Operation Time: 9:00-20:00 (Kanehori Area until 18:00)

Operation Area: See website for map/manual

Cost: per ride: Adult: ¥400 Child: ¥200

Destinations outside of the service area (MEGA Don Quijote UNY AizuWakamatsu, Aizu Chuo Hospital, Aizu University) will cost: Adult: ¥500, Child: ¥250. Some Bus Passes can be used.

More Info: <https://www.aizubus.com/rosen/myride>

((Additionally, Feb 27th (Thu) and Mar 8th (Sat) are Free Bus Fare Days! All local busses are free!))



Digital Newsletter: Help us save money and paper!

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Contact us at mail@awia.jp



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: February 22nd, 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!



QR Code to 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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