

# SynthesAizu

May 2025  
Volume 5 Issue 5

## Association News

### Message from the new Office Manager!



As of April 1<sup>st</sup>, I was appointed the Office Manager of the AizuWakamatsu International Association. I intend to work hard in this role using the invaluable skills of 'awareness' I gained from past career alongside the achievements of my predecessor, Mr. Kobayashi.

I have already had the opportunity to meet some members, but to those who I haven't, please don't hesitate to say hello when you stop by the Association! I am very much looking forward to meeting you!

NIWA Emi 丹羽恵美



### GOLDEN WEEK CLOSURES

The AWIA Office will be closed during the Golden Week Holiday.

#### Closed:

April 29th (Tue)

May 3rd (Sat) - May 6th (Tue)

Open from May 7th (Wed)  
as normal



## AtsuHana Japanese Convo. Club.

Speak Japanese in a casual way with many people and have fun with Japanese culture.

The topic is: Anime! Tell us about your favourite show! Maybe bring along a picture or goods to show and recommend your favourite to others!



|         |  |
|---------|--|
| When    | Saturday, <b>May 10th</b> 10:00-11:30  |
| Place   | City Learning Centre (Keikodo) 3F Rm 1   |
| Sign Up | Contact <a href="mailto:mail@awia.jp">mail@awia.jp</a> by <u>Friday, May 9th</u> |

## 2025 AWIA Members Meeting

Join us for our Annual Members Meeting on June 7th! First, there will be a General Assembly with a report of activities from 2024 (budget report, and event look-back.) Attendance postcards will be sent out in mid-May. Please let us know your attendance, or absence, by May 30th (Fri).

After the General Assembly, there will be a Special Speaker! We know everyone must be curious, so NIWA Emi, the new Office Manager will tell us all about her background and experience, so come hear about the new face at AWIA!

(Check out her profile on page 3!)



We will also be holding an After-Party! Join us for a dinner party at Restaurant & Bar Beans. Sign up early!

NIWA Emi

The deadline to sign up is **May 30th (Fri)**

## MEET English Convo. Club

A place to MEET new people! English Conversation Club "MEET" is a gathering of people from all walks of life and corners of the globe interested in using English and chatting. Why not expand your circle at My English Exchange Time (MEET)?



|         |   |
|---------|---|
| When    | Saturday, <b>May 17th</b> 10:00~11:30   |
| Place   | City Learning Centre (Keikodo) 3F Rm 1  |
| Sign Up | Contact <a href="mailto:mail@awia.jp">mail@awia.jp</a> by <u>Friday, May 16th</u> |

**Place:** Aizu Culture Centre (Jotomachi 14-52)

**General Assembly:** 14:30-15:45

**Special Lecture:** 16:00-17:00

(Title: America, Africa and now, Aizu (TBD))

**June 7th**

Speaker: NIWA Emi

(non-members welcome! Sign-up deadline: June 6th)

**After-Party:** 18:00-20:00 (Reg: ¥5000 Student: ¥4000)

**Place:** Restaurant & Bar Beans

(2-25 Sakaemachi (beside AWIA))

**After-Party Limit:** 50 people

(First come, first served. Sign-up deadline: May 30th)

**Sign-up:** Send back the postcard sent to you in mid-May (or scan the QR-code printed on your postcard)



会津若松市国際交流協会

AIZU WAKAMATSU INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION

TEL (0242) 27-3703

EMAIL: [mail@awia.jp](mailto:mail@awia.jp)

## This Month in Fukushima

### Kitakata Canola Flower Festa

**5/7 (Wed) - 5/18 (Sun)**

Come see the Sannokura Ski Hill in Kitakata covered in a field of yellow Canola flowers. Sannokura is also famous for its sunflower field in August. You can enjoy a variety of activities, including concerts and other shows!

- ◆ **May 10th (Sat)** - Ocarina Concert!  
11:00-11:40
- ◆ **May 11th (Sun)** Aizu Symphonic Ensemble  
10:30-11:30
- ◆ **May 10th + 11th, 17th + 18th (Sat+Sun)** -  
~10:00-16:00 - Traditional Monkey Show  
Performance.
- ◆ **May 17/18th (Sat+Sun)** - 10:00-15:00  
Canola Flower Cut: Bring a pair of scissors and  
take home flowers from designated areas (Date  
may change)

**More info:** <https://www.city.kitakata.fukushima.jp/soshiki/sangyo-a/53580.html>

### Nishi-Aizu Classic Car Show

**5/25 (Sun) 9:30-15:00**

**Highlights:** Enjoy Classic cars from all over! Even if you can't make it to the Car Show, you'll see a lot of classic cars in town that day.

**Cost:** Adult: (Pre-sale) ¥700 (Day of) ¥1000  
High School and Under: Free!  
Check out the website on how to buy  
pre-sale tickets.

**More Info:**  
<https://www.nishiaizu-natsukasicarshow.com/>



### Soma-Nomaoui: Samurai Horse Fest.

**5/24 (Sat) - 5/26 (Mon)**

Watch skilled riders participate in the race and mock-battle events. All riders wear traditional samurai armour and with tall flags on their backs. Many families have been participating for generations! It's unforgettable!! Enjoy the main festival on May 25th (Sun).

**Place:** Hibarigahara Saijochi Race Track  
(4 Chome-13-27 Haramachiku  
Hashimotocho, Minamisōma)  
**Tickets:** (Only Free Seating left)  
Pre-sale: ¥800 (online)  
Day of: ¥1000

<https://soma-nomaoui.jp/tickets/>

**More Info:** <https://soma-nomaoui.jp/schedule/>



### Enchiji Temple Light Up

**5/24 (Sat) - 5/25 (Sun) 18:30-20:30**

**Place:** Enchiji Temple, Bandai-machi  
(Sumando Bandai, Yama District)

**Cost:** FREE!!!



**Highlights:** See the grounds of the restored temple covered in lanterns! The Enchiji Temple was originally built in the year 807 by the famous monk Tokuchi. It is known as one of the first Buddhist temples in Tohoku. The hall itself was rebuilt in 2005! Why not check out this historical site?

**More Info:** <https://tif.ne.jp/jp/entry/article.html?event=6565>

### Urabandai Visitor Centre Re-Open!

**Wed-Mon, 9:00-17:00**

**Entrance:** Free!

**Highlights:** Enjoy the nature of Urabandai with all 5 senses. Learn about the 4 seasons from the perspective of a bear, and get up-close and personal with local flora and fauna specimens!

**What:** The Urabandai Visitor Centre has been closed since Oct 2023 for renewal. Why not take this opportunity to see the re-vamped Visitor Center and maybe also enjoy the multicoloured lakes at Goshikiuma, and the Morohashi Dali Art Museum nearby.

**More Info:** <https://urabandai-vc.jp/facility/about/>



### City Newsletter: Get even more information!

Once a month, the City puts out a newsletter with important announcements, off-hours clinic information, and more! Key parts of the City Newsletter are translated into English and compiled together.

Check out this month's edition and past editions online here! →



#### This Month's Highlights:

- Minami-Aizu Train Tour
- Tadami Train Tour
- Tsuruga-jo Half-Marathon Sign-up
- FREE Fukushima United FC Match

And more!



Catalog Pocket  
(Machine Translated)

To see the WHOLE Newsletter in Japanese or 9 other languages, including English, Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean, Spanish, and more, use the Catalog Pocket app. See it anywhere, anytime!



## Staff Spotlight



丹羽恵美

事務局長



NIWA Emi AWIA Office Manager



NIWA-san and her cat Vie

NIWA Emi is the new AWIA Office Manager. She started on April 1st, and fills the role left by Mr. Kobayashi. She has a lot of experience in International fields, and she will be the Special Speaker at our General Assembly Meeting on June 7th (Sat)!

NIWA-san is enjoying her life in Aizu. She loves sweets, cats, and bird watching! She joined a local birder group, and joins them when she can. She spent some time in Senegal, and maintains her connection by visiting periodically! If you're interested in learning more about the newest staff member at AWIA, come hear her speech!

### Welcome NIWA-san!

#### ■Profile:

- Born in Urawa City, Saitama (Now Saitama City). Moved to AizuWakamatsu in April 2024.
- Majored in English at University: While studying, did a year abroad in Maine, USA, studying journalism.
- After graduation, joined a foreign affiliated consulting firm, and worked as a consultant for improving productivity and efficiency of work.

• In her late 20s, joined the Japan International Cooperation Agency as a volunteer, and was dispatched to Senegal in western Africa where she contributed to supporting the emotional wellness of children there.

• While working in a variety of African Francophone countries, she also worked at the International Affairs Division of an university in Tokyo for 5 years, supporting both Japanese and foreign exchange students.

• Jumping from international cooperation field right into international cultural exchange, she's giving it her all while being supported by the kindness of the people of Aizu.



NIWA-san (right) with her Senegalese family.

## Hanami Potluck Party - April 2025

### Delicious Food



So much good food!! ↑  
Participants all brought something to share.



### Koto Performance







In addition to the great conversation, participants got to enjoy a 'Koto' performance, and even had the opportunity to try playing the 'Koto' for themselves! The 'Koto' is a traditional Japanese string instrument that has a beautiful sound. The musicians played several songs, including the famous 'Sakura, Sakura,' which was perfect for the season.

CIR Erika trying out Koto for the first time!! →



## Events in May

|    |    |  |
|----|----|--|
| 1  | TH | 18:30 Japanese Conversation Class (PM)   |
| 2  | FR | 10:00 Japanese Conversation Class (AM)   |
| 3  | SA | Closed (Constitution Memorial Day)   |
| 4  | SU | Closed (Greenery Day)  |
| 5  | MO | Closed (Children's Day)  |
| 6  | TU | Closed (Off in-lieu)  |
| 7  | WE |  |
| 8  | TH | 18:30 Japanese Conversation Class (PM)   |
| 9  | FR | 10:00 Japanese Conversation Class (AM)   |
| 10 | SA | 10:00 AtsuHana Japanese Convo. Club  |
| 11 | SU | Closed   |
| 12 | MO | Closed                |
| 13 | TU |  |
| 14 | WE |  |
| 15 | TH | 18:30 Japanese Conversation Class (PM)   |
| 16 | FR | 10:00 Japanese Conversation Class (AM)   |
| 17 | SA | 10:00 FIND English Convo. Circle<br>15:00 Children's Nihongo Hiroba                                    |
| 18 | SU | Closed   |
| 19 | MO | Closed   |
| 20 | TU |                     |
| 21 | WE |  |
| 22 | TH | 18:30 Japanese Conversation Class (PM)   |
| 23 | FR | 10:00 Japanese Conversation Class (AM)   |
| 24 | SA |  |
| 25 | SU | Closed   |
| 26 | MO | Closed   |
| 27 | TU |                     |
| 28 | WE |  |
| 29 | TH | 18:30 Japanese Conversation Class (PM)   |
| 30 | FR | 10:00 Japanese Conversation Class (AM)   |
| 31 | SA | 13:30 Newsletter Preparation   |

## Other Information

### Children's Storybook Time

#### Multilingual Storytime!!

A great opportunity for your child to hear stories and interact with languages from all over the world! This time is Vietnamese, Tagalog and English! It's free!

**Date:** June 15th (Sun) 10:00-12:00

(Sign-up start: May 17th (first come, first served))

**Place:** Aizu Keikodo Rms 1, 2, 3

**Participants:** 45 children (age 4-12)

**Sign-Up:** Aizu Library Counter, or through the poster (sent out to children. Also available at the AWIA office!)

**Contact:** Aizu Library TEL: 0242-22-4711

(send form via:) FAX: 0242-22-4702



### New City Office Building Open!

#### From 5/7 (Wed)

The AizuWakamatsu City Office Building has been under construction since March 2023 and is finally complete! All City Offices will be closed from May 2nd to May 6th due to moving. From the 7th, if you've got some free time, or paperwork to do, why not go check it out?

**More info:** <https://www.city.aizuwakamatsu.fukushima.jp/docs/2025040700053/>

### Be a Guest on the Radio!

Want a chance to be on the radio? AWIA collaborates with FM Aizu (76.2) with a segment once a week: Chikyuu Marutto Tele-report (World-wide Tele-report). Guests can share their experience of living in Aizu or abroad. Each segment is about 5-10mins, so no pressure! Guests can join live, or come and pre-record their interview. Interested? Contact us!

**When:** Wednesdays, around 17:40 (5-10min segment)  
(interview is in Japanese only)

If you have time, why not listen in?

**Want to be a guest?** Contact us: [mail@awia.jp](mailto: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:** May 31st, 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 to access our email form to sign-up for events

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