

# SynthesAizu

August 2025  
Volume 5 Issue 8

## Association News

### MEET English Convo. Club

Come MEET and speak English with people from all walks of life! Everyone is welcome, no matter your English level. Join us for activities and free talk!

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| <b>When</b>    | Saturday, <b>August 16th</b> 10:00~11:30  |
| <b>Place</b>   | City Learning Centre (Keikodo) 3F Rm 1  |
| <b>Sign Up</b> | Contact <a href="mailto:aizukokusai@awia.jp">aizukokusai@awia.jp</a> by Friday, August 15th |



### Phase 1: Decoration Downsize

In May 2026, AWIA will be moving to a new office. In preparation for the Big Move, we have to downsize our belongings, but we don't want to lose the essence of the Association in the process. Come let us know if there is anything you think we should keep, or if there is anything you'd like to take if we're going to get rid of it. You may be able to take some items home with you! Come let us know what things you think we should keep or get rid of, to maintain the AWIA that you know and love.



|              |  |
|--------------|--|
| <b>When</b>  | Saturday, <b>August 23rd</b> 14:00~17:00 |
| <b>Place</b> | AWIA Office (2-14 Sakaemachi)            |

### Autumn Japanese Classes

#### Give your Japanese skills a boost!

The Autumn session of Japanese language courses is here! 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.

**Deadline to sign-up: August 27th (Wed)**

| Day                                 | Friday Morning<br>(12 classes)   | Thursday Evening<br>(12 classes) |
|-------------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| <b>Time</b>                         | 10:00-11:30  | 18:30-20:00                      |
| <b>Course Duration</b>              | Sep 5-Nov 21   | Sep 4-Nov 20                     |
| <b>Fee<br/>(for all 12 classes)</b> | AWIA members ¥4,000<br>Non-members ¥6,000                                    |                                  |
| <b>Place</b>                        | City Learning Centre (Keikodo)   |                                  |
| <b>Apply</b>                        | Contact AWIA at <a href="mailto:aizukokusai@awia.jp">aizukokusai@awia.jp</a> |                                  |



### AtsuHana

Japanese Convo. Club.

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

Join us in September for a special version:

Ikebana - flower arrangement!

**\*\*\*Sign-up Required!\*\*\***

The first half will be arranging the flowers with the second half free talk. Join us!



**Due to the preparation required, we cannot accept walk-ins. Please sign-up early!**

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| <b>Teacher</b> | SUGIHARA Yossy   |
| <b>When</b>    | Saturday, <b>September 13th</b> 10:00-12:00  |
| <b>Limit</b>   | 25 participants (Sign-up Required!)  |
| <b>Cost</b>    | ¥500 (non-members: ¥1000)  |
| <b>Place</b>   | City Learning Centre (Keikodo) 3F Rm 1   |
| <b>Sign Up</b> | Contact <a href="mailto:aizukokusai@awia.jp">aizukokusai@awia.jp</a> by <b>Friday, September 5th</b> |



会津若松市国際交流協会

AIZU WAKAMATSU INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION

TEL (0242) 27-3703

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

## This Month in Aizu

### Hinoemata Mid-Summer Snow Festival

**8/2 (Sat) 10:00-16:00**

**8/3 (Sun) 10:00-15:00**

(Food stalls + slide close at 16:00/15:00)

(Fireworks: 8/2 - 20:00)

Missing the snow, or just looking to cool way down? Hinoemata is a tiny village in the south-west corner of Fukushima, and has some of the deepest snow in the prefecture. They hold a summer snow fest! Enjoy the village, snow, and other fun activities like sliding, shaved ice eating contest, salamander race, and more! See performances by magicians and a popular comedian: Ringo-chan!

**Place:** Oze Hinoemata Onsen Ski Resort

**More info:**

<https://www.oze-info.jp/news/33yukimaturi/>



### Kaneyama Numazawa Kosui Matsuri

**8/2 (Sat) 13:30-21:00**

**8/3 (Sun) 10:00-15:00**

Stage Performances and Lakeside fun! Enjoy watching the arrival of the Lake Monster during the fireworks show! It will be sealed once again at 12:00 on 8/3 (Sun)!

**Place:** Numazawakohan Camping Ground, Kaneyama

**Access:** Car only

**More info:**

<https://www.town.kaneyama.fukushima.jp/site/kanko/070802kosuimaturi.html>



### Residents Aizu Bandai-san Bon-Odori

**8/15 (Fri) 19:00**

*Free! No sign-up necessary!*

Flex your dancing skills at the Fukushima Museum!

**Dance Practice:** 18:30~

(Japanese instructions only)

**Bon-odori Start:** 19:00

**Place:** Entrance courtyard of the Fukushima Prefectural Museum (Jotomachi 1-25)



Children get cotton candy for free! There may be other food and drink stalls to enjoy as well. Come dance at the museum!!

### Yanaizu Fireworks

**8/10 (Sun) 19:00-21:00**

The Yanaizu Fireworks Matsuri happens every year on August 10th! Head out for a beautiful display right near Enzoji Temple and see it lit from the fireworks above and reflected in the Tadami River!

**Place:** Yanaizu, Tadami Riverside (MichinoEki)

**Access:**

Aizu Tadami Line Train

Car (Paid Parking + Shuttle Bus available)

**More info:** <https://hanabi.aizu-yanaizu.com/>



### Kitakata Sunflower Festa

**8/4(Mon) - 8/24 (Sun)**

Come see a HUGE field of beautifully flowering Sunflowers in Kitakata. The flowers were planted on a ski hill, so you get a wonderful view. You can enjoy different things there throughout the month!

♦ **Check the website for more details!**

**Access:**

Car: 50mins from Aizuwakamatsu IC

Train: 40mins by taxi from Kitakata Station

For flier and more information:

<https://www.city.kitakata.fukushima.jp/soshiki/sangyo-a/56951.html>



### Want to learn and be part of the tradition?

Interested in keeping the tradition of the Aizu Bandai-san song and performance alive? Learn how to sing the Aizu Bandai-san song, or play it on a traditional instrument etc.! You might discover a new life-long passion while getting in touch with the traditions of Aizu.

The Aizu Bandai-san Bon-Odori Preservation Society is looking for people interested in learning this tradition. You might even be able to perform at the Bon-Odori at the Fukushima Museum on August 15th!

**Contact:** the Aizu Bandai-san Bon-Odori Preservation Society (Morikawa)  
080-1801-4421



### Kawahigashi Minazuru-hime Fest.

**8/23 (Sat) 10:00-20:00**

The biggest event of the Kawahigashi area, check out this event based on the Heian era legend of Minazuru-hime and Yoshitsune!

**Place:** Hirota West Park

(Yokobori-42-1 Kawahigashimachi, Hirota)

**Details:** Offering Ceremony for Minazuru-hime, stage events, flea-market, stalls, fireworks display, etc.

**Last year's information:**

<https://www.city.aizuwakamatsu.fukushima.jp/docs/2014080500037/>



### MATSUYAMA Satomi



Matsuyama-san and her  
gifts of various Kokeshi,  
wooden dolls



## AWIA: My Sweet Home



'The next stop is 'Shinmei Dori.' Please press the button if you are getting off the bus.'

This is the announcement that plays in the Highway bus from Fukushima City to AizuWakamatsu. I press the button faster than the other riders. I am excited, almost as if I'm a child returning to my family home.

Today is the Satellite JICA Desk Day. The day I work at AWIA. At the entrance of AWIA, a place with such a sense of freedom, I greet everyone with 'Ayubowan! (Hello in the Sinhala Language) Let's do our best today!' and in return, with a big smile, I'm told 'Welcome back Matsuyama-san!' It makes me both slightly embarrassed, and happy every time. Then, with a delicious cup of coffee prepared for me by the staff, I start my day. I'm often greeted by members with, "Oh, it's Matsuyama-san. It must be the JICA desk day." and then we would start exchanging information and chatting. For the past three years, I can't tell you how much I have been healed by this warm hospitality, enveloping kindness, and the fun interactions with the members. Yes, for me, AWIA is My Sweet Home.

Since I started the role of International Cooperation Promotion Officer of JICA Fukushima Desk in 2022, I have been able to hold a "Satellite JICA Desk" every month. My job is to let as many people in the prefecture as possible know about JICA and the existence of the Fukushima JICA Desk. At first, it was a bit of trial and error, trying to figure out how to let the members to know about JICA, but when I saw people of different generations and types interacting with each other in such a fun way, my fears gradually disappeared. People from all walks of life visit AWIA. I decided to take advantage of this good thing and do what I could, without doing anything too complicated.



2022 December,  
Postcards to Sri Lanka



2023 March,  
Sri Lanka Karuta

As I participated in monthly events and actively promoted the Fukushima JICA desk and spread information from JICA, little by little "Matsuyama-san from JICA" became more and more widespread. In 2023 and

2024, we gathered high school students and held the 'International Seminar 'The World and Me' - Know, Think and Act. -High School Students' Workshop'. The students presented what they had researched about the problems facing the world and engaged in activities to communicate their opinions and ideas through discussions. In addition, we organized lectures by a certified NPO in Yamagata and on SDGs by a lecturer from the Fukushima SDGs Network. The participating high school students became interested in SDGs and international cooperation, saw global issues as their own affairs, and were motivated to do what they could for the future. A JICA Overseas Cooperation Volunteers consultation desk was also set up for those interested in joining, where I introduced my activities and gave details of the application process. I feel that I was able to plant the seeds of interest for young people and push those who should become more involved to take the next step towards international cooperation.



2024 August,  
High School Sts. Workshop

I hope that many people will utilise the JICA Overseas Cooperation Volunteers system in the future and spread their wings from AizuWakamatsu City to the world. I also hope through two years of activities in developing countries they will find treasures that cannot be found in Japan. And by sharing these treasures with Aizu Wakamatsu City, I hope that more people will be able to contribute to the realisation of a multicultural society.



2024 October,  
International Festival

AWIA has always been a place where local people and groups can meet, work together, and where local players can utilise each other's strengths and compensate for each other's weaknesses. I want AWIA to remain a place where people can create a flow of activities by building face-to-face relationships, drawing out the ideas of various people and building upon them.

Please never change.

## Events in August

|    |    |   |
|----|----|---|
| 1  | FR |   |
| 2  | SA | 15:00 Kodomo Nihongo Hiroba                                     |
| 3  | SU | Closed  |
| 4  | MO | Closed  |
| 5  | TU |   |
| 6  | WE |   |
| 7  | TH |   |
| 8  | FR |   |
| 9  | SA |   |
| 10 | SU | Closed  |
| 11 | MO | Closed - Mountain Day   |
| 12 | TU |   |
| 13 | WE |   |
| 14 | TH |   |
| 15 | FR |   |
| 16 | SA | 10:00 MEET English Convo. Circle<br>15:00 Kodomo Nihongo Hiroba |
| 17 | SU | Closed  |
| 18 | MO | Closed  |
| 19 | TU |   |
| 20 | WE |   |
| 21 | TH |   |
| 22 | FR |   |
| 23 | SA | 14:00 Phase 1: Decoration Downsize Day                          |
| 24 | SU | Closed  |
| 25 | MO | Closed  |
| 26 | TU |   |
| 27 | WE |   |
| 28 | TH |   |
| 29 | FR |   |
| 30 | SA | 13:30 Newsletter Preparation                                    |
| 31 | SU | Closed  |

## Upcoming AWIA Events

### ChAT!E (ChAT-ba) Chinese Convo. Club.

Have a fun time using Chinese. Let's talk about Festivals!  
\*\*From this session, we recommend that you be able to speak some Chinese. It may be difficult to take part if you come with zero experience.\*\*

|         |   |
|---------|---|
| When    | Saturday, <b>Sept 6th</b> 10:00-11:30   |
| Place   | AWIA Office (Sakaemachi 2-14)   |
| Sign Up | Contact <a href="mailto:aizukokusai@awia.jp">aizukokusai@awia.jp</a> by <b>Friday, Sept 5th</b> |



## Aizu Matsuri Multilingual Desk Training Session

Every year in September, the International Association runs a Multilingual Information Desk on the Tsuruga-jo Castle grounds on the main day of the Aizu Matsuri. Among other things, we provide FREE English tours all day. Want to help? You can also join us for the training session to learn or brush up on facts about Tsuruga-jo Castle.

**Aizu Matsuri Desk:** Sept 20: 9:00-16:00

(Sign-up deadline Aug 26th (Tue) - sign up early if you can!)

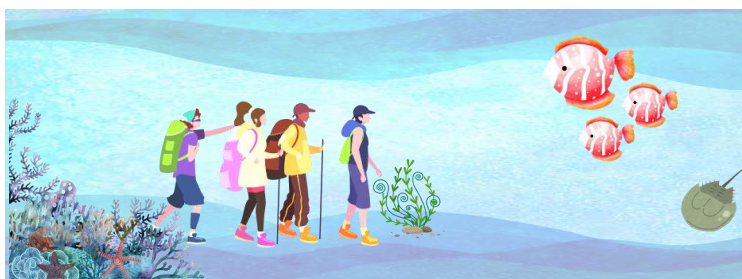
**Place:** Tsuruga-jo Castle Honmaru

**Full Day:** 9:00-16:00      **Half Day:** 9am-1pm, 12pm-4pm

**Study Session:** Sept 6th (Sat) 10:00~11:30

**Meet:** Tsuruga-jo Castle Info Desk      **Cost:** FREE

**Sign-up:** By Sept 5th (Fri) - [aizukokusai@awia.jp](mailto:aizukokusai@awia.jp)



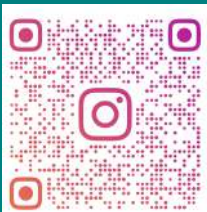
## Call for Newsletter Volunteers!

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

**Date:** Aug 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 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

TEL: (0242) 27-3703 | FAX: (0242) 27-3704 | EMAIL: [aizukokusai@awia.jp](mailto:aizukokusai@awia.jp) | SITE: <https://www.awia.jp>