

AIZU WAKAMATSU INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION MONTHLY ENGLISH NEWSLETTER

# SynthesAizu

February 2026  
Volume 6 Issue 2

## Association News



**Help Us Out!:** We announced in Sept 2023 that we will be moving office and that day is fast approaching. At the end of April, we will be moving to the old 2nd Sakaemachi Building beside the Koban near the City Learning Centre (Keikodo.) We will need help to pack up our office. Let us know if you're interested and available over the next few months!

**Moving Date:** around April 30th (Thu) 2026



## ChAT吧 (ChAT-ba) Chinese Convo. Club. Season 2



Have fun using Chinese!

Let's talk about Travel!

**\*\*Conversational level**

**Chinese is recommended\*\***

Date	Saturday, <b>Feb 7th</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>Feb 6th (Fri)</b>



## 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!

Date	Saturday, <b>February 21st</b> 10:00-11:30
Place	City Learning Centre (Keikodo) 3F Rm 1
Sign-up	Contact <a href="mailto:aizukokusai@awia.jp">aizukokusai@awia.jp</a> by February 20th (Fri)

## Garbage Rules!

**Ever wondered how to throw something away?  
Let's figure it out together!**

Join our workshop and learn not only the basics but also the reasonings for separating your trash directly from the Environmental Division from AizuWakamatsu City Office. Speak with other participants about your garbage woes, and learn



together how to throw away and recycle items. We'll also learn about the new rules and practices coming into effect from April as the city transitions into a new pay-per-throw system.

The first half of the workshop will be learning about garbage separation rules, and the second half will be putting that knowledge to the test.



**Date:** February 14th (Sat) - 10:00-11:30

**Place:** City Learning Centre (Keikodo) Rm 1

**Limit:** 30 people

(about 15 non-Japanese participants)

**Sign-Up:** Contact AWIA ([aizukokusai@awia.jp](mailto:aizukokusai@awia.jp))

before Feb 13th (Fri) to sign up

**\*\*English interpretation provided!\*\***



会津若松市国際交流協会

TEL (0242) 27-3703

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

**AIZU WAKAMATSU INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION**

## This Month in Aizu

### Isasumi Jinja Shrine: Setsubun

**Feb 3rd (Tue)** from 16:00

**Place:** Isasumi Jinja Shrine (Kou 4377, Miyabayashi, Aizumisato, Onuma District)

**Highlights:** Demons out! Good luck in! Head to Isasumi Jinja for their annual Setsubun Ceremony. Special guests comedy duo Hahagokoro, pro-wrestler Endo Arisu, and writer Kanda Yoko will throw the beans in the ceremony this year. Those that find a ticket with their lucky beans can win a lucky item from a sponsoring company/group.



See things like the traditional shinto Tsuina ceremony where the four-golden eyed Hosoushi will drive away invisible demons, and ritual archery by the chief shrine priest.

**More Details:** <https://www.aizukanko.com/event/1127>

For event poster– check out their Instagram [@isasumijinja.official](#) (username includes period)

### NishiAizu Snow Festival

**Feb 7th-8th (Sat-Sun)**

**Time:** Feb 7 (15:00-18:30), Feb 8 (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 music and comedy! Join in the National Kiri-geta (locally crafted wooden shoe) kicking contest! You can't get that anywhere else. There's even a Janken-pon tournament where you could win local products! Enjoy this small-town festival!

**More Details: (for access info and more)**

<https://www.town.nishiaizu.fukushima.jp/site/kanko/18114.html>

### Tadami 53rd Annual Snow Festival

**Feb 13th-15th (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)

### Ouchijuku Snow Festival

**Feb 14th-15th (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 poster has also has bus and train times.



**More Info:**

<https://www.gurutto-aizu.com/event/3699/>

*(for details in English, check the 2024 Schedule)*

<https://ouchi-juku.com/detail/622/news/event-152500.html>

### Aizu Painted Candle Festival

**Feb 13th-14th (Fri-Sat) ~17:30-20:30**  
(17:00 - lighting ceremony)

**Place:** Main: Tsuruga-jo Castle Sub: Oyakuen

**Highlights:** Come see the Tsuruga-jo Castle grounds decorated by beautiful hand-painted candles. The theme this year is 'Prayers from Aizu, into one thousand lights' The castle grounds will be covered in lanterns. You can only see this beautiful sight once a year!



**More Details:**

<https://www.aizu.com/erousoku/>

### Minamiazu & Koya Snow Festival

**Feb 14th-15th (Sat-Sun)**

Reservation Required ¥¥  
(sign up now!)

**Place:** Minami-Aizu, Koya area

**Highlights:** Challenge yourself on the extra large snow slide! Enjoy both 500m and 150m long slides down the mountain.



Other activities include: snowman/sculpture building, mini igloo building, snowshoeing, snow cycling (fat bike) and more!

**Fee:** (participation, insurance, amazake sweet sake)

Adults: ¥3000 (¥4000/both days)

Elementary sts. and under: ¥1500 (¥2000/both days)

**Participation:** Up to 70 people/day

**Parking/location:** Minamiaizu-gun Minamiaizu-machi  
Koya Hagiwara 1044 Jine~nnomori parking lot

**More Details: (Information in English!)**

<https://morein.jimdofree.com/english/snow-festival/>





# New Year's Potluck Party

This year, we had our New Year's Potluck Party on Jan 18th (Sun). We were lucky to have 55 people join us to share delicious food and sweets to celebrate the new year. Everyone brought amazing food like pancakes, American johnny cakes, quiche, fried rice, soba, sushi, fruit, curry, cookies, mochi and more! There was a variety of food from around the world, it felt like a really international meal. It was a very successful potluck party.



So much good food!!



Everyone had a fun time eating and chatting.



Everyone did their best!



In addition to chatting, we also had a kakizome new year's calligraphy corner! Kakizome, 'first writing', is tradition of writing auspicious words for their hopes for the year. People often put their best foot forward when writing their kakizome. At our potluck, we had a mini-kakizome contest. After everyone wrote and submit their kakizome, we had everyone vote for three categories:

- Perfect Award - beauty, perfection!
- You Tried Award - effort! They did their best!
- Unique Award - trying a new style!

We all had a fun time seeing what people chose to write, and how they approached their kakizome.

We will have the kakizome up in our office for a little while, so come and see the great writings!



We had many entries!



## More Events



### Aizu Snow Festival

**Jan 24th-Feb 15th (Sat+Sun) 10:00-19:00**

**Place:** Tsuruga-jo Castle grounds

**Dates:** Jan: 24th (Sat), 25th (Sun), 31st (Sat),  
Feb: 1st (Sun), 7th (Sat), 8th (Sun), 11th (Wed), 15th (Sun)

**Highlights:** Food trucks, games, lanterns and Geigi (geisha)!

Buy local food from food trucks and enjoy the snow! Build snowmen, try a snowball challenge, or try the snow maze and more. You can even enjoy matcha inside a dome tent! (¥1500/person) Enjoy the activities, and after the sun sets, see Tsuruga-jo lit up.

Lanterns will be released in the evening around the same time the Geigi(geisha) will be available for pictures. Come get a beautiful shot of the Geigi with lanterns and castle (around 17:00-18:00).

**More Details:** [https://www.aizukanko.com/feature/aizu\\_w\\_snowfes/aizu\\_w\\_snowfes](https://www.aizukanko.com/feature/aizu_w_snowfes/aizu_w_snowfes)



### Showa-mura Snow Festival

**Feb 22 (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 see other traditional arts. You can 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: 9:55 (~10:45 arrival at Festival)

Return: 13:40 (~14:30 arrival at Tajima Stn.)

#### RESERVATION REQUIRED:

They can be made through the main website, or here:  
(available from Feb 1st)

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

## Events in February

1	SU	Closed
2	MO	Closed
3	TU	   
4	WE	
5	TH	
6	FR	
7	SA	10:00 ChAT-ba: Chinese Convo. Club 15:00 Kodomo Nihongo Hiroba
8	SU	Closed
9	MO	Closed
10	TU	
11	WE	Closed (National Foundation Day)
12	TH	
13	FR	
14	SA	10:00 Garbage Rules: Recycling Workshop
15	SU	 Closed
16	MO	Closed
17	TU	 
18	WE	
19	TH	
20	FR	
21	SA	10:00 MEET: English Convo. Club 10:00 JICA Desk 15:00 Kodomo Nihongo Hiroba
22	SU	Closed
23	MO	Closed (Emperor's Birthday)
24	TU	
25	WE	
26	TH	
27	FR	
28	SA	13:30 Newsletter Preparation

## Other Information

### Lithuania: Užgavėnės

**Feb 17th (Tue) 9:00-16:00**

Learn about Lithuania's Užgavėnės Festival! This festival is about driving away winter and welcoming spring.

Participants wear masks and dress up as Winter, Spring, and scary things like demons, witches etc. See some masks used in the festival, and a poster with more info.

**Place:** Tsuruga-jo Castle Free Rest Area (in the Tourist Info Centre)

**Hosted by:** Dominyka, Aizu Tourism Bureau [0242-27-4005](tel:0242-27-4005)



### FREE Medical Interpretation 03-6233-9266

Consultation available: 10:00-16:00

If you're heading to the clinic and need some help speaking with the doctor, use the [AMDA Medical Information Center's](#) telephone interpretation service!

It's free! (regular phone charges will apply)

**They can interpret for the following languages:**  
*Japanese, English, Chinese, Korean, Spanish, Portuguese, Tagalog, Thai, and Vietnamese.*



Each language is available on different days, so please check the schedule on their website. Interpretation for Vietnamese does not have a regular schedule, so take care when checking.

<https://www.amdamedicalcenter.com/>

#### How to use:

(Interpretation available Mon-Fri 10:00-15:00)

1. Confirm that the clinic will allow telephone interpretation. (If you cannot ask yourself, please consult AMDA.)
2. Make a doctor's appointment during the times available for your language.
3. Call and make reservation with AMDA for your clinic appointment time. (each session is up to 30mins)

#### Be Aware:

AMDA Medical Center only interprets between the patient and doctor. They do not take any responsibility after the interpretation session.

### 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! (from Jan 2026, the newsletter will be sent out on the 4th Saturday instead of the LAST Saturday.)

**Date:** February 28th, 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

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