

AIZU WAKAMATSU INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION MONTHLY ENGLISH NEWSLETTER

SynthesAizu

March 2022
Volume 2 Issue 3

Association News

Nola's Craft Corner - Easter Egg Coloring Workshop!

Come ring in the spring season at this kid-friendly Easter event! Easter is a religious holiday observed in many countries throughout the world that celebrates new life and rebirth during the spring. For this hands-on easter event, instructors Sara Markee and Nola Novak will guide guests in simple English and Japanese to create their own colorful Easter eggs! The eggs will be hard boiled beforehand, and are safe to eat after the workshop.

Date	Saturday, March 19th 10:30 - 12:00
Place	Aizu Wakamatsu City Learning Center, 1F Kitchen Studio
Cost	500 yen / person (for 6 eggs) (no extra cost for parents/guardians accompanying small children!)
Sign Up	Contact the AWIA at mail@awia.jp or 0242-27-3703 by Thursday, March 17th!



Young Adult Sports Club “Uniship” - Join us for Indoor Volleyball!



Join us for the second meeting of “Uniship,” a casual sports club created for English-speaking young adults to make new friends. If you are looking to try out some new activities and meet new people, Uniship is the perfect place for you! Uniship provides a welcoming environment for beginners, so don’t be shy if you are not good at sports or if this is your first time to join.



Date	Sunday, March 13th 19:00 - 21:00
Capacity	Limited to 15 participants
Sign-Up	Follow the QR code to <u>sign up by March 11th!</u>
Place	Tsurugajo Gymnasium, 14-51 Jotomachi, Aizuwakamatsu
Bring	We recommend bringing a towel, indoor shoes, and something to drink.



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 Wakamatsu

"FIND" High School English Conversation Club Returns!

Back by popular demand, the AWIA member-led English conversation club, FIND, will be making its grand return this month! FIND was designed by high school students, for high school students, with the aim of creating a space for students to practice casual English conversation. Although the club is mainly for students, adults with high English proficiency may also apply to join FIND as a language volunteer. Contact the AWIA today to join!

Date/Time	Saturday, March 26th 10:00~
Place	Aizu Wakamatsu City Learning Center 3F Room 1
Sign Up	Contact mail@awia.jp by Friday, March 25th



Hinamatsuri 3.3.22



March 3rd is Japan's annual Doll Festival, known as "Hinamatsuri." This springtime festival, also known as "Girls' Day," celebrates young women and femininity. Some families celebrate by displaying Hina dolls, which are often passed down as family heirlooms.

Spring Japanese Classes

Give your Japanese skills a boost!

The AWIA will soon be starting our spring semester of Japanese language courses. With the aid of our experienced volunteer teachers, we offer courses ranging 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.

Come kick-start your Japanese skills with us this spring!

	Morning Course	Evening Course
Time	Fridays, 10:00-11:30	Thursdays, 18:30-20:00
Dates	April 1 st - June 24 th (12 Classes)	April 7 th - June 30 th * (12 Classes)
* no classes April 29 th and May 5 th		
Fee	Total course fee (for 12 classes): 4,000JPY (members) / 6,000JPY (non-members)	
Place	Aizu City Learning Center (Keiko-do)**	
Apply	Please contact the AWIA and let us know your desired time slot by Friday, March 25 th . TEL: 0242-27-3703 EMAIL: mail@awia.jp	

** online classes are also available!

Covid-19 Vaccine Booster Updates

Aizu Begins Distributing Booster Shots



This month, Aizu-Wakamatsu will begin distributing the 3rd "booster" shot of the Coronavirus vaccine. Individuals who received their second dose of the vaccine last August can expect to receive their vaccination voucher in the mail sometime this month. For those who received their second dose in September or later, please keep an eye out for your voucher to arrive in April or May.

Two Ways to Make a Vaccine Reservation

After your vaccine ticket/voucher arrives in the mail, you are eligible to make a reservation to receive your vaccine. Reservations can be made by calling the reservation hotline, or by using the online reservation portal. The reservation hotline may be congested during certain hours, so we recommend making a reservation online if possible. Please follow the QR code enclosed with your vaccine ticket to access the online reservation system. When you make a reservation, you will need to enter the vaccine ticket number printed on your vaccine ticket, so please have the ticket on hand when you make a reservation. If you choose to make a reservation by phone, you will be asked about your preferred medical institution, so please prepare the names of 2-3 medical institutions near your home if you have a preference for where you wish to be vaccinated.

If you need any assistance making a reservation, or have any questions about vaccine distribution, please do not hesitate to contact us at the AWIA! We are happy to help you make your reservation if you need any language assistance!

Fukushima Extends Period of Enhanced Infection Prevention Measures

The period of enhanced infection prevention measures that was put in place in February to curb the spread of the Omicron variant has been extended. The city is requesting that everyone avoid the "3 C's" and refrain from meeting in large groups.



Member Spotlight: Nhat Nguyen Thi Minh

Mrs. Nhat moved to Aizu from Vietnam in October 2021 to work as an interpreter. Thanks to her bright and bubbly personality, she quickly made friends here in Aizu. Her hobby is learning languages, and she speaks 4 languages proficiently, including English and Chinese. Although she enjoys living in Aizu, due to her husband's work, she will sadly be relocating to Kansai later this month. We wish the young couple well on their adventure here in Japan, and hope they make lots of wonderful new memories in Kansai. Best of luck Nhat-san!



Q: What brought you to Japan?

At first, I came here to study Japanese. While I was attending university in Vietnam, I was given the opportunity to study another language in addition to business English. I choose Japanese, and that eventually led me to come to Japan. I was able to get a scholarship that allowed me to enter a Japanese language school in Hokkaido.

Q: So you started as a student, and then began working in Japan?

That's right. The longer I stayed in Japan, the more I grew to love living here. I knew I wanted to work here, but at the time my boyfriend (now husband) was still living in Vietnam, and he asked me not to leave. After I graduated from the Japan school, my family told me to come back to Vietnam, but I loved Japan so much that I felt ok on my own, even if it meant being apart from my boyfriend. So we broke up and I applied to work in Japan. I applied for 10 different jobs, and failed 7 of them. I hadn't realized how difficult it was for foreigners to get a job in Japan.

Q: So you came to Japan first, and then your boyfriend joined you here?

After I'd decided to work in Japan, I briefly went back to Vietnam to visit my boyfriend's family. In Vietnam, it's customary to properly greet and thank people who have supported you. At that time, I met up with my boyfriend again,

and he confessed his love to me. We reunited and went right back to how we were before I left, haha. After that, he decided to come to Japan at his own expense and start studying Japanese. I began working two jobs in Sapporo, one at a fish wholesaler and another as an interpreter. My boyfriend also began attending school. Every day was busy, but we were able to see each other about once a week. We were 24 at that time.



Nhat and her husband at their wedding.

After a while, I really began to dislike the fish wholesale work, and I decided that

I wanted to focus on interpretation. I moved to Iwaki city to start a new job, and a year later after my boyfriend graduated, he also started looking for work in Iwaki. His Japanese wasn't quite good enough to find work in Iwaki however, and he ended up finding a job in Saitama.

Q: Could you tell me about your daughter?

After many years of doing long-distance, my husband and I finally got married in 2020, and my daughter was born shortly after. I returned to Vietnam in October of 2020 for her birth, and spent a year living with her in Vietnam. I thought it wouldn't be so bad to continue living in Vietnam after that, but my husband was against it. He had taken a liking to Japan's meticulous working environment, and wanted to stay in Japan. He said, "I'm staying in Japan," and even joked "maybe I'll marry a Japanese woman instead!" haha.

Q: What kind of work have you been doing in Aizu?

I applied for my job in Aizu online while I was still living in Vietnam. Once I was accepted, I asked my husband's family to look after my daughter for a while, and came to Aizu in October of 2021. In my current job, I work as an interpreter and lifestyle advisor for nearly 180 Vietnamese workers who are here on the technical intern training program. I'll accompany them to the Immigration office in Koriyama to update their residency, or visit them at their apartments to make sure they're doing alright. I've called the electrician for someone whose washing machine was broken, and gone to the hospital with someone who had appendicitis.

Q: You and your husband have been through quite the journey to be able to live together in Japan, haven't you.

We have. From March, we'll be living "as a couple" in Shiga prefecture for the first time. I'm looking forward to understanding what "being a couple" is actually like, haha. My husband will be working as an engineer, and I'll be doing product quality checks and assisting with Vietnamese immigration services. Once we get settled in, I plan to bring my daughter over from Vietnam as well. I hope I can find another English club like FIND. I'll be balancing family and work, but I hope to find time for friends too. Maybe I can make my own English club? Would it be ok to borrow the name "FIND"? My 4 months in Aizu went by in a flash, but I had a great experience. I wish the best to all of my friends in Aizu!

Events in March

1	TU	13:30 Nihongo Salon
2	WE	
3	TH	
4	FR	
5	SA	
6	SU	Closed
7	MO	Closed
8	TU	13:30 Nihongo Salon
9	WE	
10	TH	
11	FR	
12	SA	
13	SU	19:00 Uniship Young Adult Sports Club
14	MO	Closed
15	TU	13:30 Nihongo Salon
16	WE	
17	TH	
18	FR	
19	SA	10:30 Easter Egg Coloring Workshop
20	SU	Closed
21	MO	Closed
22	TU	13:30 Nihongo Salon
23	WE	
24	TH	
25	FR	
26	SA	10:00 FIND English Club 13:30 Newsletter Release Preparation
27	SU	
28	MO	Closed
30	TU	13:30 Nihongo Salon
31	WE	

Other Information

Ouchi-juku & Tsuruga-jo Winter Bus Tour



Ouchi-Juku and Tsuruga Castle Bus Tour

<https://www.aizukanko.com/news/435>

Price: 5,000 JPY (Includes lunch and castle admission fee)

Register: Contact the Aizu Bus center: **0242-22-5555**

Schedule

11:10 Depart Aizu-Wakamatsu Station • 11:20 Tsuruga Castle • 13:20 Ouchi-Juku • 15:00 Ashinomaki Onsen • 15:45 Return to Aizu-Wakamatsu Station

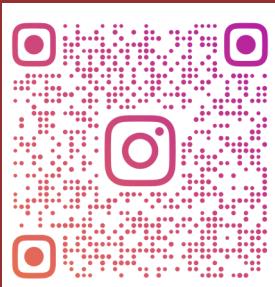
Take advantage of this winter-exclusive bus tour offered by the Aizu Bus service! This guided bus tour runs daily during the winter until March 27th.

Call for Newsletter Volunteers!

Come hang out with us while we fold, stamp, and pack our monthly publications for mailing! Chat with other AWIA members and enjoy this casual volunteer activity. No need to sign up, just drop by if you can!

Date: March 26th, 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

<http://facebook.com/awiajp>



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