

Events in August

1	MO	Closed
2	TU	13:30 Nihongo Salon
3	WE	
4	TH	18:30 Japanese Conversation Class (PM)
5	FR	10:00 Japanese Conversation Class (AM)
6	SA	9:30-12:30 Hello World Club
7	SU	Closed 10:00-12:00 Aizu International Parents Group
8	MO	Closed
9	TU	
10	WE	
11	TH	Closed
12	FR	
13	SA	
14	SU	
15	MO	Closed
16	TU	
17	WE	
18	TH	18:30 Japanese Conversation Class (PM)
19	FR	10:00 Japanese Conversation Class (AM)
20	SA	10:00 FIND English Club
21	SU	Closed
22	MO	Closed
23	TU	13:30 Nihongo Salon 18:30 Sherlock Holmes Book Reading
24	WE	
25	TH	
26	FR	
27	SA	13:30 Newsletter Preparation
28	SU	10:00 Children's Nihongo Hiroba
29	MO	Closed
30	TU	13:30 Nihongo Salon
31	WE	

"FIND" English Conversation Club

AWIA member-led English conversation club "FIND" is meeting this month! FIND was designed by and for high school students, with the aim of creating a space for English learners to practice casual conversation skills. 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 to join!

Date/Time	Saturday, Aug 20th 10:00~11:30
Place	Aizu Wakamatsu City Learning Center 3F Room 1
Sign Up	Contact mail@awia.jp by Friday, Aug 19th



5th Aizuwakamatsu Onsen and Gastronomy Walking Tour

Do you like onsen, good food, and sake? Well look no further—this tour is perfect for you! Walk around the Ashinomaki Onsen area and enjoy natural scenery at the Okawa Dam and the Aga river, and take part in some local cuisine and hot spring bathing. For more details, please see the Gastronomy Tourism event page (Japanese only).

Date: Sep 18 (Sun)
Contact: Aizuwakamatsu Tourism Bureau

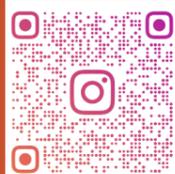
☆An English-speaking tour guide volunteer from the AWIA will be attending the 11:00am tour only.



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: August 27th, 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>



Visit our Facebook page for the latest updates in multiple languages!

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Association News

2022 International Festival!

Oct 9 (Sun)
10:00-15:00
Tsuruga-jo Castle Gym



It has been four years coming, but it's finally here! The theme of the 20th Aizuwakamatsu International Festival's theme is "WOW! World of Wonders", bringing to you fantastic sights and experiences from around the world. Let's enjoy it together!

The event may be altered or cancelled depending on weather or the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation.

We are now accepting festival booth applications!

Apply by Aug 20 (Sat)

- ✳️ We have a list of terms and requirements available on request.
- ★ Cultural booth: introduction of country or culture, etc.
- ★ Food booth: sale of foreign food or drink

We need volunteers!

Volunteers wanted for festival preparations both on the day and leading up to the event! Contact the AWIA for more information.

- ★ General festival prep: planning, leaflet distribution, poster making, decoration making, etc.
- ★ Oct 8 (Sat) 13:00-19:00: Purchase of equipment, venue/booth setup
- ★ Oct 9 (Sun) 8:00-16:30: Preparation, venue guides, clean up etc.

Costume Fashion Show participants wanted!

★ October is the month of Halloween! We'll be giving out participation prizes to anyone who comes in a costume or dressed in a national outfit. We'll also have a fashion show on the stage—come and join in!

"Little Trip" Seminar Series: Mid-Autumn Festival

An important festival in Chinese culture, this year the Chinese Mid-Autumn Festival falls on September 10. Join Chinese tea artist Li HuiYu and our Chinese exchange student guests for a morning of tea, mooncakes and traditional performances, and experience the festival for yourself!



Date: Sep 4 (Sun), 9:30-10:40
Guest: Li Huiyu (High-level Chinese tea artist)
Performers: Chinese exchange students
Place: Aizu Learning Centre, 3F Rooms 2-3
Price: Members ¥500yen, non-members ¥600
Capacity: 30 people - Apply to the AWIA by Aug 28 (Sun)

Please consider sponsoring us!

In order to put on the best event we can, we are seeking donations to be put towards the festival.

- ★ Sponsorship amount: ¥3,000 (or from ¥1,000 for individuals)
- ★ How to become a sponsor: Please apply directly at the AWIA offices. If you would prefer a bank deposit slip to be issued for your donation, please contact us.
- ★ All of our group and individual sponsor's names will be featured in our event pamphlets (only if desired).



会津若松市国際交流協会

TEL (0242) 27-3703

EMAIL: mail@awia.jp

AIZU WAKAMATSU INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION

Autumn Japanese Classes

Give your Japanese skills a boost!

The AWIA will soon be starting our autumn 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 autumn!



	Morning Course	Evening Course
Day	Fridays (12 classes)	Thursdays (12 classes)
Time	10:00-11:30	18:30-20:00
Course Duration	Sep 2-Nov 25 (no class Sep 23)	Sep 1-Nov 24 (no class Nov 3)
Fee (for all 12 classes)	AWIA members ¥4,000 Non-members ¥6,000	
Location	Aizu City Learning Centre (Keikodo)	
Apply	Contact the AWIA by Aug 24 (Wed)	

New English Speaking CIR—Erika Csanyi

Hello! Nice to meet everyone! My name is Erika Csanyi and I will be the new Coordinator for International Relations (CIR) at AWIA from August. I'm originally from Vancouver, Canada and I've lived in Aizu for over 5 years now. I've truly fallen in love with Aizu, so I'm really excited to be starting at the International Association! I've been involved in a few events at the International Association throughout the years, so I'm looking forward the events we'll be holding throughout the year, and hope you are too!

An unusual thing about me is that I'm an identical twin. My sister used to live in Japan, but has since moved back to Vancouver. My favourite movie is The Matrix, and I'm a HUGE Arashi fan. I really like fake-food samples, and have a good collection of fake-food earrings. I also really like painting my nails, but I'm not that girly. I've gotten into Judo recently, and I hope to get my blackbelt sometime this year or early next. I am looking forward to meeting you, so please stop by the International Association and say hello! Yoroshiku onegaishimasu!



COVID-19 Vaccinations

In recent weeks, Japan has been seeing an increase in COVID-19 infections due to the BA.5 variant of the Omicron COVID strain. Please take care of yourselves!

Free Vaccination Period

The period for receiving a vaccine free of cost will end on **September 30 (Fri)**. Anyone has not received their initial two vaccines or the booster should book an appointment as soon as possible. The city expects reservations to be in high demand in September, and only a limited number of clinics are providing 1st-3rd vaccinations now. To make an

appointment, please use the online booking system, or call the reservation hotline.

Online bookings: <https://vaccines.sciseed.jp/aizuwakamatsu/login>

Reservation hotline: 0120-050-503 (Mon-Sun, 9:00-18:00)
For more information, contact the Aizuwakamatsu COVID-19 General Call Centre (0570-026-263)

☆1st/2nd vaccination reservations by hotline only

☆You need your vaccination voucher number when making a reservation.



Member Spotlight: Sekizawa Kazuyuki



Mr. Sekizawa Kazuyuki, AWIA member & homestay volunteer host

This is Mr. Sekizawa, a host family volunteer. You may have seen him at the AWIA's Halloween haunted house wearing a cowboy hat! While it has been hard to get homestay visitors during the ongoing pandemic, Mr. Sekizawa is surrounded by a growing number of people linked by their common interests and hobbies. He says, "it would be nice if there was a way for people who share hobbies to meet up and get to know each other within the AWIA". We think so too!



(Left to right) Mr. Sekizawa, Mr. Jo and Mr. Li at Mt. Adatara.

Meeting new people through road cycling ~ Treasuring the bonds made through cultural exchange

"The best part of Aizu comes from its people". That's what my Chinese friend Mr. Jo (a new AWIA member) says. He also says that "the natural environment, the air, water, food, and the sake is perfect". For someone from Aizu like myself, to hear such compliments makes me very pleased. I met Mr. Jo last summer at the Seaburi-touge Pass. We were both on our road bikes, which is what got us talking. I wrote about our meeting, and it was featured in the Fukushima Minpo Newspaper. Please have a read!

Treasuring the bonds made through cultural exchange

Last summer, I set off alone for the Seaburi-touge Pass with my road bike, aiming to reach the summit. Along the way, I met an older man who I had seen now and then riding his own bike ahead of me, and started up a conversation with him. I found out that he was originally from Dalian in China who had moved to Japan, and we later became close friends. At the time though, I simply told him I was a member of the Aizuwakamatsu International Association, and we exchanged contact information.

Later, he told me that he was still trying to get familiar with the Aizu region, so I took him on several road bike trips around local cycling courses and mountain passes. In Autumn we did a loop around Sado Island, covering about 260km during our 3-day 2-night stay. During that trip, he told me a little more about himself. I learned that after he graduated from university in China, he came to Japan as an engineering research student, and worked to pay for his studies at a Japanese graduate school. He saw Japan through the Showa bubble period through to the Heisei era, meeting a lot of Japanese people that supported and befriended him along

the way. I can learn so much from the experiences he shares with me. Something he said recently has stuck with me. "Our relationships are half a gift from the gods, but the other half depends on our efforts!" He's right. I'm glad I took the initiative and talked to him back in that mountain pass.

From here on out, I want to continue these international exchanges through road cycling, having once-in-a-lifetime encounters, and treasuring all the bonds I make along the way.

**Fukushima Minpo Newspaper
Feb 19, 2022**

Unfortunately, I can't speak English or Chinese. I'm just a regular guy from Aizu, with no experience of living abroad. However, I have always enjoyed and sought out new experiences, wanting to see new cultures, countries, and learn about their histories and environments. I especially enjoy interactions with the locals!

I think that foreigners that come all this way to Aizu must be seeking similar experiences. I want those people to experience the Aizu that I love; to enjoy our nature and history without worries. I want to support them in that endeavour.

Actually, the other day Mr. Jo and his wife taught me how to make authentic gyoza (including the wrappers!). I was impressed by the dexterity of his wife in making the gyoza skins. Also, Mr. Li (another new AWIA member) taught me some cooking with dougan tofu. He is a pro with the spices! I believe all of our lives can be enriched with these sorts of cultural exchanges. This is the beauty of international exchange. If you can take a step forward without fretting and fussing over it, your horizons broaden exponentially!

I have a few different channels of connections myself, so lately I've been enjoying the benefits of introducing some friends to each other. It'd be great if the AWIA could also be a place that facilitates the introductions of like-minded people with similar interests.