

AIZU WAKAMATSU INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION MONTHLY ENGLISH NEWSLETTER

SynthesAizu

September 2025
Volume 5 Issue 9

Association News

AWIA Bus Tour: Yamagata

When we don't hold our International Festival, we try to hold a big event instead. This year, we want to take you somewhere you may not have been, or may have difficulty getting to! Let's enjoy the beauty, history, and taste of Yamagata. We'll stop by the famous Dahlia garden, Yonezawa Castle ruins, and Tohoku's largest winery, Takahata winery.

Members' only event. Take this chance to sign up!

Date: Oct 4th (Sat) Rain or Shine!

Meeting Place: 8:10am in front of AizuWakamatsu Station near the akabeko

Schedule: Leaves at: 8:30 (don't be late!!)

Return: around 18:00

Route: Yamagata Kawanishi Dahlia Garden → Uesugi Shrine, Yonezawa Castle Ruins (Lunch Time) → Grape Picking → Takahata Winery (shopping etc.) → AizuWakamatsu Station

Cost: (includes bus fare, entrance fees, insurance fee)

• High School aged and up: ¥2000

• Children aged 3-15: ¥1500

Does not include lunch, pay before the event

Limit: 40 people - Members Only! First come, first served.

Bring: Easy to walk in shoes, water bottle, umbrella/jacket, towel/handkerchief etc.

Sign-up: aizukokusai@awia.jp by **Sept 20th (Sat)**

(Registration complete when payment received.)

(No refunds for personal cancellations/no-shows.)

(Contact us if you may have difficulty paying ahead of time or other concerns.)

AtsuHana Japanese Convo. Club.

Join us for Ikebana! Sign-up required! Sign-up started August 1st, so spots are limited.

Members: ¥500 Non-members: ¥1000

When	Saturday, September 13th 10:00-12:00
Place	City Learning Centre (Keikodo) 3F Rm 1
Sign-up	Contact aizukokusai@awia.jp by *** Friday, Sept 5th ***

※Autumn Japanese Classes have started!

Sign up is open until **Sept 24th**! Check inside for more info.

AWIA Office Closed: Our office will be CLOSED all day on Oct 4th (Sat) due to our Bus Tour Event.

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

Have a fun time using Chinese. Talk about Festivals!

****Conversational level Chinese is recommended****

When	Saturday, Sept 6th 10:00-11:30
Place	AWIA Office (Sakaemachi 2-14)
Sign Up	Contact aizukokusai@awia.jp by Friday, Sept 5th



Aizu Bandaisan Dance

9/19 (Fri) 19:00-20:00
(meet at 18:50)

Join AWIA in the Aizu Bandaisan Dance on Shinmei-dori St. on the Friday night of the Aizu Festival weekend. AWIA and the Japan-China Friendship Association will be getting together and dancing in the procession. We will be lending out happi coats, available first come, first served! Come join us for a fun time!

Meeting Place: Shinmei-dori, in front of Daiso

Cost: Free! Borrow a Happi coat and dance!

(First come, first served.)

No sign-up necessary! Everyone welcome.

Join anytime! Hop-in, hop-out as you like!



APIO BIZ Park Festa AWIA will have a booth at the APIO BIZ Park Festa this year! Come stop by if you're free!

Sept 7th (Sun) 10:00-16:00 @ APIO Space
(Near the AizuWakamatsu Interchange)



NO MEET English Convo. Club

There will be NO MEET in September.

Join us in October for a special edition! Sign-up required.

Date: Oct 18th (Sat) 10:00-12:00

Check out our Oct edition for more info.



会津若松市国際交流協会

AIZU WAKAMATSU INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION

TEL (0242) 27-3703

EMAIL: aizukokusai@awia.jp

Fruits & Flower Festival

9/13 (Sat) 9:00-13:00

Place: Kita-Aizu Hotaru no Mori
(Miyano Higashi Kita Aizumachi Shimoarai)

Includes:

Food trucks, fresh local produce, balloon show, and miso-making workshops!
Miso Making Workshop: (sign-up Sept 1st!)

Times: 10am, 11am, 12pm

Cost: ¥2000 **Limit:** 20ppl/session

More Info: <https://www.city.aizuwakamatsu.fukushima.jp/docs/2019082700027/>



Kitakata Sake Festival

9/27 (Sat) 15:00-19:00

Buy a ticket and freely enjoy sake from local breweries! You can also get a ¥500 coupon for a local restaurant! Some food available from local restaurants. Also, check out booths about fermentation and brewing!

Place: Kitakata City Hall area (7244-2 Oshimizu Higashi, Kitakata)

Cost: pre-sale: ¥2000 day of: ¥2500

More Info: <http://www.kitakata-kanko.jp/news/detail.php?id=1037>



Cheers with Aizu Sake at Tsuruga-jo

10/1 (Wed) 17:00-20:00 (cheers at 18:00)

October 1st is 'Japanese Sake Day'. Cheers with Aizu Sake! You can buy and enjoy Aizu Sake poured by the brewers and carefully selected Aizu side dishes.

Place: Tsuruga-jo Castle Park

Bonus: Join the 'Cheers Time', and receive a special Aizu lacquerware sake cup filled with a Gold Prize winning sake from the Annual Japan Sake Awards.

More info: <https://www.aizukanko.com/event/661>



8th Aizuwakamatsu ONSEN Gastronomy Walking Tour

10/11 (Sat) Sign-ups open now!

Do you like onsen, local food, and sake? Walk around Aizuwakamatsu and visit various sake breweries on your way to the Higashiyama Onsen area. Enjoy some local cuisine and award winning sake! You'll get a discount on the onsen entrance fee!

Route: 8 stops between Suehiro Brewery -> Higashiyama Onsen (~8km)
Enjoy performances by Higashiyama Geigi (Geisha), Fukushima City Singer/Songwriter MANAMI, and rock band 'ircle' vocalist Kawauchi Kengo.

For more details and to sign-up, see the Gastronomy Tourism event page (Japanese only).

Sign-up: Scan the QR Code to sign up

Contact: Aizuwakamatsu Tourism Division



Japanese language only!

Aizu Matsuri

Aizu Matsuri Main Events

Aizu Matsuri is the largest event in Aizu! Check out these fun things from Sept 19 (Fri)-21 (Sun) Happening on or around Shinmei Dori St.

Sept 19: Children's Lantern Parade 18:00-19:00
(Fri) (Tsuruga-jo Castle -> Shinmei Dori)
Aizu Bandaisan Dance 19:00-20:30

Sept 20: Aizu Clan Parade 9:30~15:30
(Sat) Aizu Bandaisan Dance 19:00-20:30

Sept 21: Nisshinkan Children's Parade and
(Sun) Marching Band Parade 9:30~11:30
(Dai-ichi JHS (10:10) -> Tsuruga-jo Castle)

Don't miss the largest festival in Aizu!

<https://www.aizukanko.com/kk/festival/autumn>

Join us at the Aizu Bandaisan Dance on Sept 19th! See front page for more info

Aizu Clan Parade

9/20 (Sat) 9:30~

Come watch the highlight of the festival! Consisting of around 500 people, participants include local Junior High and High School students, as well as representatives and decedents of famous players in Aizu's history.

While the parade is going around the city, you can enjoy various stage performances at the Castle! Please look out for the English Pamphlet! We'll be handing it out at the festival.



Multilingual Information Desk

9/20 (Sat) 9:30-16:00

For the Aizu Matsuri, the International Association runs a Multilingual Information Desk on the Tsuruga-jo Castle grounds on the main day of festival. We provide Festival Pamphlets in multiple languages, and FREE English tours all day. There are also pamphlets etc. in Chinese!

Cost: FREE

Place: Tsuruga-jo Castle Grounds (near the teahouse.)



AWIA Multilingual Info Desk Training

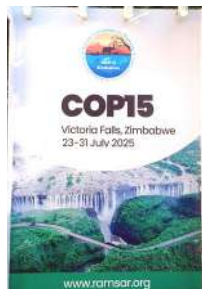
9/6 (Sat) 10:00-11:30

Meeting Place: Tsuruga-jo Tourist Information Desk

Sign-up: aizukokusai@awia.jp by Sept 5th (Fri)



From CIR Erika:



Earlier this year, AWIA was asked by AizuWakamatsu City if we could provide an English interpreter to attend the 2025 Ramsar Convention in Zimbabwe at the end of July. CIR Erika gladly took the chance to help the representatives from AizuWakamatsu to navigate the trip/conference. They spent a few days in Zimbabwe, attending the conference and seeing the sights! It was an incredible experience. Here is part 1 of the series about her experience: the introduction!



To Zimbabwe and back!: the Ramsar Convention

This year, Lake Inawashiro was placed on the Ramsar List and recognized as a 'Wetland of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat.' Part of the UNESCO umbrella, the Ramsar List is maintained by the 'Convention on Wetlands' Contracting Parties,' made up of about 172 countries committed to protecting wetlands around the world. They met this year at the end of July to update the Ramsar Convention, recognize newly designated wetlands and share information. I was lucky enough to go as an interpreter for representatives from the city of AizuWakamatsu.



Ethiopian Airlines flights to Zimbabwe

In total, eleven people from various government organizations in Fukushima went to Zimbabwe: two from Fukushima Prefecture, two from Inawashiro Town, three from Koriyama, two from AizuWakamatsu City, plus me and one other interpreter. They were from the Environmental divisions in their various governments and were very happy to be



Transfer sign at the Addis-Ababa Airport in Ethiopia

representing Lake Inawashiro on the world stage. Throughout the trip, I could see how committed they are to protecting the environment of Fukushima.

I met the two men from the AizuWakamatsu City Hall for the first time in June for our first round of vaccines. (One of them is actually a member of AWIA!) In total, we received 8 different vaccines over three clinic visits. Most of these vaccines were only available from a travel clinic in Fukushima City, so we spent quite a bit of time in a car together, talking about various things and preparing for the trip. We discussed things like tip cul-

ture overseas, what sort of clothes or shoes to bring, and what omiyage to prepare. These two men are extremely kind, easy-going, and reliable. I don't think I would have had half as good a time if I was paired with different people.

The conference itself took place in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe from July 23rd to July 31st. Zimbabwe is located in Southeastern Africa, next to Zambia, Mozambique, South Africa and Botswana.



Victoria Falls (Mosi-oa-Tunya)

It has a time difference of minus 8 hours from Japan. Victoria Falls is in the northwest of the country and is considered the largest waterfall in the world. Named after Queen Victoria by Christian missionary and geographer David Livingstone, it is actually called 'Mosi-oa-Tunya' (Thundering Smoke/Smoke that Rises) in the local Lozi Language. This is because of the sheer amount of water going over the falls creates a constant spray that can sometimes be seen around 50kms away!

Our business trip lasted one week: from July 24th to July 30th. With several connecting flights, it took about 24hrs including layovers to get to Zimbabwe. We were only there for four days and three



At the conference!

nights, but we were able to pack a lot into those few days! We had one day of work, participating in the conference, then one day of checking out the local sights before we had to fly back. It was a whirlwind trip!

Look forward to the next installment, when I talk more about the conference itself!

More from AWIA

Give your Japanese skills a boost!

The Autumn session of Japanese language courses has started! Our experienced volunteer teachers teach courses from beginner level to advanced. With small class size, they strike a balance between reading, writing, and conversation. Online lessons available, but subject to teacher availability. **9/1: Thurs Evening class very full. Open space in Fri Morning class.**

Deadline: Sept 24th (Wed)

Autumn Japanese Classes

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

Events in September

1	MO	Closed
2	TU	
3	WE	
4	TH	18:30 Japanese Conversation Class (PM)
5	FR	10:00 Japanese Conversation Class (AM)
6	SA	10:00 ChAT-ba: Chinese Convo. Circle 10:00 Aizu Matsuri Info. Desk Training 15:00 Kodomo Nihongo Hiroba
7	SU	OFFICE CLOSED 10:00 APIO BIZ PARK Festa (AWIA Booth)
8	MO	Closed
9	TU	
10	WE	
11	TH	18:30 Japanese Conversation Class (PM)
12	FR	10:00 Japanese Conversation Class (AM)
13	SA	10:00 AtsuHana: Japanese Convo. Circle
14	SU	Closed
15	MO	Closed - Respect for the Aged Day
16	TU	
17	WE	
18	TH	18:30 Japanese Conversation Class (PM)
19	FR	10:00 Japanese Conversation Class (AM) 19:00 Aizu Bandai-san Dance
20	SA	9:30 Multilingual Desk at Tsuruga-jo Castle
21	SU	Closed
22	MO	Closed
23	TU	Closed - Autumn Equinox
24	WE	
25	TH	18:30 Japanese Conversation Class (PM)
26	FR	10:00 Japanese Conversation Class (AM)
27	SA	13:30 Newsletter Preparation 15:00 Kodomo Nihongo Hiroba
28	SU	Closed
29	MO	Closed
30	TU	

Other Information

2025 Census: Oct 1st

The Japanese Census is happening this year! Under the Statistics Act, every person residing in Japan is required to respond to the census in order to ensure the accuracy of the statistics. Census takers will be delivering documents to each household starting September 20th (Sat). Keep an eye out for when they come around! (they will be wearing an official Census 国勢調査 ID)

Available in paper, or online forms in the following languages: **English, Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Portuguese, and Spanish.** To answer online, use the ID and password provided by the Census taker.

Census submission deadline: Oct 8th (Wed)

If they have not received your submission by this date, a Census taker will visit your house again.



Japanese Speech Contest

This year, for the 25th anniversary of the creation of the Fukushima Rotary Club, they are holding a speech contest with a Non-Japanese category. Show off your skills and you could win a prize!

Topic: 福島県で今、伝えたいこと (3分以内)

A message you want to express from your life in Fukushima. (Less than 3min speech)



Contest: Sept 23rd (Tue/Holiday) 14:00~

Place: Koriyama Big-i Building 7F
(right beside Koriyama station)

Participants: People with Japanese as a second language.

Finals: Nov 8th (Sat) (10 finalists)

Place: Sakura no Seibo Junior College (Fukushima City)

Winners of the Final Contest:

- Top Award: 30,000yen (1person)
- Award: 20,000yen (1person)
- Participation: Commemorative Prize

Sign-up: By Sept 20th (Sat) through email or by QR code

Contact: lasanichi-f@worldvillage.org
(or AWIA for a sign-up form)

Run by: Fukushima 21 Rotary Club



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: September 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

<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 | SITE: <https://www.awia.jp>