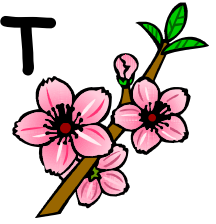


# SHIBUKAWA CURRENT

Shibukawa International Association

197th Edition, March 2009



## Dear Readers,

We are very happy that a lot of people come and support and also enjoy the Shibukawa International Association's activities throughout the year. We would like to offer you continuous opportunities to learn Japanese culture through various activities.

March is called "Yayoi", which means to grow more and more and is the last month of the Japanese calendar. The traditional Japanese calendar is based on the reigning period of the emperor. Each time a different emperor begins to rule, a new counting of the years begins and the period acquires a new name. The Japanese school year starts in April, and it is also the beginning of the new fiscal year for business. Spring is almost around the corner! The weather is becoming warmer day by day and some flowers are already starting to bloom!! So let's enjoy the beautiful nature around us!!

## Doll's Festival

(ひな<sup>まつ</sup>祭り)

Doll's Festival is held on March 3rd. This is a day to pray for young girl's growth and happiness. It is also called "Momo no sekku (Peach Festival)" because of the peach blossom season on the old lunar calendar. Most families with girls display special dolls for Hinamatsuri and dedicate peach blossoms to them. They are usually arranged on a five or seven-tiered stand covered with a red carpet. At the top are the Emperor and Empress. The next step contains three court ladies, followed by five musicians, two ministers, and three servants ending the bottom row in a five-tiered display. There are also small pieces of furniture, small meal dishes, and other things.



## Stone steps doll festival (いしだん<sup>いしだん</sup>ひなまつり)

March 7th (Sat), 8th (Sun), 1pm-

This festival will take place on the well known stone steps of Ikaho Hot Springs. Lovely children from Ikaho dressed like hina dolls sit together on the stone steps. It's sure to be an unforgettable moment for you. Come with your family or friends.

## Sakuramochi (さくらもち)

Sakuramochi is a sweet pink rice cake. It's traditionally eaten on Girls' Day. There are various kinds of sakuramochi in Japan. Usually girls invite their friends to a home party and have a good time. Many people still prepare a special meal for girls on this day. It might be fun to plan a Japanese Girl's Day party for your kids.



## Ikaho (い か ほ)

Take advantage of the spring weather by visiting Ikaho. Ikaho is a town with over 400 years of history. It is situated on the mountain side of Haruna with a awesome view. At its center it has almost 360 steps of stone, and several souvenir shops and Japanese inns. The spa resort is well known for being a favorite with great writers and artists such as Roka Tokutomi and Yumeji Takehisa.



# Living Guide (生活ガイド)



## Hello Work (ハローワーク)

"Hello Work" service provides free-of-charge employment counseling and job introductions. Some "Hello Work" sections have a "Foreigner Employment Service Center", where counseling is offered in various foreign languages, including English, Chinese, Spanish, and Portuguese. The "Hello Work" services are available nationwide. If you do not know the location of the nearest service, please ask your local municipal office or on the Internet at [www.hellowork.go.jp](http://www.hellowork.go.jp).

## Getting to Narita International Airport

(成田空港への行き方)

There are several direct bus services to Narita International Airport. There is no direct train service available in Gunma. You need a reservation at least three days prior to your departure. You can book directly on the phone, web or at your local travel agency.

If you don't want to take the bus, you can take a train to Tokyo and then transfer to another train that goes directly to Narita. Many train services are available, including the JR Narita Express, JR Rapid Train Airport Narita, and Keisei Skyliner.



## Application Procedure for Nursery School (保育園に入る手続き)

When both parents work and are unable to tend to their children, they may want to send them to a nursery school. Nursery schools are for preschool children age six and younger.

### Dropping Off and Picking Up Children

A parent or guardian is usually responsible for dropping off and picking up their children.

**Hours:** Most nursery schools are open from 8:00 am to 6:00 p.m. Some nursery schools are open earlier and/or later than this.

**Cost:** The monthly fee is determined by the family's annual income. Discounts are often given to families with more than one child attending the school.

**Application Procedure:** Contact your local municipal office to apply for admission to a public nursery school. School admission starts in April and openings may be limited, so apply early.

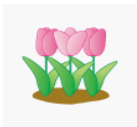
For more information please call at 0279-22-2111 ext. 1216.

## Municipal Branches in Shibukawa

しぶかわし そうごうししょ  
渋川市の総合支所

The 2nd municipal office building is a 10 minute walk from the main city office building

The 2nd municipal office building,	〒 377-0007 Ishihara 6-1	tel: 22-2111
Ikaho municipal branch office,	〒 377-0192 Ikaho Machi 116-1	tel: 72-3155
Onogami municipal branch office,	〒 377-0392, Murakami 3756-3	tel: 59-2111
Komochi municipal branch office,	〒 377-0292, Fukiya 384	tel: 24-1211
Akagi municipal branch office,	〒 379-1192, Akagi machi Shikishima 568-1	tel: 56-2211
Hokkitsu municipal branch office,	〒 377-8502, Hokkitsu machi Makabe 2372-	tel: 52-2111



# Coming Events (イベント)



## For Movie Fans

(えいがかんしょうかい  
映画鑑賞会)

On March 15th (Sun) from 2pm Shibukawa City Library (sicyoukakusitsu) will show a movie. It's free and no space limitation so anyone can come and enjoy.

**Content:** Meteoron Notte (2006, Japanese film)

**Tel:** 22-0644 (for details)



## Make Your Own Mug

(マグカップに絵を描こう)

You can try to make an original mug.

This class will be held for children (6th graders and below) and their parent on March 27th (Fri) 1:30pm-4pm at Shibukawa Toubu Kouminkan.

Sign-up will start from March 13th.

**Limit:** 10 pairs of parents and child

**Charge:** ¥800 (for per pair)

**Tel:** 22-4321

## Enjoy Songs and Music

(はるやす  
春休みハッピータイム)

Take advantage of the happy time with songs, music, and other attraction for your children (6th graders and below) during the Spring vacation. It will be held on March 30th (Mon) 10:30am-noon at Shibukawa Toubu Kouminkan. Please provide parental supervision for 3rd graders and below.

**Limit:** 100 people (first come, first-served)

**Sign-up:** from March 9th

**Tel:** 22-4321 (It's free)



## Confectionary Class for Children

(キッズ☆春の色レシピ)

Shibukawa Kouminkan wishes to hold a confectionary class for children (elementary school students) on March 22nd 10am-noon. It is a good chance to learn how to bake cookies and jelly with strawberry milk.

(Please bring an apron, small towel, head cover and dish towel.)

**Limit:** 15 children (first come, first served)

**Fee:** ¥300

**Sign-up:** from March 9th

**Tel:** 22-0999

## Sky Therme (スカイテルメ)

The Sky Therme is a hot spring bath, On the first floor, there is a warm-water swimming pool, heated by the heat from the hot springs. There are variety of tubes as well as outdoor baths and saunas. There are also many other forms of recreation including a restaurant, a karaoke room and a game corner.



## Movie for Kids (子ども映画かい)

Shibukawa City Library will show movie for children on March 14th (Sat) 2pm-. Please call for more details at 22-0644.



## Woodwork for Family

(おやこもっこうきょうしつ  
親子木工教室)

The Toyoaki Kouminka will hold a woodworking workshop for families. It is a good chance to learn how to make animals from a branch of a tree. This class will be held on March 28th (Sat) 9:30am-11:30am. The charge will be 300 yen for material cost and the limit is 10 pairs of parents and child. **Please call 22-0312 for more information**

# Health Information (健康情報)



## Getting An Aids Test (エイズの検査)

If you are worried about HIV/AIDS infection or want to get an aids test, there are many local Public Health Clinic (hokenjo) are located in every neighborhood and urban area throughout Japan. If you are unsure about where the closet hokenjo is to you, call your ward office or simply ask your train station or local police box where you can find it.

Health and Welfare Offices in Gunma have a HIV/AIDS consultation room and provide free and anonymous consultations and tests from health professionals.

Your privacy is guaranteed.

The term for blood test in Japanese is "ketsueki kensa", and Aids test is "Aizu no testo". Some health centers have been asking foreigners for names or alien registration cards. However, it is not required to give your name or any personal information about yourself.

If you have any problems at the hokenjo, walk to a pay phone and call The Aids Hotline at 0120-46-1995. The Aids Hotline will call the hokenjo and remind them of YOUR RIGHTS!

**Prefectural Health Management Division**

Tel: 027-226-2609



## Prevention of Influenza

(インフルエンザの予防)

The influenza is a highly contagious disease in which the virus enters the body through the mouth and nose. If infected, strong systemic symptoms (a sudden fever of over 38 ° C, headaches, and joint and muscular pains) can be observed in addition to those related to the common cold. Serious complications of bronchitis, pneumonia, and fever convulsion can also occur.

- ★ Increased resistance: eat a balanced diet, exercise moderately and get sufficient sleep. Prevent contact with the virus: avoid crowds of people, wash your hands and gargle when you return home.
- ★ The most effective prevention is the vaccination received before an influenza outbreak. Ask at your local medical institution.
- ★ If you think you have had influenza, see a doctor as soon as possible. The first 3 days after the onset are the most likely time for the virus to spread. To prevent further spreading of the virus, avoid going out among crowds of people. Get plenty of rest and sufficient sleep, and remember to keep hydrated.

## Counseling Service

(外国人生活相談窓口の案内)

The Shibukawa International Association is providing a free counseling service for foreign residents of Shibukawa. It is available every Thursday 1pm-3pm at Shibukawa City Hall, 1st floor. Don't hesitate to come or call the number listed below.

## Information (お問い合わせ)

Shibukawa City Office Planning Division 80 Ishihara, Shibukawa City

TEL: 0279-22-2396 FAX: 0279-24-6541

Email: [kikaku03@city.shibukawa.gunma.jp](mailto:kikaku03@city.shibukawa.gunma.jp)

Staff: Mr. Igarashi, Mr. Sakuma, Mr. Kato, Ms. Nishijima, Mrs. Sarwar