

THE OSMONET

January 2024 (vol.318)

The following articles are taken mainly from "Koho Ashiya" – the bulletin of Ashiya City (January issue). It is, of course, a Japanese edition, and translated into English by a voluntary group from the Ashiya Cosmopolitan Association. Please understand that some phone numbers listed under the various events are staffed by people who may not speak English.

New Year's Greetings



Happy New Year 2024



Mayor TAKASHIMA Ryosuke (right) with City Council Chairperson KIYAMA Kazuya (left) at YODOKO Guest House (The Former Residence of the Yamamuras)

We hope all Ashiya citizens are having a peaceful New Year in good health.

The new structure for both the Mayor and City Council started last year. Efforts have been made to lay the foundation for further development of Ashiya City, as well as to formulate a general plan for education.

"Dialogue" with citizens is essential to introduce the various measures to build the future of Ashiya. This year, too, we will talk and work with you, the citizens, to promote urban development that maximizes Ashiya's appeal as the "International Cultural Residential City where every Ashiya citizen wants to continue living".

We look forward to your further support and cooperation.

TAKASHIMA Ryosuke, the Mayor
KIYAMA Kazuya, the Chairperson
of Ashiya City Council



New Year Special Interview – Yoshioka Ema & Mayor Takashima (Abridged)

–Striving to become a city where nature and culture are in harmony and a good place to raise and educate children –

We talked with Yoshioka Ema, who is from Ashiya, a winner of the Grand Prix at the 55th 2023 Miss Japan Contest, and Mayor Takashima, who became the youngest mayor in Japan in May 2023. We asked these hopeful people to talk about their future goals and Ashiya's future.

–What inspired you to become Miss Japan and Mayor?

Yoshioka: There were two reasons. One is because as a Miss Japan finalist, you can participate in Study Sessions. One of them is a class given by an instructor of Noh, Japan's oldest performing art, and I wanted to try it as I like classical literature. Another is that I met Ms. Kaneko Megumi, a former member of the House of Representative, when I worked part-time at the TV station. She was a former representative of the Kanto region of Miss Japan, and I was impressed by her wonderful personality.



Takashima: There are study sessions that only finalists can attend?

Yoshioka: Yes, for about 4 months, you can learn not only Noh but Japanese flower arrangement, *Ukiyoe* and many other things. Some of the finalists even want to become Miss Japan because they want to participate in these study sessions.

Takashima: This is the first time I heard about this. I ran for Mayor because I felt that being Mayor is a job where I can make a difference in the world. When I was in the 6th grade of elementary school in Minoh City, where I lived at that time, a Mayor in his 30s took office and I felt the town was changing. The Mayor is the closest person connected to the citizens and the public. Since assuming office, I have come to realize more and more that there is no better job in the world.

– Do you have a favorite place or favorite way to spend time in Ashiya?

Takashima: I like the warmth of people. I think it is the citizens who have protected this environment.

Yoshioka: What a lovely thing to say! I like the natural environment that the Mayor just mentioned, the richness of nature even though it is close to the city. I wake up to the sound of woodpeckers and kingfishers are flying overhead, which is proof that the river is clean.

Takashima: I am glad to hear that there are woodpeckers and kingfishers in Ashiya. Do you take walks in nature on your days off?

Yoshioka: I like running. I run along the Ashiyagawa River to Koza Falls. The members of the athletic club at Yamate Junior High School, where I'm from, run to Koza Falls.



Yoshioka Ema

Profile: Born in Ashiya. A student at Kwansei Gakuin University.
2023 Miss Japan, Grand Prix. Hobbies: Pilgrimage to temples and shrines, dance and reading classics.

Takashima: Indeed, everyone was running along the mountain paths at the Sanjo *Komisuku* (Community School) Sports Day.

Yoshioka: Do you play sports?

Takashima: I played rugby from junior high school to university. I have participated in several events at *Komisuku* Sports Day.

I would like to run, as well... Isn't it difficult to keep running?

Yoshioka: You are busy, aren't you? I didn't like running that much



Koza Falls

at first, but as I ran, I enjoyed improving my time and came to love it. When I get better, I would like to participate in the Ashiya Sakura Fun Run.

Takashima: We look forward to your participation.

- What attracts you to classical literature?

Yoshioka: I love classical culture and want to convey its charm and interest to the younger generation. I started to be interested in it from "*Hyakunin Issyu*", One Hundreds Poems by One Hundreds Poets, compiled by Fujiwara Teika (1162-1241). It is interesting to find the same ideas and feelings as my own in the past. Whenever I am in difficulty or feeling uncertain, I sometimes wonder how people in the past put their ideas in order.

Takashima: Do you have a favorite poem that will always remain in your heart?

Yoshioka: *Nagaraeba mata konogoroya Shinobaremu Ushitomishi yozo imaha koishiki*

It is a positive poem that says that there are hard times in life, but if you live long, you will get by. I have been encouraged by this poem to get through life.

Takashima: It is a nice episode. I think one of the challenges in education today is that few understand why we learn. The same is true of math and science, but the classics are even harder to understand. If people can connect to the subtleties depicted in the classics with their current selves, they will become more interested in the classics.

- What is it that you are aiming for?

Takashima: Most of the decisions leaders must make are which way to choose when the advantage and disadvantages are 49 to 51. It is important how we can make decisions based on evidence and how we can engage in careful discussion to convince citizens of those decisions.

Yoshioka: You are also informing on SNS.

Takashima: Thank you for taking a look. We also hold open meetings to help build relationship of trust with the citizens. In my six months in office, I have felt that City Hall

is not good at making self-promotion.

Yoshioka: I want to be an announcer. I think it's wonderful when the newscaster I admire gives information and then says, "Would you like to think about it?" I am learning how to communicate and use language that will help people think about social issues and problems together. I hope to change Japan with the younger generation in the future.

- What do you want Ashiya to become in the future?

Yoshioka: I'd like to see an increase the number of younger generation in order to become a more vibrant city. I hope Ashiya becomes a city that younger people want to return to, even if they grow up and take on challenges outside of the city. I participated in Miura International Marathon in Kanagawa Prefecture as Miss Japan, and I hope Ashiya will hold such a big event so that people can experience the beautiful town and nature of Ashiya and increase the number of Ashiya fans.

Takashima: I very much sympathize with you, I also want this to be a city that everyone wants to return to. It is difficult to keep the younger generation in the city, and it should not be that way. I want our students to have a good education in Ashiya and to go out into the world.

When it comes time to raise their children, I want them to be glad they grew up in Ashiya.

Yoshioka: I am planning to find a job in Tokyo, but would like to return to Ashiya someday.

Takashima: Please come back.

Takashima Ryosuke

Profile: Born in February, 1997.

Graduated from Nada Junior and Senior High School.

Graduated from Harvard University

Mayor took office in May 2023



Advanced First-Aid Training Class

- ◇ Date and Time: Sunday, January 28 9:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
- ◇ Place: Main Fire Department All-purpose Room
- ◇ Contents: AED cardiopulmonary and other emergency aids
The basic certification test (written and practical) will be held at the end of the class.
- ◇ Capacity: 20 people, first-come basis
- ◇ Eligibility: Those who live, work and study in Ashiya
(junior high school students and over)
- ◇ Application: Contact us at 2D code or at the number below by 5:30 p.m.
on January 26 (Fri.)

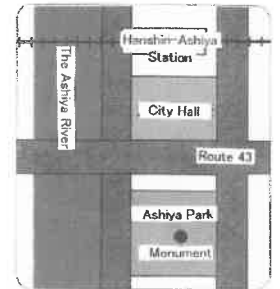


Inquiries: Emergency Section, Fire Department Headquarters (Phone: 0797-32-2345)

1.17 Ashiya City Prayer and Pledge



- Date and Time: Wed., Jan. 17 7:00 a.m.– 5:00 p.m. (Will be carried out even if it rains.)
 - Place: In front of the “Hanshin–Awaji Earthquake Memorial and Reconstruction Monument” (inside Ashiya Park, Hama–Ashiya–cho)
 - Content: Flower offering and signing the memorial book.
* Please come anytime during the above–mentioned time zone.
- N.B. •No parking available for cars and bicycles.
•Flowers will be prepared by the City.
•It is requested that no offerings such as flowers or fruits be sent.
- Inquiries: Secretarial Section (Phone: 0797–38–2000)



Fire Brigades New Year’s Parade 2024

- ◆ Date and Time: Sun., January 14 10:00 a.m. – Noon
- ◆ Place: Seido Elementary School Ground (Will be cancelled if it rains.)
- ◆ Events: Part 1 (Ceremony): Mayor’s address / Commendation.
Part 2 (Performances): “*Danjiri Bayashi*” by Seido Float Preservation Society/
Fire–fighting performance / Simultaneous water discharge performance /
Juvenile fire–fighting club’s performance / Booth for fire vehicles display/
Booth for First Aid experience, etc.
- ◆ Inquiries: General Affairs Section, Fire Department Headquarters (Phone:0797–32–2345)



Financial Benefits Focused on Supporting Families Deal with Price Rises in Electricity, Gas, Food, etc.



70,000 yen per household will be paid as support benefits for low income household whose family finance is strongly affected by the price rises.

Please refer to the City’s webpage for details.

- Eligibility: A household that has a certificate of residence in Ashiya city as of December 1, 2023 and where all household members are exempt from residents’ tax on a par capital basis. However, households where all household members are dependent under the tax law on a person who is subject to residence tax is not eligible to receive the benefits.
* Those who are displaced due to DV, please consult us.



- Notification Dispatch and Application:

We are dispatching notification of the benefits to the eligible households from the end of December. (Households containing persons who moved in during the year 2023 will get the information in the middle January).



Application procedure is not necessary for the households with no change in notification content. Benefits will be transferred to the same account used for the former occasions. Application procedures are necessary for households with no registration of account, with non–registered household member and household refusing the receipt of the benefits.

- Inquiries: Call Center in charge of Temporary Benefits, Community Welfare Section (Phone: 0797–38–2053)

The amount of garbage to be burned has decreased due to the introduction of the designated bag system

Thank you for your cooperation in the designated bag system. Personal burnable garbage has decreased by approx. 9% (compared to the previous year), while resources such as paper and plastic bottles have increased. However, there are cases where waste separation is insufficient, so please continue to promote separation.

▶ Some people are putting out the garbage without using the designated garbage bags.

Unfortunately, there are approx. 1-2% of stations in the city where people are disposing of garbage without using the designated garbage bags. Please contact the Environmental Facilities Section so that we can distribute leaflets to the areas surrounding the relevant stations and housing complexes, and prepare signs to be posted at garbage stations.

▶ Plastic garbage is combustible garbage.

There are some people who throw away large plastic waste with other non-burnable waste, but currently, in Ashiya City, it is combustible garbage. For bulky garbage, please call the bulky garbage reservation center to reserve collection. Bulky Garbage Reservation Center (Phone: 0797-22-2166)



Standards for bulky garbage (judged by the length of the longest side)

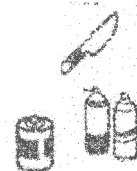
- ▶ Burnable garbage (plastic cases, etc.) 50cm or more
- ▶ Non-burnable garbage (products containing metal, etc.) 30cm or more

▶ Place other non-burnable garbage in designated garbage bags.

Please use designated garbage bags for other non-burnable garbage. Garbage that is dangerous if mixed together will be collected separately, so please put that garbage on its own in visible bags.

Examples of hazardous waste that can be disposed of in visible bags

- ▶ Knives, broken glass, and other garbage that could injure staff
- ▶ Inflammable garbage such as used spray cans, batteries
- ▶ Garbage that is too hard to process, such as iron arrays



▶ About out of stock 5ℓ and 15ℓ bags

We are sorry for the inconvenience as 5ℓ and 15ℓ bags are out of stock. Demand exceeded expectations based on population and amount of waste. We are currently asking manufacturers to increase production. We will have more in stock as needed, so please do not bulk buy. (There is no problem even if the inner bag is not a designated garbage bag.)

* 15-liter bags are available at the City Hall kiosk.

* Check the 2D code on the right for store sales status.

■ Inquiries: Environmental Facilities Section (Phone: 0797-32-5391)



Special Benefit to Support Low-Income Families with Children

tei-shotoku no kosodate setai seikatsu shien tokubetu kyufu-kin

低所得の子育て世帯生活支援特別給付金

If you are eligible for the benefit and have not yet received them, please apply.

- ◇ **Eligible Children:** Children born between April 2, 2005 (April 2, 2003, for those with certain disabilities) and February 29, 2024
- ◇ **Eligible Recipients:** A father or mother raising an eligible child who has the higher income and meets either criteria below.



▶ **Two-Parent Households**

- ① Those exempted from Resident's Tax (per capita) for the fiscal year 2023, or
- ② Those with income equivalent to those exempted from Resident's Tax due to a sudden change in income on or after January 1, 2023.

▶ **Single-Parent Households**

- ① Those who did not receive the March 2023 Child Rearing Allowance (児童扶養手当 *jido fuyo teate*) because they are receiving public pension, or
- ② Those whose income is expected to be at the same level as that of Child Rearing Allowance recipients due to the increasing cost of living.



- ◇ **Benefit amount:** 50,000 yen per child
- ◇ **Application:** Those who meet the eligibility requirements, please submit the necessary documents to the Child Policy Section by Thu., February 29th (postmark valid). Documents needed can be downloaded from the Ashiya City website.
- ◇ **Inquiries & Mail to:** 〒659-8501 Child Policy Section (Phone: 0797-38-2045)
(No address necessary)

Submit Salary Payment Reports Online

Businesses should submit Salary Payment Reports (給与支払報告書 *kyuyo shiharai hokoku-sho*) by January 31, 2024, for employees (including part-time workers, "arubaito" part-time workers, and retirees) who were paid salaries or other wages during the previous year.



eLTAX

Documents needed for the Salary Payment Report may be downloaded from the 2D code to the right. eLTAX, the local tax portal system, is a convenient report submission method.



- ◇ **Inquiries:** Municipal Tax Subsection, Taxation Section (Phone: 0797-38-2016)

Notification of Paid Insurance Premium Amount



Notification of insurance premium payment amounts confirmed to have been paid during 2023 will be sent out at the end of January 2024. Insurance premium payments are tax-deductible. Make use of the notification for your final tax return. Please note, however, that insurance premium payments made at the end of December 2022 may not be included in the notification.

◇ National Health Insurance (NHI):

Collection Subsection, Insurance Section (Phone: 0797-38-2226)

◇ Medical Care System for the Elderly Premium:

Medical Care for the Elderly Subsection, Insurance Section (Phone: 0797-38-2037)

◇ Long-term Care Insurance (LTCI) Premium:

Management Subsection, Senior Citizens' Long-Term Care Section
(Phone: 0797-38-2046)



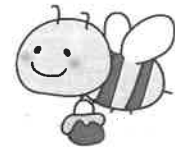
Revision of Minimum Wage Rates

Effective December 1, 2023, **specific (industrial) minimum wages** in Hyogo Prefecture were revised. The new minimum wages apply to all workers, including part-time workers and “*arubaito*” part-time workers.

◇ **Inquiries:** Wages Division, Labor Standards Department, Hyogo Labor Bureau
(Phone: 078-367-9154)

Beekeeper Registration of Honeybees

Those who keep honeybees, including hobby beekeepers, are required to file a beekeeper registration with Hyogo Prefecture every year in January.



◇ **Inquiries:** Regional Economy Promotion Section (Phone: 0797-38-2033)
Hanshin Agriculture and Forestry Promotion Office, Agricultural Administration and Promotion Division (阪神農林振興事務所農政振興課 *Hanshin Norin Shinko Jimusho Nosei Shinko-ka*)
(Phone: 079-562-8848)



ASHIYA TRIANGLE, Ashiya Public Relations TV Program (CH11/15 min.)

Broadcast Time: ①9:00 a.m. ②12:00 noon ③4:00 p.m. ④8:00 p.m. ⑤10:00 p.m.

※ Updated on the 1st and 16th of every month. You can also watch it on YouTube if you miss the broadcast.



Water Leak and Water Supply Pipe Repairs

- Weekdays during the daytime ▶ **Waterworks Customer Service Center** ☎0797-38-2082
- Saturdays, Sundays, public holidays, and during the night ▶ **City Hall** ☎0797-31-2121





How to Obtain Disaster Information

This year marks the 29th anniversary of the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake on January 17, 1995. Know how to obtain information when a disaster hits.



◇ Information Disseminated by the City of Ashiya:

- ▶ Ashiya City Website
- ▶ Ashiya Disaster Prevention Network (*Ashiya Bosai Net*)
- ▶ Emergency Alert System
- ▶ Automated Response Telephone (☎050-5527-2580)
- ▶ Emergency Broadcast Radio
- ▶ J:COM Channel
- ▶ Facebook, X (formerly Twitter)

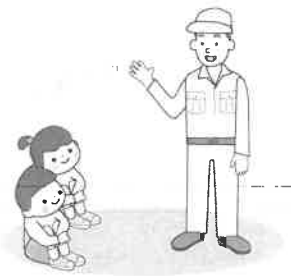
◇ Inquiries: Disaster Prevention and Security Section (Phone: 0797-38-2093)

1.17 Ashiya Pheonix Fund Subsidy

The fund is available to subsidize volunteer efforts, such as by citizen groups and college students, to pass down the experiences and valuable lessons learned from the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake to the next generation and to build strong communities against disasters.

◇ Eligible Activities:

- ① Providing support for disaster victims and the recovery and reconstruction of the disaster-stricken regions.
 - ② Raising awareness of disaster prevention and preparedness, and establishing voluntary disaster prevention organizations.
 - ③ Training volunteers for disaster prevention, preparedness, and reconstruction.
 - ④ Passing down the lessons learned from the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake.
 - ⑤ Exhibiting materials about the devastation, recovery, and reconstruction from the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake.
 - ⑥ Holding memorial services for the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake
 - ⑦ Any other activities that are in line with the objectives of the 1.17 Ashiya Pheonix Fund.
- ※ There are conditions to be eligible for the subsidy. Please inquire for details.



◇ Inquiries: Policy Promotion Section (Phone: 0797-38-2127)

Movie “Mustache Principal”



A story of teachers who worked tirelessly to protect the deaf.

- ◇ Date & Time: Sat., January 27, 1:30–4:00 p.m.
- ◇ Place: Renaissance Classics Ashiya Luna Hall
- ◇ Capacity: First 400 people
- ◇ Inquiries: Kiguchi Foundation (Phone: 0797-21-5150)

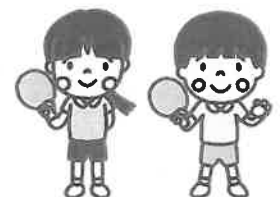


Table Tennis at the Children’s Center

- ◇ Date & Time: Thu., January 11, 4:15–5:00 p.m.
- ◇ Capacity: First 16 elementary students (sign-up begins 5 minutes before the start time)
- ◇ Place & Inquiries: Children’s Center, 10-5 Kamimiyagawa-cho (Phone: 0797-22-9229)

Ashiya School Lunch Recipes

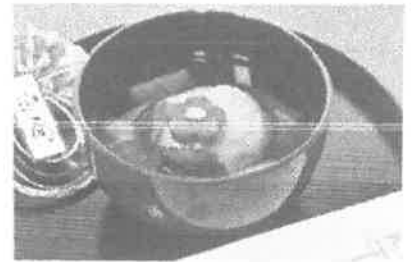
■ Plum *Shiratamamochi* Soup

□ Ingredients (serves 5)

150g *daikon* radish
30g *kintoki* carrot
15g *mitsuba*
1.5ℓ water
15g kelp
30g *hanakatsuobushi*
2 tsp. light soy sauce
1g salt

➤ Plum white jade cake

80g white jade powder
1tsp. plum meat
25g canned beets (solid content)
25g silken tofu
15g water



□ Directions:

1. Cut the *daikon* radish into thin slices, cut the *kintoki* carrot into plumblossom-shaped pieces, and cut the rest into long sticks. Cut the *Mitsuba* into about 2cm pieces. Parboil the radish and the carrot.
2. Make the stock: Heat water and kelp over high heat, bring to the boil, and reduce heat to low and simmer for 30 minutes. Remove the kelp, put the bonito flakes in and bring to the boil again and strain the stock through a colander.
3. For *Umeshiratamochi*, mix together *Shiratamako*, plum, beets, and silken tofu and knead well. Make sure to crush the beets.
4. While checking the consistency of the dough, add water little by little and knead until it becomes a lump. Be careful not to make it too soft.
5. Divide ④ into 5 pieces and roll them up like small mochi.
6. Boil the mochi in boiling water in a pot. Once they float, let them heat for about 3 minutes to cook through.
7. Add *daikon* radish and *kintoki* carrot to the soup stock ②. Add seasonings to taste.
8. Arrange the soup and plum *shiratama* in a bowl and sprinkle with the *mitsuba* leaves.

National Pension from Age 20

When you turn 20 years old, the Japan Pension Service will send you documents related to the national pension (the pension handbook will be sent separately). Please be sure to check the contents.

■ Inquiries: Management Subsection (Pensions), Citizens' Section
(Phone: 0797-38-2036)

Events at the Municipal Library



■ **Place & Inquiries:** Municipal Library (Phone: 0797-31-2301)

■ **Picturebook Reading**

◇ **Dates & Time:** Saturdays, January 6, 13, 20 & 27

① 2:00–2:30 p.m. ② 2:30–3:00 p.m.

◇ **Age Groups:** ① 3-year-olds and above ② 5-year-olds and above

◇ **Capacity:** First 20 children each session

※ No late arrivals. ※ No parents/guardians allowed



■ **Storytelling & Picturebook Reading for Children**

◇ **Dates & Time:** Saturdays, January 6, 13, 20 & 27

① 2:00–2:30 p.m. ② 2:30–3:00 p.m.

◇ **Age Groups:** ① 1st graders and above ② 3rd graders and above

◇ **Capacity:** First 25 children each session

※ No late arrivals. ※ No parents/guardians allowed



■ **Storytelling for Small Children** (picturebook reading and finger plays)

◇ **Dates & Time:** Thursday, January 25

① 10:00–10:30 a.m. ② 10:45–11:15 a.m.

◇ **Age Group:** 0 to 2-year-olds and their parent/guardian

◇ **Capacity:** First 8 child and parent/guardian pairs

◇ **Registration:** Municipal Library website, starting Fri., January 5, 10:00 a.m.



Events at the Gender Equality Center

■ **Place & Inquiries:** Gender Equality Center (Large Mtg Rm) (Phone: 0797-38-2023)

■ **Interactive Exercises for Dads and Kids**

Learn healthy (exercise) habits with your child in a fun way.

◇ **Dates & Time:** Sat., February 3, 10:00–11:30 a.m.

◇ **Age Group:** 18-month-olds to 3-year-olds who can walk by themselves

◇ **Capacity:** The first 12 dad and child pairs (moms may accompany)

※ Temporary childcare available: 300 yen per child, 6-month-olds to preschoolers, first 6

◇ **Registration:** Starts Mon., January 1. Access and fill out the form from the 2D code.



■ **Papa Time:** Talk with other dads while children play.

A yoga instructor will teach baby massages that dads can perform.

◇ **Dates & Time:** Sat., February 10, 10:00–11:30 a.m.

◇ **Age Group:** 0 to 2-year-olds and their fathers

◇ **Registration:** Not required (free entry and exit)

※ If you have a question for an advisor about childrearing, you can enter your question beforehand in a form by accessing the 2D code.



- Opening in Citizens' Center -
Café Restaurant "Belle Pot あしや(Ashiya)"



You will find a place of relaxation and recreation where many people of various generations, such as the users of Citizens' Center, can gather and interact. Scheduled to open on Sun., January 28.

- Open Hours: 9:30 a.m.- 6:00 p.m.
- Inquiries: Citizens' Center
(Phone: 0797-31-4995)



Gardening Classes at Ashiya Grand Park (Sogo Koen)



Content (Class name)	Date/Time	Cost	Application Deadline
(1) "Make an arrangement with branch (twig or sprig)"	Sun., January 21 10:30 a.m.- Noon	2,500 yen	5:00 p.m. January 14
(2) "Make a Primula Pochette Garden"	Mon., January 22 1:30.-3:00 p.m.	2,500 yen	5:00 p.m. January 15
(3) "Why not grow a Christmas Rose?"	Sat., January 27 10:30 a.m. - Noon	2,500 yen	5:00 p.m. January 20

- * Capacity: First 15 people for each class
- * What to bring: Writing materials and a big bag to carry the work home in
- * Application: Visit, call/fax or E-mail to Ashiya Grand Park.
- * Location and Inquiries: Ashiya Grand Park (*Sogo Koen*)
(Phone: 0797-38-2103 / Fax: 0797-25-2026 / E-mail: ashiyasogo@mizuno.co.jp)



Windows 10 PC Classes at Kamimiyagawa Cultural Center

- Date: Wed., February 14/21 (Successive 2 classes)
- Time: (1) 9:45-11:45 / (2) 1:00-3:00 p.m.
- Content: Learning the basics of functions while creating a household budget in Excel 2016
- Eligibility/Capacity for each (1) and (2):
6 beginners who live in Ashiya and can type and attend both days
- Cost: 1,000 yen
- What to bring: Writing materials, attendance card and fees
- Application: Send a fax or a postcard with the time of the class you want to attend (either 1 or 2), your postal code, name and address, your age and phone number to the Center by Mon., **January 22** (without fail). If there are too many applications, a lottery will be held, and a notification of result will be sent by the end of January.
- Mailing address and Inquiries:
Kamimiyagawa Cultural Center, 10-5 Kamimiyagawa-cho, 659-0061
(Phone: 0797-22-9229 / Fax: 0797-22-1659)



Library Service will be More Convenient

From March 1, with the start of operation of the new system, new library services will be available. Furthermore from April 1, automation of services (non-contact) and other systems will be put into practice.

[New Library Service (from March 1)]

▶ Service related to lending procedures:

Smartphone version of library lending card (Pre-registration required) will become available. Just display the bar code on your smartphone and hold it over the scanner, and you can borrow books from the library. Existing book-lending card and My Number Card linked to the book-lending card will also be available.

▶ Service related to Search and Reservation Methods:

- It will be possible to renew books on the online library service.
(* Only once and when there is no other reservation during the lending period.)
- From the results of book searches on the internet, you can register books in your "Favorite" and create a book list of your own. On the new webpage, you just display the book cover on "My Bookshelf", and you can view it as your own personal bookshelf.



[New Library Service (from April 1)]

▶ Automation of Service

- <Automatic Lending Machine> (at Main Library / Uchide and Ohara Branch Libraries)
- <Self-Pick-up-Shelf for reserved books> (at Main Library)

Library users are able to check the reserved materials and lending process by themselves (except some materials). This will eliminate waiting time.

[Closing Information]

Facilities of Library will be closed during the following period due to the introduction of the new system.

- ▶ Main Library / Ohara Branch Library: February 19-29
- ▶ Libraries in KOMIKAN / Kamimiyagawa Cultural Center: February 18-29
 - * Uchide Branch Library will be closed until March 31(Sun.) due to the renovation work (scheduled).

[Library Services to be Suspended]

During the closed period of each library facilities, all library services (1-5 below) which are related to the system will be suspended. Very sorry for any inconvenience caused, but we appreciate your understanding.

- (1) Browsing reservation / Book lending / Return / Research Consultation in all libraries
- (2) Mutual use with other municipalities, etc.
- (3) Book collection research, Reservation and Webpage browsing on the internet
- (4) Copying of data
- (5) Browsing/copying of digitized materials at the National Diet Library

* Book return posts in the city are usable during the period above.

◆ Inquiries: main Municipal Library (Phone: 0797-31-2301)

Blood Donation

Please donate blood to help save the lives of those who need blood for illness or surgery !



- Date and Time: Fri., January 12 10:00-11:30 a.m. / 12:40-4:00 p.m.
- Place: Lobby, 1F City Hall North Wing
- Inquiries: Children and Family Health Center (Phone: 0797-31-1586)

Consultation Service for Foreign Residents (Immigration Bureau)

- Date/Time/Place: Mon., February 5 1:00-4:00 p.m. 3F City Hall North Wing
- Content: You can ask Immigration Bureau staff about the procedures for changing status of residence, etc. (Up to 5 persons)
- How to Apply: Email to the address below
- Inquiries: Public Relations and International Exchange Section
(Phone: 0797-38-2008 / E-mail: kokusai@city.ashiya.lg.jp)



Healthy Walking Class

Enjoy learning proper walking in good posture ! Anyone can participate, regardless of age or sex.

- Date and Time: January 8(Mon., Holiday) 10:00-11:30 a.m.
- Capacity/Cost: 30 persons /500 yen
- What to Bring: Clothes easy to move in; Inner shoes
- Application: Come to our counter or by phone
- Place/Inquiries: Gymnasium and Youth Center (Phone: 0797-31-8228)



Self-Taping Lessons

Learn how to tape an ankle, practical and high degree of difficulty !

- Date and Time: Sat., January 20 10:00-11:30 a.m.
- Place: Large conference room, 2F Gymnasium and Youth Center
- Eligibility /Capacity: 20 person, 16 years old and up
- Instructor/ Cost: Sports Intelligence / 500 yen (taping cost)
- What to bring: Scissors
- Application/Inquiries: Come to our counter.

Gymnasium and Youth Center (Phone: 0797-31-8228)



Badminton Lessons

- ◆ Date and Time: Sat., January 13 9:30-11:30 a.m.
- ◆ Content: Basic training according to the level /Practice in game format
- ◆ Eligibility/Capacity/Cost: 30 persons, 16 years old and up
- ◆ What to Bring: Clothes easy to move in; inner shoes
- ◆ Application / Inquiries: come to our counter with the fee

Gymnasium and Youth Center (Phone: 0797-31-8228)



Sazanami Wind Ensemble Concert 2024

- Date/Time: January 20 (Sat.) 2:00 p.m.–
- Place : Renaissance Classics Ashiya Luna Hall (The Hall opens at 1:30 p.m.)
- Capacity: 400 people
- Inquiries: *Sazanami* Wind Ensemble (Phone: 090-2112-7712)



The 66th Ashiya City Calligraphy Exhibition

- Date /Time: January 27/28 9:00 a.m. –9:00 p.m. (Until 4:00 p.m. on Jan. 28)
- Place/Inquiries: Citizens' Center / Sakuma (Phone: 0797-35-0448)



Exhibition of Tea Ceremony /Flower Arrangement

- ❁ Date /Time: Feb. 3 (Sat.) Flower Arrangement 9:30 a.m.–4:00 p.m.
Feb. 4 (Sun.) Tea Ceremony 10:00 a.m.– 3:30 p.m.
- ❁ Cost: Tea Ticket 1.000 yen
- ❁ Place/Inquiries: Citizens' Center /Ashiya Association of Tea Ceremony/Flower arrangement (Phone: 0797-38-0376)



Citizen's Trekking

- ◆ Date and Time: Sun., January 7 8:30 a.m.– 2:30 p.m. (Will be canceled if it rains.)
- ◆ Course: Meeting at North Square of Hankyu Ashiyagawa Station → Bus stop of Higashi-Otafukuyama trailhead → The highest peak of Rokko Mountain → Koza Waterfall →Hankyu Ashiyagawa Station (dispersion)
- ◆ Cost: 500 yen (excluding transportation expenses)
- ◆ What to Bring: Lunch, a drink, rainwear, crampons, etc.
- ◆ Inquiries: Ashiya Mountaineering Society (Phone: 0797-38-5255)



Filing Final Income Tax Return with Smartphone

With a smartphone and My Number Card, you can file final income tax return very easily at home.

Usable for 24 hours !

- Inquiries: Ashiya Tax Office (Phone: 0797-31-2131)



Disaster Prevention Drill

To prepare for a major disaster, let's learn more about disaster preparedness in order to save your life in an evacuation center.

- ◇ Date and Time: Sunday, January 21 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
- ◇ Place: Ashiya City Gymnasium and Youth Center, Kawanishi Athletic Field
- ◇ Contents: Evacuation shelter experience, condominium disaster prevention, emergency stocks, making pouch for sweets, etc.



Inquiries: Disaster Prevention and Security Section (Phone: 0797-38-2093)



Reuse Festa

Furniture and bicycles discarded as garbage will be renovated and given away free of charge (bicycle only for a charge). Please check the website for the items and apply by a reply-paid post card. Those who cannot check on the website can check on the visiting days.

- ◇ Visit and see: January 19~20 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.
Pick up: February 16 (Fri.) 17 (Sat.) 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.
- ◇ Eligibility: residents of Ashiya
- ◇ Application: One item per household Apply by a reply-paid post card with your name, address, and phone number, and the number and name of the item, no later than January 31 (Wed.). Please write the name and address on the reply side.



※The result will be mailed out on February 9.

Inquiries and Mailing address: Environmental Facilities Section (Phone: 0797-32-5391)
〒659-0032 Hamakaze-cho 31-1

♪ Kominkan Concert

– Piano music in France, Russia and Japan during the war times–

Date and Time: Saturday, March 2 2:00 p.m. The door opens at 1:30 p.m.

- ◇ Place: Citizens' Center, 219 music room
- ◇ Capacity: 100 people
- ◇ Fee: 500 yen
- ◇ Program: A la maniere de...Borodine, by Ravel, Golliwogg's Cakewalk by Debussy, 3 Preluds by Gershwin, Fuji-san by Osawa Hisato, etc
- ◇ Performers: Doi Midori, piano Tomoo Shiraishi, lecture
- ◇ Application: Please apply by reply paid post card or from 2D code with the name of the concert, your name, address and phone number and the number of participants (up to two) no later than February 16.



Inquiries and Mailing address: Citizens' Center, In charge of 3/2 Concert,

(Phone: 0797-35-0700) 〒659-0068 Narihira-cho 8-24



Doctors on Call for Emergencies on Sundays and Holidays



● Evening Medical Care Rotation *8:00 p.m.-11:00 p.m. on Friday		
Jan. 5	Pain Clinic Ashiya Piccolo Clinic (Internal Medicine)	☎ 0797-25-1347
Jan 12	Arita Clinic (Internal Medicine/Cardiovascular Internal Medicine)	☎ 0797-23-3000
Jan. 19	Shigenobu Clinic (Internal Medicine/Pediatrics)	☎ 0797-31-2480
Jan. 26	Fuji Clinic (Internal Medicine/Cardiovascular Internal Medicine)	☎ 0797-31-7373

- Be sure to wear a mask when you visit a doctor or a hospital.
- First make a call when you have a fever.

■ Emergency Relief Center ☎ #7119 (24/7) ※IPS Phone: 078-331-7119

■ Designated Emergency Hospital

Ashiya Municipal Hospital (Surgery/Internal Medicine) ☎ 0797-31-2156

Minami-Ashiyahama Hospital (Surgery/Internal Medicine) ☎ 0797-22-4040

Ashiya St. Maria Hospital (Orthopedics/Surgery/Internal Medicine) ☎ 0797-23-1771

■ Holiday Emergency Clinic (Internal Medicine/Pediatrics) ☎ 0797-21-2782

(5-13 Kimmitsu-cho, Ashiya City) (9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. on Sundays, public holidays, during the year-end and New Year's holidays)

■ Amagasaki Health Medical Care Foundation Holiday/Night Emergency Medical Care (Ear, Nose and Throat) ☎ 06-6436-8701

(3-15-20 Mizudo-cho, Amagasaki City)

(9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. on Sundays and public holidays / 6:00 p.m.-8:30 p.m. on Saturdays)

(9:00 a.m.-5:30 a.m. the next morning during the year-end and New Year's holidays)

■ Amagasaki Health Medical Care Foundation Holiday/Night Emergency Medical Care (Ophthalmology-Eye Department) ☎ 06-6436-8701

(3-15-20 Mizudo-cho, Amagasaki City)

(9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. on Sundays and public holidays)

(9:00 a.m.-5:30 a.m. the next morning during the year-end and New Year's holidays)

■ Kobe Children's Primary Emergency Medical Center (Pediatrics) ☎ 078-891-3999
(In HAT Kobe)

Consultation Days	Reception Hours
Monday-Friday	7:30 p.m.-6:30 a.m. the next morning
Saturday	2:30 p.m.-6:30 a.m. the next morning
Sunday & public holiday The year-end/New Year's holidays	8:30 a.m.-6:30 a.m. the next morning

■ **Dental Center** (14-9 Kurekawa-cho, Ashiya City) ☎ 0797-31-0658
(9:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m. on Sundays, public holidays, during the year-end/New Year's holidays)

★ Starry Winter Sky Observation ★

Why not take this opportunity to observe the starlit winter sky through a telescope from the terrace of the Citizens' Center? We will observe the moon's craters, Jupiter, and Subaru. You can also learn many stories about stars.

■ **Date and Time:** Sat., Jan. 20, 6:30 - 9:00 p.m. (rain-or-shine)

■ **Place:** Ashiya Citizens' Center, Room 401

■ **Capacity:** First 50 people

* Junior high school students and younger should be accompanied by guardians.

■ **Application:** Sign up at the section below from 9:00 a.m. on Jan. 9 to 5:00 p.m. on Jan. 17.

■ **Inquiries:** Environment Section (Phone: 0797-38-2051)

Parent-child Plaza at the Community Learning Center

Let's enjoy picture book reading and making simple crafts related *Setsuburi!*

□ **Date and Time:** Sat., Feb. 3, 1:00-3:00 p.m.

□ **Place:** Ashiya Citizens' Center, Room 301

□ **Eligibility:** Parents and children from infants to lower grades of elementary school

□ **Capacity:** First 15 pairs

□ **What to bring:** Glue, scissors

□ **Application:** Apply with the names of parents, the number of adults, the number of children, their ages, and phone number using the 2D code or email below.



□ **Inquiries:** Community Learning Center (Phone: 0797-35-0700)

E-mail: ashiyagawa.c@gmail.com

Official Quoits Citizen Event

◇ **Period:** Jan. 1-Feb. 29

◇ **How to Participate:** ① Conduct official quoits at seniors' parties or local events, etc.

② Record your score on the recording sheet (distributed at the counter) ③ Send the recording form to the Sports Promotion Section (address below) by Fri., March 8.

④ After counting, the top 10 people will be decided. We will send them a certificate of commendation.

◇ **Eligibility:** Ashiya citizens

◇ **Venue:** Various locations in the city

◇ **Inquiries:** Sports Promotion Section (Phone: 0797-22-7910/Fax: 0797-22-1633)

E-mail: sport@city.ashiya.lg.jp (15-3 Kawanishi-cho 659-0072)

Information about the COVID-19 Vaccination (As of Dec. 20)



Temporary vaccinations for COVID-19 are scheduled to end at the end of March, 2024. Please consider receiving vaccination as soon as possible.

Autumn 2023 Start Vaccination (Vaccine for Omicron strain, XBB1.5)

Vaccinations against the Omicron XBB strain are available now.

- **Target persons:** Persons aged 6 months or over who have completed the initial vaccinations and three months have passed since their previous vaccination
- ※ The vaccination starting autumn 2023 is not obligatory, however, it is strongly advised for the elderly aged 65 and over, or those with underlying medical conditions or whose doctors decide they are high risk of developing severe symptoms. Please consider the effects and side effects of the vaccination before you decide whether or not to have the vaccination.

- **Type of vaccine used:** Monovalent vaccine for Omicron strain, XBB1.5 manufactured by Pfizer Inc.

※ The type of vaccine used differs depending on the age of target persons.

※ Regarding the effectiveness of the COVID-19 vaccine, it has been reported that the effect of preventing infection and onset of the disease lasts for about 2-3 months, and the effect of preventing the disease from becoming more severe lasts for more than a year.

- **Vaccination period:** Until the end of March, 2024

■ **Vaccination coupon:** The vaccination coupon will be mailed to those eligible approx. ten days before three months have passed since their previous shot. If you have already received a coupon and did not use it, please use the coupon for the vaccination.

- **How to make an appointment:** Make an appointment at individual medical institutions.

※ If it is difficult to connect to each medical institution by phone, please wait for a while before making your reservation.

※ Appointment method may vary depending on each medical institution.

※ Please check medical institutions on the city's website.

The Initial Vaccinations

Temporary (free) vaccination for COVID-19 will end at the end of March, 2024. Since the initial vaccination requires multiple doses, please consider the interval between vaccinations, etc. The type of vaccine used is Monovalent vaccine for Omicron strain, XBB1.5.

Medical institutions that offer vaccination services

- ▶ For those aged 12 or over: Ashiya St. Maria Clinic
- ▶ For children under 11 years of age: Medical institutions where children under 11 years of age can get vaccinated

※ Please check medical institutions where children aged 11 or under can receive the vaccination on the city's website.

■ **Inquiries: COVID-19 Vaccine Office (in Children and Family Health Center)**

Phone: 0797-31-0655

Hours: Weekdays 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. (excluding 12:00 noon to 0:45 p.m.)

※ **Excluding year-end and New Year's holidays (December 29 to January 3, 2024)**

※ We are dealing with issuance or re-issuance of the vaccination coupon and other general inquiries.

※ If you need special assistance due to hearing or language problems, please fax us for consultation. **(Fax: 0797-31-1018)**

The World through Picture Books

365 picture books from various countries collected by the IFLA, the International Federation of Library Association, will be on display. Those books were donated to the World Children's Library through "Let's Learn the World through Picture Books" project.

◇ **Date and Time: January 24 -February 18**

10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. on the opening days

◇ **Place: Ashiya Municipal Library, Main Building 2F, Meeting Room**

◇ **Special Events: February 3 (Sat.), 4 (Sun.), 10 (Sat.) 11(Sun.)**

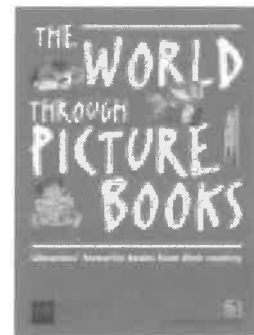
Reading picture books in various languages.

Students from Konan Women's University and native volunteers will read picture books.

◇ **Capacity: 15 people each day**

◇ **Application: Please apply from 2D code. Application will be accepted from 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, January 24.**

Inquiries: Ashiya Municipal Library (Phone: 0797- 31-2301)



PUBLISHED BY
Ashiya Municipal Shio-Ashiya Exchange Center
(Designated administrator: Ashiya Cosmopolitan Association)

7-1 Kaiyo-cho, Ashiya City
Phone: 0797-25-0511 Fax: 0797-25-0512