



SHIBUKAWA CURRENT

Shibukawa International Association

374th Edition, December 2023



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<https://www.city.shibukawa.lg.jp/kurashi/community/kokusaikouryukyoukai/p000024.htm>



Hello Everyone!

In Japan, December is called **Shiwasu**, which means teachers or priests run around. This word reflects the busiest month of the year. It's a Japanese custom to send **Oseibo** (end-of-year gifts) around this time of the year. Also it's customary to write and mail **Nengajo** (Japanese New Year's postcards) in December so that they are delivered on **Oshogatsu** (New Year's Day). During December, **Bonenkai** (forget the year gatherings) are held among co-workers or friends.

Christmas is not a national holiday in Japan, but people enjoy, no matter what is their religion, giving each other presents while towns are beautifully decorated with Christmas ornaments.

Osoji (extensive cleaning), is done before New Year's holiday, and Japanese New Year's decorations are usually placed around and inside the house. In Japan, New Year's Eve is called **Omisoka**.

Osechi ryori (Japanese New Year's Food) is eaten during the first three days of the New Year.

At midnight on New Year's Eve, all temples ring their bells 108 times, a tradition called **Joya-no-kane**. The year-end salutations are: "**Kotoshi mo iroiro to osewa ni narimashita. Rainen mo yoroshiku onegai shimasu**" (I thank you for all the favor towards me this year and look forward to next year).

"**Yoi otoshi wo omukae kudasai!**" (Have a happy New Year!)

Illumination in Shibukawa (しぶかわ まちなかイルミネーション)

Ekimae Plaza and Ekimae-dori street in front of Shibukawa Station are decorated with colorful LED lights and creative displays made by students from Shibukawa City high schools, for the winter holiday season, and will be lighting up every evening between 5:00 pm and 10:00 pm, starting December 2 through January 31, 2024 (from 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm at the Yotsukado prefectural housing area).

An opening ceremony will be held at Ekimae Plaza on Saturday, December 2 from 5:00 pm to 6:30 pm.

New Year Party (しんねん 新年パーティー)

Come and join us for our annual New Year Party and enjoy delicious food, games, international songs, dances, and maybe wearing your native dress. It's a chance to meet old friends and make new friends! For those who will want to perform on stage, please contact us in advance.

Place: Shibukawa Chuo Kominkan, 4th Floor Hall

Date: Saturday, January 20, 2024, from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm (reception starts at 10:45 am)

Limit: 50 people, on a first-come, first-served basis

Fee: Adult 800 yen (foreigners 500 yen); elementary and junior high school students 300 yen

Sign-up: Friday, December 8 to Friday, December 22, 2023 (Tel: 0279-22-2396)



Shibukawa City New Year's Concert (渋川市ニューイヤーコンサート)

The 2024 "Shibukawa New Year's Concert" by the Gunma Symphony Orchestra will be held at the Shibukawa City Civic Center (Shiminkaikan).

Date and Time: Monday, January 8, 2024, from 2:00 pm (doors open at 1:15 pm)

Price: General admission 2,200 yen. High school students and below 1,000 yen

Sales at the door: General admission 2,500 yen. High school students and below 1,300 yen

Advance tickets are on sale now: by phone, at the Shibukawa Civic Center Box Office during operating hours or, or via online reservation system at: <http://www.cnplayguide.com/shibukawa/>

(Lawson ticket: <https://l-tike.com> (L code: 31963))

Tel: 0279-24-2261 (Shibukawa City Civic Center)



Tori no Ichi Fair (西の市)

Tori-no-Ichi (Bird Fairs or Rooster Festivals), take place on the days of the Rooster, at shrines throughout Japan, in November or in December. In Shibukawa, this fair is held from old times annually on December 16 at Yasaka Shrine, situated near Shinkoji Temple. Usually a forgotten silent shrine, on this day it is getting really crowded with people who come to pray for health, abundant harvest and prosperous business. At the Fair, open-air stalls line up selling kumade, good-luck rakes which are believed to "rake in good fortune" and bring happiness to those who purchase and display them throughout the years. Yasaka Shrine Omikoshi will be on display during the Tori-no-Ichi Fair. A big raffle drawing will also be held at the Fair.



Japanese Little New Year Decoration Workshop (小正月飾りづくり教室)

You will learn how to make a decoration with mayudama (cocoon-shaped rice cakes) and kakibana (long scratches from tree branches), used for Koshogatsu, Japanese Little New Year celebration.

When: Wednesday, January 10, 2024, from 9:00 am to noon

Place: Hokkitsu Rekishi Shiryokan.

Limit: 10 people, on a first come, first served basis

Application: Starting December 8, every day except Mondays and Tuesdays, from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm

Tel: 0279-52-4094



Esugoroku and Otogibanashi Exhibition

(絵双六とお伽ばなし展)

This exhibition displays a collection of Esugoroku, picture game boards from Meiji period to Showa period, and Otogibanashi, Japanese Fairy Tales.

Where: Tokutomi Roka Memorial Museum of Literature

When: December 1 to January 25, 2024, from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm (closed on December 25-29)

Admission fee: Adults 350 yen, elementary, junior high school, and high school students 200 yen)

Tel: 0279-72-2237

Strawberry Picking in Shibukawa

(渋川のいちご狩り)

There are many sunny days in Shibukawa during the winter, and from mid-December you can enjoy delicious strawberries, fresh from the field at one of the local strawberry picking farms in Ikaho-machi. Akagi-machi, or in Komochi area.

Take your family and friends and come to a strawberry farm!



Onogami Onsen Marathon (おのがみおんせん マラソン)

The Onogami Onsen marathon will be held around Onogami Koen on Monday, January 1, 2024.

There are two different courses: 1.5km for elementary school students (those in grade 3 and below must be accompanied by a parent) and 3km for junior high school students and above. The 1.5km course starts at 10:00 am and the 3km course starts at 10:30 am. Reception is from 9:00 am to 9:30 am.

The participation prize is a free admission ticket for the Hata no Yu hot spring.

Sign up: By phone until Friday, December 22 (same-day registrations are also possible)

Tel: 0279-59-7027



Shibukawa City Public Library Events (しぶかわ しりつ と しょ かん もよお もの)

All events will be held in the City Library and are free.

★ **Kids Movies:** "The Twelve Moons" and others on Saturday, December 9, from 11:00 am to 11:45 am.

★ **Christmas Stories by "Moe no Ko" Story Reading Group:** "The Little Match Girl" black panel theater and others on Saturday, December 16, from 2:00 pm to 2:30 pm.

★ **Movie:** "Light a Light of Hope in the Wilderness", a 2021 Japanese documentary that follows in the footsteps of Dr. Satoshi Nakamura, who was shot and died while doing humanitarian work in Afghanistan, on Sunday, December 17 from 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm.



Ikaho Ice Rink Now Open (いかほ いっぱんかいほう)

The Gunma Sports Complex Ikaho Rink is open for the season!

The 400-meter outdoor ice rink will stay open through Sunday, February 18, 2024 and the first indoor ice rink through Sunday, March 31, 2024 (except on Mondays, if it isn't a holiday, December 31, and January 1.) Gloves must be worn in the skate rink. Helmets, elbow and knee guards are free to rent. Bring your family, friends or come out yourself to Ikaho Ice Rink this winter.

Fee: Adults 1,250 yen, high school students and below 720 yen (after 5:00 pm, adults 930 yen, high school student and below 510 yen). It's free for preschoolers (they must be accompanied by an adult and must pay the skate rental fee). Skate rental is 320 yen (sizes from 15cm to 30cm).

Operating hours: 9:00 am to 4:45 pm (in March, from 11:00 am to 2:45 pm). Exclusive rink rental is available from 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm. The ice rink may not be available during tournaments or exclusive use, or may be closed at times due to weather conditions. For more information, please visit the following:

URL: <http://www.gunma-sports.or.jp/> or call, **Tel: 0279-72-3144.**



Free Legal Consultation for Foreigners (がいこくじんむりようほうりつそうだん)

Where: Takasaki City Chuo Kominkan, Shukai Hall (〒 370-0065, 27 Suehiro-cho, Takasaki-shi)

When: Sunday, December 17, 2023 from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm (Doors close at 2:30 pm)

(Walk-ins are accepted, but those with reservations will be given priority.)

Consultants: Attorneys, Gyoseishoshi Lawyer (Japanese Visa Specialist) & Shakai Hoken Romushi (Certified Labor and Social Insurance Consultant). Free confidential interpreting service is available.

Contact: One-Stop Consultation Center for Foreign Residents of Gunma

Tel: 027-289-8275

On-duty Clinics in December (1 2 月 の 休 日 当 番 医)

	Internal Medicine		Surgery	Dentistry
12/3 (Sun)	Ishikita-iin (石北医院) Tel: 22-1378	Iriuchijima-naika-iin (入内島内科医院) Tel: 60-7322	Otaki-clinic (大滝クリニック) Tel: 30-5800	Kobuna-shika-iin (こぶな歯科医院) Tel: 22-4939
12/10 (Sun)	Kosei-iin (厚成医院) Tel: 22-1060	Akagi-kaisei-clinic (赤城開成クリニック) Tel: 20-6500	Takano-geka-ichoka-iin (高野外科胃腸科医院) Tel: 24-2454	Esu-shika (エース歯科) Tel: 55-1181
12/17 (Sun)	Takeuchi-shonika (竹内小児科) Tel: 30-5151	Shinto-wakaba-clinic (榛東わかばクリニック) Tel: 20-5531	Shibukawa-iryo-center (渋川医療センター) Tel: 23-1010	Akagi-shika-iin (あかぎ歯科医院) Tel: 20-6522
12/24 (Sun)	Sato-iin (佐藤医院) Tel: 52-3003	Oi-naika-clinic (大井内科クリニック) Tel: 30-5575	Kato-seikeigeka-iin (加藤整形外科医院) Tel: 20-1007	Iizuka-shika-iin (いづか歯科医院) Tel: 22-0808
12/29	Nakano-iin (中野医院) Tel: 22-1219	Miyukida-naika-iin (みゆきだ内科医院) Tel: 60-6070	Ino-seikei-geka-rihabiri -naika (井野整形外科リハビリ内科) Tel: 30-5255	Aoba-shika-iin (あおば歯科医院) Tel: 25-8820
12/30 (Sat)	Tsukagoshi-clinic (塚越クリニック) Tel: 60-7700	Furumaki-naika-iin (ふるまき内科医院) Tel: 25-8881	Sekiguchi-byoin (関口病院) Tel: 22-2378	Fukushima-shika-iin (ふくしま歯科医院) Tel: 22-0154
12/31 (Sun)	Saito-naika-geka-clinic (斎藤内科外科クリニック) Tel: 22-1678	Sekiguchi-iin (関口医院) Tel: 55-5122	Tomaru-clinic (とまるクリニック) Tel: 26-7711	Meiji-shika-shinryojo (明治歯科診療所) Tel: 25-8101

Night Emergency Clinic (夜 間 急 患 診 療 所)

The clinic provides emergency medical services for conditions and issues related to internal medicine, surgery, and pediatrics, depending on the doctor in charge, between 7:00 pm and 10:00 pm, every day.

Please contact the clinic before going if you are not sure if you can be treated.

Tel: 0279-23-8899 (Address: 1760-1 Nagatsuka-cho, Shibukawa)

Free Counselling Service (外 国 人 生 活 相 談 窓 口 の 案 内)

The Shibukawa International Association is providing a free counselling service for foreign residents at Shibukawa City Hall every Thursday from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm. **(Tel: 0279-22-2396)**



Information (お 問 い 合 わ せ)

Shibukawa City Office DX & Administrative Management Division, 80 Ishihara, Shibukawa City

Tel: 0279-22-2396 Fax: 0279-24-6541 Email: sia-shibukawa@city.shibukawa.gunma.jp

URL: <http://www.city.shibukawa.lg.jp/kurashi/community/kokusaikouryukyoukai/p001414.html>