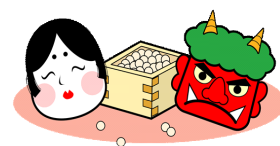




# SHIBUKAWA CURRENT

Shibukawa International Association  
388th Edition, February 2025



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## Dear Readers,

The old Japanese name for February is **Kisaragi** which literally means "wear more clothes," to keep warm. Even if it's still cold, you can enjoy winter sports, relax in hot springs, and admire wonderful snowy scenery in Shibukawa or around the city.

February 2 is **Setsubun**, a Japanese tradition that celebrates the end of winter and the start of spring. Literally meaning the "seasonal division" it originally referred to the days before the beginning of each of the seasons, but today only the day before **Risshun**, the beginning of spring in the traditional Japanese calendar, remains as Setsubun. To celebrate the coming of spring and to drive away evil spirits, **Mamemaki**, a bean-throwing ceremony is held at Shinto shrines and Buddhist temples all over Japan. At home, many families also do Mamemaki. They open the window and throw **fuku mame** (fortune beans) toward the outside while shouting **Oni wa soto!** (evil spirits outside), then throw them inside the house shouting **Fuku wa uchi!** (good luck within!). It is believed that people will be healthy and happy if they eat the number of fuku mame equal to their age.

The days are getting longer and the cold weather is getting milder, although it still can happen to snow. February 12 is **Kenkoku Kinen no Hi** (National Foundation Day).

February 23 is **Tenno Tanjobi**, the holiday celebrating Emperor Naruhito's birthday.

After mid month, **Haruichiban** rages through the country. This is the first southern storm of the year.

## Setsubun Ceremony at Mizusawa Kannon

みずさわ かんなん せつ ぶん かい  
(水澤観音節分会)



Mizusawa Kannon is the 16th of the 33 temples dedicated to Kanzeon, the Buddhist Goddess of Mercy that are visited during the Bando Kannon Pilgrimage. Founded over 1300 years ago, the temple was designated as the place of imperial prayer by Empress Suiko. The principal object of worship is a Thousand-Armed Goddess of Mercy statue enshrined in the Main Hall of the temple complex.

Near Mizusawa Temple, many udon restaurants serve the popular "Mizusawa Udon". There are also stalls selling Yakimanzu, the local delicacy of Gunma and other local specialties.

Every year, a Mamemaki ritual is held at Mizusawa Temple, where beans are thrown by toshi-otoko and toshi-onna, men and women born under the year's zodiac sign (this year is the Year of Snake, or Hebi-doshi in Japanese), and the temple is crowded with visitors.

This year, the Mamemaki ritual is held on Sunday, February 2.

Come visit this wonderful event that both adults and children can enjoy.

## The Anime Series "Binan High School Earth Defense Club" and Shibukawa Ikaho Onsen Collaboration "Eternal ♡ ONSEN Zanmai" to Be Held

(アニメ「<sup>びなんこうこうちきゅうぼうえいぶ</sup>美男高校地球防衛部」シリーズ×<sup>しぶかわいかほおんせん</sup>渋川伊香保温泉コラボ「<sup>えい</sup>永遠に♡ONSEN ざんまい」を実施します)

This collaboration project is held in conjunction with the release of the movie "Binan High School Earth Defense Club ETERNAL LOVE!", which commemorates the 10th anniversary of the first TV anime series "Binan High School Earth Defense Club." A digital stamp rally, a mini original art exhibition and accommodation plans in collaboration with the anime will be held in Ikaho Onsen, the setting of the first series. (A smartphone is required to participate in the digital stamp rally.)

**When:** Friday, January 31, to Monday, March 31, 2025

**TEL: 0279-22-2873** (Shibukawa City Tourism Department)

### Children's Art Exchange Exhibition <sup>しまいとしじどうさくひんてん</sup> (姉妹都市児童作品展)

The Annual Sister and Friendship Cities Children's Art Exhibition in Shibukawa will be held from Friday, February 21 to Monday, March 3, every day from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm (last day, until 3:00 pm). There will be on display artworks of children from Hawaii County and Shibukawa City. You can get a glimpse of the life in each of these cities through the works of children. Admission is free!

**Where:** Shibukawa City Hall Dainichosha, 2nd Floor, Ajisai Salon

### Get Closer to Flowers Workshop

<sup>はな</sup> (花に親<sup>した</sup>しむ体験<sup>たいけん</sup>教室<sup>きょうしつ</sup>)



For people interested in growing flowers and plants, those who would like to start Yoseue and learn how to make their own mixed flower container.

**When:** Saturday, March 15, 10:00 am to 12:00 noon

**Where:** Shibukawa City Hall, Dainichosha

**Limit:** 25 people (randomly selected through draw)

**Fee:** 2000 yen (material costs)

**Application:** by phone until Friday, February 21

**Tel: 0279-25-8307** (Toshi Seisaku Department)

### Scratch Art Class

(スクラッチアート)

Experience the wonder of the vibrant works that are created by scraping the black surface with a bamboo pen!

**When:** Friday, February 21, 9:30 am - 11:30 am

**Where:** Shibukawa Kominkan

**Limit:** 10 people (randomly selected through draw)

**Fee:** 300 yen (collected at the time of entrance)

**Application:** by phone until Thursday, February 13

**Tel: 0279-22-0999** (Shibukawa Kominkan)

### Shibukawa City Public Library Events <sup>しぶかわしりつとしよかんもよおもの</sup> (渋川市立図書館催し物)



All events will be held in the City Library and are free. Just show up!

★ **Kids Movies:** "Shippo no Tsuru" (Tail Fishing) and others on Saturday, February 8 from 11:00 am to 11:40am

★ **Kamishibai storytelling by Story Reading Group "Moe no Ko":**

① "Mi-se-te" (Show Me) and others on Saturday, February 15, from 2:00 pm to 2:30 pm

② "Yukkuri ga Ippai!" (Slowly, Slowly, Slowly Said the Sloth) on Saturday, March 1, from 2:00 pm to 2:30 pm

★ **Movies:** "Ume Kiranu Baka" (The Lone Ume Tree), a 2021 Japanese drama film, on Sunday, February 16, from 2:00 pm to 3:20 pm

## Sport Fukiya Experience Class (スポーツ<sup>ふきや</sup>吹矢体験<sup>たいけん</sup>教室<sup>きょうしつ</sup>)

Sport Fukiya (Blowgun) is an exciting and challenging activity for all ages. This experience includes: learning the rules of the use of the fukiya, the basic motions, and shooting techniques.

**When:** 9:30 am – 12:00 noon, Saturday, February 15 and Saturday, February 22, 2025

**Where:** Miyata Shokai Budokan (Martial Arts Stadium).

**Eligible people:** people who either live, work or go to school in Shibukawa

**Cost:** It's free

**Things to bring:** clothes suitable for exercise, indoor sports shoes, a towel, and drink

**Application:** You don't need to register. Just show up! It's also possible to attend only one time.

**TEL: 0279-22-2141** (Sport Department) / **TEL: 0279-21-2141** (Prefecture Sport Wellness Fukiya Association Shibukawa Branch, Mr. Takada-san)



## Ikaho Ice Skate Rink (伊香保<sup>いかほ</sup>スケートリンク)

Come to the Gunma Prefecture Sports Complex Ikaho Ice Rink to spend a beautiful winter day skating. The 400-meter ice rink will be open until February 28, and the indoor first rink until March 31.

**Fees:** Adults: 1,250 yen, 930 yen after 5:00 pm. High school students and younger: 720 yen, 510 yen after 5:00 pm. It is free for preschool children. Skate rental: 310 yen. Gloves and hats are recommended.

**Opening hours:** everyday except on Mondays, ① 9:00 am - 3:30 pm, ② 5:00 pm - 9:00 pm

**Tel: 0279-72-3144**

## Filing of 2025 Income Tax Return (確定申告<sup>かくていしんこく</sup>のお知らせ<sup>し</sup>)

Income Tax (Shotoku Zei) is the tax paid by individuals in proportion to their annual income every year. Income Tax Report (Kakutei Shinkoku) is a procedure in which taxpayers report their total income earned the previous year, from January 1 to December 31, and pay or adjust their tax amount accordingly.

**Period:** Monday, February 17, 2025 to Monday, March 17, 2025

For more information, please visit the National Tax Agency website: <https://www.nta.go.jp/>

You can file your tax return on the Internet from your computer or smartphone at home. If you have any question, please contact the tax office of Shibukawa City Hall. You may receive assistance and consultation for your 2024 Final Income Tax Return from Monday, February 3.

**TEL: 0279-22-2251** (Shibukawa City Hall Tax Office)

## Free Legal Consultation for Foreigners (外国人<sup>がいこくじん</sup>無料<sup>むりよう</sup>法律<sup>ほうりつ</sup>相談<sup>そうだん</sup>)

**Where:** Isesaki City Hall, 5F Conference Room No 4, Hihashi-kan (2-410 Imaizumi-cho, Isesaki City)

**When:** Sunday, February 9, 2025, from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm (doors close at 2:30 pm)

**Consultants:** Attorneys, Gyoseishoshi (Certified Administrative Procedures Legal Specialist), and Shakai Hoken Romushi (Certified Social Insurance and Labor Consultant)

**Interpreters:** English, Chinese, Portuguese, Spanish, Vietnamese, Nepalese and Tagalog

**Reservation & Inquiry:** One-Stop Consultation for Foreign Residents of Gunma

**Tel: 027-289-8275** (Monday - Friday, 9:00 am - 5:00 pm) / **090-1215-6113** (on February 9 only)  
(Walk-ins are welcome, but priority will be given to reservations.)

## On-duty Clinics in February

( 2 月 の 休 日 当 番 医 )

Internal Medicine			Surgery	Dentistry
<b>2/2</b> (Sun)	Yuasa-naika-clinic (湯浅内科クリニック) Tel: 20-1311	Takeuchi-shonika (竹内小児科) Tel: 30-5151	Ino-seikei-geka -rihabiri-naika (井野整形外科リハビリ内科) Tel: 30-5255	Fukuda-shika-iin (福田歯科医院) Tel: 23-6677
<b>2/9</b> (Sun)	Kamiyama-naika-iin (神山内科医院) Tel: 22-2181	Oi-naika-clinic (大井内科クリニック) Tel: 30-5575	Hokumo-byoin (北毛病院) Tel: 24-1234	Seki-shika-iin (関歯科医院) Tel: 25-0530
<b>2/11</b> (Tue)	Shibukawa-chuo-byoin (渋川中央病院) Tel: 25-1711	Harasawa-iin (原沢医院) Tel: 72-2503	Takano-gekaichoka-iin (高野外科胃腸科医院) Tel: 24-2454	Saito-shika-iin (さいとう歯科医院) Tel: 53-5454
<b>2/16</b> (Sun)	Saito-naika-geka-clinic (斎藤内科外科クリニック) Tel: 22-1678	Akagi-kaisei-clinic (赤城開成クリニック) Tel: 20-6500	Shibukawa-iryō-center (渋川医療センター) Tel: 23-1010	Hokkitsu-shika-shinryojo (北橋歯科診療所) Tel: 52-3762
<b>2/23</b> (Sun)	Nakano-iin (中野医院) Tel: 22-1219	Okamoto-naika-clinic (岡本内科クリニック) Tel: 20-5353	Otaki-clinic (大滝クリニック) Tel: 30-5800	Hirakata-shika-iin (平形歯科医院) Tel: 22-0953
<b>2/24</b> (Mon)	Kosei-iin (厚成医院) Tel: 22-1060	Shinto-Wakaba-clinic (榛東わかばクリニック) Tel: 20-5531	Arima-clinic (有馬クリニック) Tel: 24-8818	Funaoka-shika-iin (船岡歯科医院) Tel: 23-8211

## Night Emergency Clinic (夜間急患診療所)

The clinic provides medical services daily 7:00 am - 10:00 pm, in cases of sudden illnesses or injuries, for conditions and issues related to internal medicine, surgery and pediatrics, depending on the doctor in charge. Patients will introduced to another medical institution if specialized treatment is necessary.

**Address:** 1760-1 Nagatsuka-cho, Shibukawa

**Tel: 0279-23-8899**

## 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: 0279-22-2463)**

## Information (お問い合わせ)

Shibukawa City Office Shimin Kyodo Suishin Ka, 80 Ishihara, Shibukawa City

**Tel: 0279-22-2463 Fax: 0279-24-6541 Email: sia-shibukawa@city.shibukawa.gunma.jp**

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

