



# SHIBUKAWA CURRENT

Shibukawa International Association

389th Edition, March 2025



To access the **SHIBUKAWA CURRENT** on **LINE**, open the QR code reader of your smartphone's **LINE** app to scan the QR code, and register as a member.



## Dear Readers,

Spring is already here! In Japan March is called "**Yayoi**", which means to grow more and more.

March 3 is the **Hina Matsuri** - Hina Doll Festival. This is a day to pray for young girls' growth and happiness. Families who have daughters display a set of hina dolls dressed in ancient costumes and arrangements of peach and rape blossoms. Hina Matsuri is also called "**Momo no Sekku**" meaning Peach Blossom Festival, for the peach trees are usually in full bloom at this time.

The 3rd is also Ears Day. The shape of the Arabic numeral 3 resembles that of an ear, and the numeral 3 can be read in Japanese as *mi*, so March 3 sounds like *mi-mi* and the day is called "**Mimi no Hi**".

The Japanese school year ends in March and begins in April. This time of the year is very important for Japanese test takers. The competition to pass high school and university entrance examinations is really severe. The school year ends with the graduation ceremony. At graduation ceremonies, graduating students from kindergarten through university receive certificates. After the ceremony, the students give a **Shaonkai** party in honor of their teachers, to show appreciation for their guidance.

March 20 is **Shunbun no Hi**, or Vernal Equinox Day. It's a national holiday in Japan that marks the beginning of astronomical spring. This day is actually part of a seven-day period known as the equinoctial week of spring or **Haru No Higan**, a Buddhist holiday celebrated usually three days before and after Shunbun No Hi. During this week, Buddhist families go together to visit the graves of their ancestors. Shunbun No Hi is also a day for farmers to pray for "good luck" with their crops as it is the start of a new planting season. Following Vernal Equinox Day, days gradually get longer and nights shorter, the chill of winter finally disappears, and temperatures do get higher from around this time.

Cherry blossoms slowly start blooming from the southern regions of Japan, to the northern areas. It is expected that cherry blossoms in Gunma will be in full bloom at the end of March.

## Oka Shirai' s Kawazu Cherry Blossoms (かわづ 桜 の 丘 白 井)

The Kawazu-zakura variety of cherry blossoms is known for blooming earlier than other varieties, usually from mid-February each year, and remains open for about a month. The flowers are larger than other cherry blossom varieties and have a more vibrant pink color.

Kawazu-zakura no Oka Shiroi is a new cherry blossom viewing spot that is loved by many people in Shibukawa, and attract new visitors. There are about 70 Kawazu cherry trees planted on a slope extending north from the back of Komochi Michi no Eki (Roadside Station) to the Komochi Shiroi Onsen hot spring. A well-maintained bark path is leading up the hill with a fine view of the cherry trees from the top, so visitors can enjoy the flowers while taking a leisurely stroll.

(Parking is available at the Komochi Roadside Station.)

## Saku Electric Power Plant Cherry Blossom (さくら み ざく はつでんしょ「桜 が見ごろ「佐久発電所」)

The about 100 Yoshino cherry trees that have been planted alongside the water pipeline extending from the head pond to the surge tank turn beautifully pink, usually from late March to early April. During the peak bloom time, food stalls are set up in the area, and blossom viewers can also enjoy visiting the Saku Electric Power Plant and other activities while viewing the cherry blossoms. Parking lot is also provided, but the place can get crowded, and parking may be difficult.

## Shibukawa Monument Tour Exhibition (しぶかわ ひ てん かいさい「渋川の碑めぐり展」を開催しています)

This exhibition aims to introduce the haiku poem stone monuments of Matsuo Basho, placed in different locations in Shibukawa city, as well as the Manyo-shu waka poem stone monuments, scattered around the Ikaho town, through panels, photographs, and other images.

**When:** Saturday, March 1 - Thursday, April 24, 2025, from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm

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

**TEL: 0279-72-2237** (Tokutomi Roka Memorial Literature Museum)

## 7th Anniversary Commemorative Exhibition:

### "Koromo Shinichiro Exhibition - Ancient Burial Mounds and Pyramids"

(かいがん きねんでん ころもしんいちろうでん こふん「開館記念展 VII「衣 真一郎展 - 古墳とピラミッド -」)

To celebrate the seventh anniversary of its relocation, the Shibukawa City Museum of Art and Kuwahara Kosuke Sculpture Museum will be holding a solo exhibition by Koromo Shinichiro, an artist born and raised in Shibukawa City (formerly Ikaho Town).

In addition to works depicting ancient tombs and pyramids, works depicting memories of his hometown will also be on display, providing a glimpse into the origins of this up-and-coming artist who is active both within and outside the prefecture.

**When:** Saturday, March 15 to Monday, April 14, from 9:30 am to 5:00 pm, last entry at 4:30 pm

A special concert by Shibukawa High School Brass Band and Shibukawa City Girls' High School Baton Club MASHA will take place on Thursday, March 20, 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm. It's free!

(The museum is open to the public only during regular City business hours.)

## Let's Have Fun! Come and See It! Kamishibai and Pantomime!

(たのしもう！みてみよう！紙芝居・パントマイム！)

Explore the enchanting world of Kamishibai, the traditional Japanese art of storytelling, and the magical fairy tale world of pantomime with Matsui sisters special performance on Saturday, March 22, from 1:30 pm to 3:00 pm (first part: 30 min kamishibai storytelling / second part: 60 min pantomime performance).

**Where:** Kanashima Fureai Center

**Limit:** 300 people (on a first come, first served basis)

**Sign up:** By phone at Kanashima Kominkan starting Wednesday, March 5, from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, everyday except Mondays and holidays (Tel: 0279-22-0241)

## Shibukawa City Public Library Events (しぶかわ しりつ としょ かん もよお もの 渋谷市立図書館催し物)

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

★ **Kids Movies:** "Konnichiwa Tamago Nii-chan" and others on Saturday, March 8, 11:00 am to 11:40 am.

★ **Picture book storytelling by Story Reading Group Moe no Ko:** "Sakuro no Sakuhi"

and others on Saturday, March 16, 2:00 pm to 2:30 pm.

(For kindergarteners and elementary school students (grades 1, 2) and their parents.)

★ **Movies:** "You Are Here, You Were Here" (Kimi ga Iru, Ita, Sonna Toki), a Japanese documentary film, on Sunday, March 16, 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm.

**Tel: 0279-22-0644** (Shibukawa City Library)



## The 29th Shibukawa Martial Art Festival (第29回渋谷武道フェスティバル)

You can enjoy performances of martial arts and you can also experience them.

If you are interested in practicing at the festival, please contact Mr. Ishibashi or the Sport Division until Friday, March 15.

**Where:** Miyata Shokai Budokan, Shibukawa

**When:** Sunday, March 23, from 9:00 am to 10:30 am

**Tel: 090-3149-7404** (Mr. Ishibashi) / **Tel: 0279-22-2241** (Sport Division)



## Shibukawa City and Natural Disasters (しぶかわ し ぜんさいがい 渋谷市と自然災害)

The Akagi Rekishi Shiryokan (Historical Museum) exhibits stone tools and earthenware from the Paleolithic Period, as well as valuable intangible folk-cultural properties from early modern and modern periods. A special exhibition will take place from Tuesday, March 26 to Sunday, June 29, 2025 where visitors can learn lessons from the past natural disasters, through ruins excavated in the city, and also introducing modern disaster prevention measures.

**Opening hours:** 10:00am to 4:00pm (except Mondays, Tuesdays, and public holidays)

**Admission fee:** Adults 200 yen, elementary, high school and university students 100 yen, junior high school and younger children free of charge

**TEL: 0279-56-8967** (Akagi Rekishi Shiryokan)

## Notice on Changing of Water Charges (すい どうり よう きん ね あ 水道料金の値上げについて)

The city's water supply and sewerage system is a self-sustaining business that runs with the water rates charged to its customers. The water charges are used for various purposes such as the cost of producing safe and high-quality water, the costs for renewing and maintaining aging water supply facilities, and the cost of preventing water leaks and earthquake disaster prevention measures.

Recently the water supply business is experiencing major financial difficulties and in order to ensure the stable delivery of safe and reliable tap water in the future, the water rates will be revised (increased) from April 1, 2025. Those who have been using the service since before the revision will be charged the new rate starting from June 2025 meter reading. The notice of water tariff increases is published in the city's publications and website or sent out with water bills.

## On-duty Clinics in March (3月の休日当番医)

Internal Medicine			Surgery	Dentistry
3/2 (Sun)	Kawashima-naika -clinic (川島内科クリニック) Tel: 23-2001	Sato-iin (佐藤医院) Tel: 54-2756	Takano-gekaichoka-iin (高野外科胃腸科医院) Tel: 24-2454	Shimizu-shika-iin (清水歯科医院) Tel: 54-3413
3/9 (Sun)	Nara-naika-iin (奈良内科医院) Tel: 25-1155	Furumaki-naika-iin (ふるまき内科医院) Tel: 25-8881	Shibukawa-iryo-center (渋川医療センター) Tel: 23-1010	Miyashita-dental-clinic (宮下デンタルクリニック) Tel: 53-4701
3/16 (Sun)	Otani-naika-clinic (大谷内科クリニック) Tel: 20-1881	Itamino-clinic -Hasegawa-iin (痛みのクリニック長谷川医院) Tel: 30-5055	Kato-seikei-geka-iin (加藤整形外科医院) Tel: 20-1007	Sango-dental-clinic (三剛デンタルクリニック) Tel: 72-3430
3/20 (Thu)	Tsukagoshi-clinic (塚越クリニック) Tel: 60-7700	Sekiguchi-iin (関口医院) Tel: 55-5122	Sekiguchi-byoin (関口病院) Tel: 22-2378	Satori-shika-clinic (さとり歯科クリニック) Tel: 22-0069
3/23 (Sun)	Honzawa-iin (本沢医院) Tel: 23-6411	Sato-iin (佐藤医院) Tel: 52-3003	Adachi-seikei-geka (あだち整形外科) Tel: 30-1170	Sato-shika-iin (佐藤歯科医院) Tel: 54-8330
3/30 (Sun)	Miyukida-naika-iin (みゆきだ内科医院) Tel: 60-6070	Komayose-kodomo -shinryojo (駒寄こども診療所) Tel: 55-5252	Shibukawa-iryo-center (渋川医療センター) Tel: 23-1010	Nagai-shika-iin (永井歯科医院) Tel: 56-8854

## 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 be 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>**