



SHIBUKAWA CURRENT

Shibukawa International Association
395th Edition, September 2025



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Dear Readers,

In the Japanese lunar calendar, September is known as **Nagatsuki** or **Yonagazuki**, meaning the month of long nights. In the first half of September, the late summer heat is strong, but after mid-month the temperature drops in the mornings and evenings, and autumn is in the air. People enjoy the music of crickets and other insects singing, and also the **Otsukimi** (viewing the moon) in the autumn nights. **Undōkai** (sports festivals) and **Bunkasai** (cultural festivals) are held across Japan during September and October, and preparations for these events in schools begin after students return from summer the break. Peak typhoon season continues in September and days can be wet, with strong winds.

Keirō no Hi (Respect for the Aged Day) is a public holiday in Japan celebrated annually on the third Monday of September, this year on September 15, to honor elderly citizens.

September 23 is **Shubun no Hi** (Autumnal Equinox Day), a national holiday in Japan. It is a day to commemorate ancestors and is part of the week-long Buddhist observance called **Higan**.

From late September to early October, beautiful buckwheat flowers bloom throughout Miyukida's buckwheat fields on a hill overlooking Akagi Mountain, at the foot of Haruna Mountain.

The 42nd Shibukawa Heso Matsuri (第42回渋川へそ祭り)

Shibukawa is located at the center of the Japanese archipelago, which is why it is often referred to as the "Belly Button of Japan". The Heso Matsuri (the Belly Button Festival) was established in 1984, and using the "Belly Button of Japan" as a catalyst, it has been held every year since then, becoming one of the largest and most popular events in the city.

During the festival, the area around Gosaro Intersection, close to the Heso Rock and the Heso Jizo, becomes a pedestrian paradise, where visitors can enjoy various activities, including the kids' and adults' Belly Button Dance Parade, performances of groups of dancers, wind bands, and Japanese Taiko drums, sales of Shibukawa specialty products, a Belly Button-themed food stalls, fire safety activities, electric cart display, and many others. The main attraction of the festival is the Heso Odori Parade, where participants, both children and adults, with comical faces painted on their bellies wear special costumes with arms hanging out from their waists, and large hats to cover their heads and arms, parade through the streets dancing and encouraging spectators to join in by yelling with big excitement, "Heso dase yoiyoi!" (Show us your belly, yoi yoi!).

You can get your belly painted up, learn the dance, and join in the Heso Odori with the locals!

When: Saturday, September 6, from 1:00 pm to 9:00 pm (the Kid's Belly Button Dance Parade takes place from 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm, and the Belly Button Dance Parade, from 6:00 pm to 8:00pm.)

Ikaho Matsuri (伊^い香^か保^ほまつり)

The Ikaho Festival is held every year on September 18, 19 and 20 in Ikaho hot spring town.

On September 18, the festival coincides with Roka Festival when a Japanese tea ceremony is held in memory of Tokutomi Roka. A Yukumi ceremony of drawing hot water from the hot spring source is also held to give thanks for the abundant amount and high quality of the natural onsen water.

On September 19, the Ikaho shrine's mikoshi (portable shrine) is paraded through the town's main streets before being carried up the Stone Steps and returned to the shrine at the top.



On September 19 and 20, Taru-mikoshi (made of sake barrels) are paraded through the historic streets of Ikaho, and then up the 365 stone steps to the Ikaho shrine. Watching the mikoshi carriers bumping against each other on the narrow stone steps is thrilling and impressive.

International BBQ! (バーベキュー^{こうりゅうかい}交流会)

Shibukawa International Barbecue is coming soon! Come join us for a fun day out at Sogo Koen Seijin no Mori BBQ-jo, where you can enjoy games and barbecuing in a relaxed atmosphere with other foreigners and local Japanese people.

When: Saturday, October 25, from 10:30 am to 1:00 pm (Reception starts at 10:00 am)

Where: Shibukawa Sogo Koen General Park Barbecue Ground

Limit: 60 people (on a first-come, first-served basis)

Charge: 800 yen / foreigners 500 yen (300 yen for children under age 15)

Sign-up: Tuesday, September 9 - Monday, September 22, either by email or phone call

Tel: 0279-22-2463 / Email: sia-shibukawa@city.shibukawa.gunma.jp



Tachibana Furusato Festival (たちばな古^{ふるさと}里まつり)

Tachibana Furusato Matsuri will be held at Atagoyama Furusato Koen on Sunday, September 28.

The festival features a procession of local junior high school students, which is a celebration of Princess Ototachibana and Prince Yamato Takeru, from a legend of Mount Tachibana. Wearing costumes that reflect the image of the ancients, they create a fantastic atmosphere. It starts at 1:30 pm, and the welcoming ceremony for the procession takes place at 3:00 pm, on the stage inside the park.

There will also be a variety of activities to enjoy, including kamishibai performances, live public entertainment, food stands, local products' sale, a bazaar, and a game corner.

It concludes with the Tachibana Lake Fireworks, an exciting display of light, sound, and color over Tachibana Lake, starting from 19:00 pm.

(In the case of inclement weather, the festival could be called off to ensure everyone's safety.)

Shibukawa's Anniversary Festa (しづかわ^{しづかわ}アニバーサリーフェスタ)

Shibukawa's Anniversary Festa, celebrating the 20th anniversary of the city, will be held at Shibukawa Shimin Kaikan on Saturday, September 13, from 12:00 pm to 8:00 pm.

The event will feature a variety of programs, including eating, drinking, shopping, performing arts, live music, and games.

Shibukawa Yatai Mura for Rural-Urban Interactions (しぶかわ まちなか 交流屋台村)

The Yataimura (Food Stall Village) event, will be held at Shimonochō Kaikan Higashigawa on Sunday, September 14, from 4:00 pm to 8:00 pm. There will be local specialties and drink sales, live music performances, and game booths. (In case of inclement weather, the event will be canceled.)

Healing Yin Yoga Course (い やしの いん ヨガ)

Learn Yin Yoga poses that can help you to reduce stress and tension, while working to improve your physical condition! The course will be held at Shibukawa Kominkan on Monday, October 6, from 10:00 am to 11:00 am. It's Free!

Things to bring: yoga mat, towel, bath towel, comfortable clothing, and drink

Limit: 18 people on a first come, first served basis

Application: by phone at Shibukawa Kominkan until Monday, September 29, from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm, except for Saturdays, Sundays, and National Holidays (**Tel: 0279-22-0999**)



Get Familiar with Flowers Workshop (はな した たいけん きょうしつ 教室)

Discover the art of Yoseue group planting in this hands-on workshop, where you will make your own beautiful Halloween fall planter.

When: Saturday, September 27, 10:00 am-12:00 noon

Where: Dainichosha, the City Hall Second Building, Momiji Terrace.

Limit: 25 people (randomly selected if the number of applicants exceeds 25)

Fee: 2000 yen (material costs)

Application: by phone until Tuesday, September 16 (**Tel: 0279-25-8307**)

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

When: Sunday, September 21, from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm (Registration until 2:30 pm)

Where: Oizumi Kominkan, Minami Bekkan Kenshu-shitsu (2011-1 Yoshida Oizumi-machi, Oura-gun)

Consultants: Attorneys, Gyoseishoshi Lawyer (Immigration Specialist) & Shakai Hoken Romushi (Labor issue & pension specialist)

Interpreting services are available in English, Chinese, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

Contact: One-Stop Consultation Center for Foreign Residents of Gunma (**Tel: 027-289-8275**)

(Same-day registration is available, but those with reservations have priority.)

Night Emergency Clinic (や かんきゅうかんしんりょうじょ)

The Night Emergency Clinic provides medical services between 7:00 pm to 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. If specialized treatment is necessary, patients will be introduced to another medical institution that is more suitable.

Tel: 0279-23-8899 (Please contact the clinic before going if you are not sure if you can be treated.)

On-duty Clinics in September (9 月 の 休 日 当 番 医)

| | Internal Medicine | | Surgery | Dentistry |
|-----------------------|--|--|--|---|
| 9/7 (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 | Adachi-seikei-geka (あだち整形外科) Tel: 30-1170 | Hokkitsu-shika-shinryojo (北橘歯科診療所) Tel: 52-3762 |
| 9/14 (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 | Tomaru-clinic (とまるクリニック) Tel: 26-7711 | Hirakata-shika-iin (平形歯科医院) Tel: 22-0953 |
| 9/15 (Mon) | Saito-naika-geka-clinic (斎藤内科外科クリニック) Tel: 22-1678 | Oi-naika-clinic (大井内科クリニック) Tel: 30-5575 | Arima-clinic (有馬クリニック) Tel: 24-8818 | Funaoka-shika-iin (船岡歯科医院) Tel: 23-8211 |
| 9/21 (Sun) | 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 | Kato-seikei-geka-iin (加藤整形外科医院) Tel: 20-1007 | Shimizu-shika-iin (清水歯科医院) Tel: 54-3413 |
| 9/23 (Tue) | Kawashima-naika-clinic (川島内科クリニック) Tel: 23-2001 | Sato-iin (佐藤医院) Tel: 54-2756 | Sekiguchi-byoin (関口病院) Tel: 22-2378 | Mitake-shika-iin (三剛歯科医院) Tel: 72-3430 |
| 9/28 (Sun) | Kamiyama-naika-iin (神山内科医院) Tel: 22-2181 | Sekiguchi-iin (関口医院) Tel: 55-5122 | Shibukawa-iryo-center (渋川医療センター) Tel: 23-1010 | Satori-shika-clinic (さとり歯科クリニック) Tel: 22-069 |
| 10/5 (Sun) | Shibukawa-chuo-byoin (渋川中央病院) Tel: 25-1711 | Shinto-Wakaba-clinic (榛東わかばクリニック) Tel: 20-5531 | Takano-gekaichoka-iin (高野外科胃腸科医院) Tel: 24-2454 | Sato-shika-iin (佐藤歯科医院) Tel: 54-8330 |

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/kokusaikouryukyukai/p000024.htm>