



SHIBUKAWA CURRENT

Shibukawa International Association

401st Edition, March 2026



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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 Shiroi' s Kawazu Cherry Blossoms (かわづ桜の丘白井)

Kawazu-zakura is famous for being one of the earliest-blooming cherry blossoms in Japan, distinct for its large, vibrant and pinkish-purple flowers that last longer than other cherry blossom varieties.

In Shibukawa City, you can enjoy viewing Kawazu cherry blossoms at Kawazu Sakura-no-Oka Shiroi, a new cherry blossom viewing spot that is loved by many people in Shibukawa, and attracts many 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. The best time to view these beautiful flowers this year is from early March to early April. (Parking is available at the Komochi Michi no Eki.)

Share Your Favorite Scenic Spots in Shibukawa City

(皆さんがおすすめする渋川市の絶景スポットを教えてください)

Following the first round of "Shibukawa Oshi: Menu" (food, sweets, and processed food), the city is accepting photo submissions for the second round of "Shibukawa Oshi: View Spots" (scenic spots, including city views) in the Shibukawa area.

Application: Submit required information and photo data via the official application form on the city's website, starting Monday, March 16 (Submissions for the first round, "Menu" are still being accepted.)

Shibukawa Monument Tour Exhibition (「渋川の碑めぐり展」を開催します)

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: Tuesday, March 3 - Thursday, April 30, 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)

Shibukawa Machi Naka - Live at the Museum of Art (渋川まちなか美術館ライブ)

The Shibukawa City Museum of Art and Kuwahara Kosuke Sculpture Museum will be holding a free music event "Live music surrounded by sculptures," featuring performances by Shibukawa High School Brass Band, Shibukawa City Girls' High School Baton Club MASHA, and Yamanchu band.

Where: Shibukawa City Museum of Art and Kuwahara Kosuke Sculpture Museum

When: Friday, March 20, from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm

City Art Museum Special Exhibition by Fumika Hachisu "Little Monsters"

(市美術館企画展 蜂巢文香展 ～小さな怪獣～)

This exhibition features photos of companion animals, highlighting their behavior and the emotions they express by Fumika Hachisu, a photographer from Shibukawa City. The exhibit presents a variety of scenes, showcasing a dreamy world reminiscent of children's books, but one that adults can share.

Entrance fee: 300 yen. Free admission for junior high school students or younger, those 65 and older, for holders of a disability certificate and their accompanying caregiver.

When: Saturday, March 14 to Sunday, May 10, from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm

Where: Shibukawa City Museum of Art



Rural Martial Arts and Hoshin-ryu in the Foothills of Mt. Akagi

(赤城山麓の農村武術と法神流)

This exhibition provides an overview of the rural martial arts practiced in the foothills of Mt Akagi during the latter half of the Edo Period and introduces the traditions of one such art, Hoshin-ryu, as well as its famous swordsmanship and the kata (forms) still practiced today. It will be held at Akagi Rekishi Shiriyokan from Wednesday, March 25 to Sunday, June 28, from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm.

Entrance fee: 200 yen. 100 yen for high school and university students. Free admission for junior high school students or younger.

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 at the City Library and are free. Just show up!

★ **Kids Movies:** "Boku Tokidoki Buta" and others on Saturday, March 14, 11:00 am to 11:30 am.

★ **Picture book storytelling by Story Reading Group Moe no Ko:** "Yuki no Furu Yoru" and others on Saturday, March 21, from 2:30 pm to 3:00 pm.

★ **Movies:** "Sekai wa Bokura ni Kizukanai" (The World Doesn't Care About Us), a 2022 Japanese film, on Sunday, March 15, from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm.



Citizens' Karate Course (しみんからてどうきょうしつ)

The course will be held at Shibukawa Shimin Taikukan every Wednesday (except on April 29 and May 6), from 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm, starting April 1 through May 27, and consists of two divisions: a junior division for junior high school students and younger children, and a senior division for high school students and older people.

Limit: 25 people in each division (Young children must be accompanied by a guardian.)

Course Cost: 1000 yen

Application: by phone to the Sport Div. (Tel: 0279-22-2241) or Mr. Mizusawa (Tel: 090-9107-3027)



Sport Fukiya Experience Class (スポーツふきやたいけんきょうしつ)

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. You don't need to register. Just show up! Please bring clothes suitable for exercise, indoor sports shoes, a towel, and drink.

When: 11:00 am – 12:00 noon, Saturday, March 14 and Saturday, March 21

Where: Shibukawa Miyata Shokai Budokan

Cost: 100 yen

TEL: 090-7801-1332 (Prefecture Sport Wellness Fukiya Association Shibukawa Branch, Mr. Fujikawa-san)

The 30th Shibukawa Martial Arts Festival (だい 30 かいしぶかわぶどうフェスティバル)

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 Saturday, March 7.

Where: Shibukawa Miyata Shokai Budokan

When: Sunday, March 22, from 9:00 am to 12 noon

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

Changes to PET Bottles/Glass Bottles Collection Days

(ペットボトル・ガラスビンの回収日が変わります)

Previously, PET bottles, glass bottles, plastics, and non-burnable garbage / plastic were collected on the same day. From April 2026, PET bottles and glass bottles will be collected on specific, separate days (generally on 1st/3rd or 2nd/4th weeks depending on the area). The change applies only to the Shibukawa District. To find out collection days for your area, please check the collection calendar (or garbage schedule pamphlet) at the collection site or ask someone in your neighborhood.

For specific, updated garbage collection schedules, please visit the Shibukawa City website.

On-duty Clinics in March (3月の休日当番医)

| Internal Medicine | | Surgery | | Dentistry |
|-------------------|--|--|---|---|
| 3/1 (Sun) | Ishikita-iin (石北医院) Tel: 22-1378 | Tsukagoshi-clinic (塚越クリニック) Tel: 60-7700 | Adachi-seikei-geka (あだち整形外科) Tel: 30-1170 | Shimizu-shika-iin (清水歯科医院) Tel: 54-3413 |
| 3/8 (Sun) | Nakano-iin (中野医院) Tel: 22-1219 | Takeuchi-shonika (竹内小児科) Tel: 30-5151 | Kato-seikei-geka-iin (加藤整形外科医院) Tel: 20-1007 | Miyashita-shika-iin (宮下歯科医院) Tel: 24-1939 |
| 3/15 (Sun) | Kamiyama-naika-iin (神山内科医院) Tel: 22-2181 | Honzawa-iin (本沢医院) Tel: 23-6411 | Shibukawa-iryō-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: 22-0069 |
| 3/20 (Fri) | Akagi-kaisei-clinic (赤城開成クリニック) Tel: 20-6500 | 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 | Sato-shika-iin (佐藤歯科医院) Tel: 54-8330 |
| 3/22 (Sun) | 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 | Sekiguchi-byoin (関口病院) Tel: 22-2378 | Nagai-shika-iin (永井歯科医院) Tel: 56-8854 |
| 3/29 (Sun) | Harasawa-iin (原沢医院) Tel: 72-2503 | Furumaki-naika-iin (ふるまき内科医院) Tel: 25-8881 | Tomaru-clinic (とまるクリニック) Tel: 26-7711 | Onogami-shika-shinryojo (小野上歯科診療所) Tel: 59-2493 |

Night Emergency Clinic (夜間急患診療所)

The Night Emergency Clinic provides medical services in cases of sudden illnesses or injuries daily between 7:00 pm and 10:00 pm, for conditions and issues related to internal medicine, surgery, and pediatrics, depending on the doctor in charge. If specialized treatment is necessary, patients may be introduced to another medical institution. Please call before heading to the clinic, to ensure they can treat you.

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 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>