

Dear friends,

It's time again to recount what we did this year. Please bear with us, as we try to continue this personal tradition.

### Yukiko in 2013

Yukiko became the chair of the Japanese language education department in April. She has been busy throughout the year with administrative work such as writing reports and attending meetings. Her schedule does not leave much time for fun activities.

However, in August, we traveled in Peru to visit Machu Picchu and other ruins of the Incan empire in the Andes. Machu Picchu was our long-time dream destination. We finally learned the history of Incan civilization, touching meticulously crafted stone walls, experiencing beautiful evening of Cusco, walking though Machu Picchu, and wandered what was like to live in the place like that. We also climbed to the top of Wayna Picchu (the higher peak behind the city in the photo) (two-hour trip) Yukiko did much better than Kazumi during this hiking. In October, Yukiko visited Poland for the first time to attend a conference. She was impressed by how kind local people were. A man on the same train from Berlin to Warsaw helped her with heavy luggage, and a local married couple (total strangers) in Poznan gave her a ride to her hotel. Under a normal circumstance, it would have been a situation that one should be cautious, but their kind gestures made her forget such feeling. Yukiko had a wonderful time in Poland.

In November, Kazumi and Yukiko attended the first anniversary service of Yukiko's mother's passing in 2012. Time flies.

In the second week of December, Hiroshima University is hosting a national conference of Second Language Acquisition Studies. Yukiko is the person in charge of this gathering. (I am sure it will be a very successful one. KH) Right after the conference, she will make a short trip to Thai land to attend business meetings on institutional exchange agreement. As you can see, she will be busy down to the end of the year. She is planning to have a quiet restful new year. She will be in this position for one more year.



### Kazumi in 2013

2013 has been a bit different from other years for Kazumi. In March, the documentary film "Resilience: Protecting Today" (the one we added English subtitles) was presented at Purdue. In April, he presented a report on applications of Kinect (motion sensor) at a regional conference for IT applications in foreign language instruction at Ohio University. HE Also learned about ARIS (editor for mobile learning games). Kinect forces students to get up and move and ARIS brings students outside classroom. Both technologies are promising in creating more dynamic learning environment than traditional classroom.

Kazumi took a summer off from his duty as the director of Middlebury College Japanese School so that he could spend more time with his father in Tokyo. In late May, however, Kazumi's father

developed urine infection that caused blood poisoning. He was in an ICU for five days. Miraculously, he survived his ordeal and recovered. (Apparently, it was not his time to go, but we were all scared.)

As for *rakugo*-related activities, Kazumi interacted with Saryu-shisyo often. (including eating and drinking opportunities. We had a memorable drinking-eating trip to Yaizu with Katsuo, a Purdue student, and Nobuaki, professor at Elizabethtown College. In May, a *rakugo* performance was held in Hiroshima for international students. (Ms. Takahashi, Ms. Takata, and Ms. Kimura worked hard on this project.) In July, Kazumi made a trip to Sapporo to see a friend, Shu Miwa of Hokkaido University. As a part of the *rakugo* troop, Kazumi spent one week at the Japanese School in July. It was strange to interact with students he met for the first time.

In August, Kazumi flew back to Indiana and Yukiko joined a few days later. Then, we took off to Machu Picchu, Peru. It was our long-time dream to go there. Needless to say, Machu Picchu was wonderful, but our guide educated us that Machu Picchu was just one of the main ruins of Incas in the region. In the city of Cusco, there are a few large catholic churches. They made Kazumi wonder that if Spanish had come to Japan with army, Japan would have had catholic churches in stead of Osaka and Edo castles. That would have been very strange scenery.

Kazumi came back to Tokyo for a project supported by Hakuho Foundation to write a Japanese language textbook with the main theme of Japanese food culture. He is staying in Tokyo for six months. His main activities are reading, interviewing dietitians of elementary and junior high schools, interviewing chefs, visiting Tsukiji market, video recording food scenes, and writing.

We wish you a very merry Christmas and a happy new year!



In case you have forgotten us, we are doing fine. The irresponsible owner has not been around much this year, but Sayuri and Chie have taken a good care of us. Our loyalty is to the people who feed us.

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Happy New Year 2014

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