

\*\*\*\*\*      \*\*\*\*\*      \*\*\*\*\*      Merry Christmas      \*\*\*\*\*      \*\*\*\*\*      \*\*\*\*\*

Greetings! We hope that you are all well and welcoming another joyful holiday season.

The biggest event this year was that Kazumi hit the big number 40. (OK. OK. Yukiko's turn is coming up..) We expected of him a big change in maturity, but nothing seems to have happened so far. (39 or 40, what is the big deal? I admit a few more aching joints after basketball...) Kazumi spent months of May and June in Tokyo as a research fellow of the Japan Foundation. To his surprise, this two-month continuous stay in Japan was the longest one he had since he left Japan in 1979. As for his work, he finished the 10-part series for a magazine, and is now revising them and writing an English version. When it is done, he hopes to merge two versions into one bilingual volume for publication. He will also be working on a WWW version of the course he has been teaching. (Computer literacy for foreign language instructors)

This is Yukiko's third year at University of Iowa. There has not been any big change in the job, except she is getting busier and busier as usual. She finished the first volume of the textbook for the elementary Japanese. It should be published sometime next year. During summer, she went to Austin, TX and taught at University of Texas for two weeks. This was a nice change of pace, and she enjoyed there. She is now working on the second volume of the textbook and a few articles. She recently received a job offer from a university in Australia but has not decided what to do.

We had a wonderful Thanksgiving this year by having several guests in Lafayette. Since we hadn't hosted a for a while, it was somewhat refreshing. Two of them, Steve and Mariko were our oldest friends in the US. Steve and we went through the same MA program, and Mariko worked with us as a graduate assistants Illinois. All of us used to in the same house: 905 S. Race, Urbana. Steve, who flew from Oregon became 40 this year. He and Kazumi talked a lot about THOSE days such as getting drunk. We all went out to see the new Star Trek movie like those olden days. Also at the party were Sayuri, another Illinois bunch living in Lafayette and a very good friend of Yukiko, and Yuki from Michigan, with whom we have become very close to each other over several years. This year, we had a new friend, Fusae, Kazumi's co-worker. We had a lot in common (none of us are no longer "young," don't have children, have a carrier), and this turned out to be the most relaxing party that we had for years and was indeed a memorable one. We hope to get together with our old and new friends in the future as well.

Naoki, our famous nephew did not come this summer. Thus, our summer, though it was short because Kazumi was in Japan and Yukiko taught in Texas, was relatively quiet. Since Kazumi was in Tokyo and Naoki lives just a few houses away, he was constantly bombarded with Naoki's request to play basketball. (When the sound of dribbling a basketball nears around 4 p.m., I tried to run...KH) Naoki improved his dribbling skills.

Chibitan and Mi-chan are both very healthy. You can see both of them on Yukiko's WWW homepage. The address is <http://www.uiowa.edu/~japanese/hatasa.html>

We hope that this year has been a very fruitful one for all of you, and wish you a very merry Christmas and a happy new year! We will be spending our winter break in Japan.

With love,

Kazumi & Yukiko

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