

Popoki



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http://popoki.cruisejapan.com/index_e.html

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Popoki loves yellow flowers! There are lots of yellow flowers growing around his house, so his walks make him happy. We hope you have something to make you happy, too.



Popoki's Hot News!

It's here! Popoki's Peace Book 3!

The third book in the Popoki's Peace Book series, *Popoki, What Color is Genki? Popoki's Peace Book 3* is out! You can get a copy at your local bookstore (in Japan), from the publisher Epic (<https://bookway.jp/epic/>), at the Kobe YMCA or from the Popoki Peace Project! We look forward to your orders and comments.



Pieces of Peace

One of Popoki's friends, Sato-nyan, sent the following piece of peace:

"Japanese dormice lost their trail due to development, so a mayor made a 'Dormouse Bridge' for them. It is a very great city!

Isn't it nice when lots of different people and animals can live happily.!"

What sort of 'peace' did you encounter today? Please contribute a bit of peace! Please let us know by sending a message to Popoki's e-mail.

Popoki has a facebook page! Please have a look!

[www.facebook.com/pages/Popoki-Peace-Project](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Popoki-Peace-Project/1384738958444817)
[ポークキピースプロジェクト/1384738958444817](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Popoki-Peace-Project/1384738958444817)

Thank you for your continuing help!

Popoki's Friendship Story - Our Peace Journey Born out of the Great Northeastern Japan Earthquake is getting a good reception, thanks to help from his friends. Please help to let more people know! More information about the book at: <http://popoki.cruisejapan.com/monogatari.html>

* You can purchase a copy at the Kobe YMCA!

Popoki in Fukushima - Number 1

Ronyan

From 9 to 11 May I had an opportunity to visit Fukushima Prefecture with photographer Takashi Morizumi and to think about the effects of the nuclear power plant accident. Popoki came too, and made many new friends. This is the first of a series of articles about my impressions. We plan to include an interview with Morizumi-san in next month's newsletter.

Why, three years after the nuclear accident, did I decide to go to Fukushima? The answer is that I wanted to see the situation with my own eyes, breathe the air and feel it with my entire body. Perhaps we will conduct Popoki Friendship Story activities in Fukushima in the future. But my objective this time was not to expand our activities but to take a long and serious look. I ask my friend Morizumi san who has been recording the accident from the beginning, and he agreed to show me around.

This time I will write about the first place we went, a temple in Nihonmatsu. The temple runs a nursery school, and I was able to talk with Ruri Sasaki, the partner of the temple's head priest and two other 'Mother Rangers,' Ms. Endo and Ms. Suzuki. These women are involved in a number of activities to try to keep the children safe. Using the temple networks, they also arrange for the children to go for retreats in uncontaminated places outside of Fukushima. I was really moved by their deep concern for the children.

We spoke for more than two hours. Here I will introduce just some of things that made an impression on me.

- Since the disaster, vegetables and other foods are delivered on the 10th and 20th of every month from more than 100 places throughout Japan (50-200 places every time). The Mother Rangers distribute the food free of charge to 250 households with children. They are grateful not only for the food, but also for the concern shown by the people who send food. They are happy for any amount of kind of food, so if any readers of Popoki News want to contribute, please feel free to do so!
- I thought that schools would place greatest emphasis on the children's safety, but it seems that the situation is very difficult. "Now we can't talk about radiation, and the teachers can't mention it. They even tried to go on a school excursion to a place that has high levels of contamination." Ms. Sasaki and her friends got proof and were able to stop it, but it is very difficult. "I guess everyone has sort of given up fighting. So school events are just festivals and fun things...."
- "A huge gap has opened up between people who experienced the disaster and those who didn't and also according to their attitudes toward radiation. It gets wider every day, and now we can't even talk about the disaster or radiation."
- Ms. Sasaki's daughter was four at the time of the disaster, and now she is in 2nd grade. She came home from school and asked her mother, "What is cherry blossom viewing? Have you ever done it?" Because of the radiation, she has very few chances to be

outdoors, so even though she lives in a place with magnificent trees and scenery, she has never been cherry blossom viewing. This story made me cry.

- “Nature. Even though it is beautiful, I have to teach my children that it is scary and dirty. They shouldn’t touch pine cones or dandelions. They say things like, ‘This frog has been decontaminated so it is OK.’ If they pick flowers, they hide them behind their backs when they come into the house. I know they understand but”
- There are 80 children at the nursery school. When I saw them playing barefoot on the grass I exclaimed, “I’ve never seen children able to play barefoot on grass at a nursery school in Kobe!” The reply to my comment surprised me. “In order to keep them from bring in radiation from outside, we make the room and yard into one area where they can go in and out barefoot.”

I gave Ms. Sasaki a copy of *Popoki, What Color is Genki?*, asking that she read it with her children. She said it was a beautiful book and was pleased. I also asked all three Mother Rangers to draw on Popoki’s Friendship Story cloth. They drew the Mother Ranger logo, explaining it to me as they drew.

Thank you so much Ms. Sasaki, Ms Endo, and Ms. Suzuki. You gave me a lot to think about!

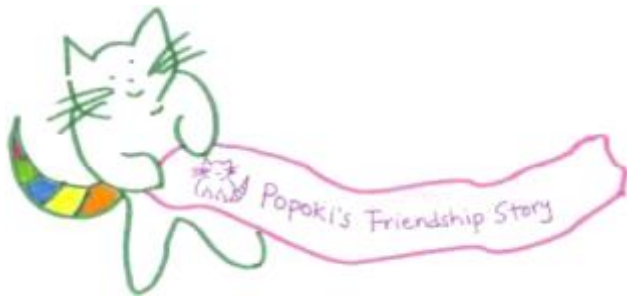
I spent the rest of the day thinking. “What is common sense?” I tried to put myself in the position of Ms. Sasaki and her friends. When I have lost my *genki*, I go outside and take deep breaths, exercise, and look for flowers and plants or perhaps cats. If the nature I love ceased to be my friend, what would I do??? I cannot find an answer, but it made me realize how intimately our lives are dependent on our natural environment.



Ms. Sasaki (left) and friends



A dosimeter in front of the nursery school



Popoki's Interview

Meeting a poetess in a temporary housing project in Kamaishi: The words that have invisibly supported "genki"

Hayashinyan

Do you write words to support your own "genki"?

I encountered poems that continue to support one person's "genki" in a Tohoku Disaster temporary housing project.

It was on May 2, 2014 that I met Mrs. Nakako HIRANO during an activity of Kobe University Tohoku Volunteer Bus. We held activities such as community café or handicrafts for community business. And she was one of the two guests that



Mrs. Nakako HIRANO (left)

day. She wore a deep red blouse and calmly told me that they could see beautiful rainbows there. I asked her, "Rainbows? Rainbows are beautiful, aren't they?" Unexpectedly she recited her poem about rainbows from memory.

Nakako told that before the disaster she had lived a difficult life, and comforted herself by writing poetry. Actually, although she said she "wrote" poetry, she really just created poems only in her, and sometimes consigned them to oblivion. After hearing about her past, I was deeply moved by the fact that her modest way of life has been supported by her own poetry. It seemed to me that this in and of itself *is* "poetry." Nakako's past

Nakako suffered badly with a violently drunk husband. While he was alive she could not hate her husband enough. But after his death her heart went out to him. He died of a subarachnoid hemorrhage after the accidental fall from the roof, when he was 42 years old. Nakako was left with four children. At that time she worked gathering abalone and sea urchins in the coastal waters. She had

Rainbow

My stormy life has passed with my youthfulness.
I, 72 years old, can't cry.
Nor suffer.
Because I'm in a new unrestricted world.
Drawing pictures,
writing poems,
and being bright like rainbows,
I'd like to have a beautiful mind like rainbows.
Because the fascination of the rainbow is infinite
and a mystery.

Flowers on earth

All flowers have their own grace,
and all people do, too.
If they do not have good looks,
they have their own grace in their mind.
It's just the difference between whether or not they can
express it.
When you love somebody,
or find a clue to good fortune,
it shows on their visage.
That is incomparable beauty.
Unselfish cordial beauty that emanates from Buddha.
Paramount happiness.
We can say that is a magnificent vast flower on earth.

trouble gathering these shells because the waves rocked her small boat. Her husband burnt with anger over and over, but even these memories feel beautiful now for her. Later she got a job at a processing plant for marine products, sorting frozen fish in the refrigerator. The work was very hard, and hands became bent and like, in her words, "rubber gloves." Finally she went to Tokyo and worked as a caregiver at various hospitals. In Tokyo, though wages were good, the job was hard because of night work and her clients' difficulties. She found some good people in Tokyo, too. The work made her hands become like rubber gloves, but her daughters' hands are fair and slender like their father's.

About Nakako's Poetry

Though it was the season for beautiful cherry blossoms, she has never written poems about flowers. Flowers are beautiful, but do not give her the urge to write. Nor did she write poems about the disaster. She has never shared her poems with her colleagues or her children, because she thinks they would not be interested in them.

About the 2011 tsunami disaster

Nakako lived in the Ureishi area of Kamaishi City. The day of the disaster, she was on the way home from the post office after making an insurance loan payment. When she left home she was in a hurry and jumped on the bus to the post office without going shopping. If she had not taken that bus, she would not have survived the tsunami. She walked home from the post office, and had just put down her bag and gone out when suddenly the earth began shaking so strongly she was not able to stand. When the shaking stopped, she went home and started to lock up. But she could see everybody outside was running to a high place, so she joined them. She looked at the sea, and saw extraordinary white waves. Then blue waves attacked the pathway to Route 45 right before her eyes. She thinks that two events - first the timely bus, and then the evacuation to a high place - saved her life. Her elder sister in Unosumai area, Kamaishi City died because the disaster prevention center to which she evacuated was unsafe. She thought that her survival made up for the poverty of her past half. She hopes to take up residence to public housing in a humble manner because she has already cleared off her debts.

Golden box

People are entrusted a tiny golden box by God,
when they are born.
It is an invisible marvelous box.
A golden box that we hardly open.
A box that we can unlock only with a key of effort,
endurance, kindness, and patience.
We are watched over fondly by God.
When all the terms are achieved,
God transmits energy into our tiny boxes.
A blinding golden beam.
It is by that beam the golden box is opened.
At that moment people will feel happiness on earth.

Poem "*Kinnosuke, the goldfish*"

That goldfish is a prize that her grandchild got at a street fair. The goldfish grew to be quite large. Nakako thought that goldfish got their name from the fact that they glitter brilliantly like gold. So she wrote this poem.

Kinnosuke, the goldfish

My father was born in Tokyo.
He is a descendant of Dokan Ohta, the fortifier of Edo castle.
They may find curious that I named the goldfish Kinnosuke.
My father's name is Shinnosuke.
So I named the goldfish Kinnosuke.
Kinnosuke in the aquarium is glittering.
My jewel is about the same size as bitterling.
I wonder if Kinnosuke could see me.
I was aware that he was able to find tiny food
Thus he can surely see me.

Kinnosuke is my jewel.
Today, he is swimming and weaving as usual.
I wonder if God in Heaven made this Kinnosuke.



Remembering my dead mother

The sky is vast like infinity.
I wonder if my dead mother is over the sky.
Embarking on purple clouds,
Sparkling with gold,
I wonder if she has been reincarnated as a
bodhisattva, Buddhist saint?
I long to see her.

Today, I was able to understand my mother to my
heart's content.
I found that I was living in her mind,
She who died at the age of 93 on account of silly
me.
I thank my mother who gave me unconditional
love.
I was moved to tears by my mother who will never
come back, who loves me infinitely.

POPOKI'S EASY POGA

Lesson 72

This month's Poga is about stretching our eyes!



1. As always, begin with sitting up straight and making yourself look thin.
2. Staying seated, open your eyes wide and without moving, look up...and then down.
3. Next, look left...and then right.
4. Finally, try looking diagonally to the upper right, lower left, upper left, lower right... If you like, try a figure eight, too!
5. Did it? It is time for the 'success pose.'

Congratulations! You have successfully completed Lesson 72. Do you feel refreshed? Please remember to relax, breathe, laugh and practice for 3 minutes every day.

Please join us!

Next Po-kai: 6/27 Kobe YMCA 19:00- Rm.306

- 6.1 Popoki at Nada challenge festival! 10:00~16:00, Tokagawa Park, Nada-ku, Kobe. Please come and join the fun.
- 6.13 Peace and Health Workshop at Osaka Active Studio. 18:30~20:00.
<http://kc-i.jp/event/>
- 7.12 Popoki at Kodomo no sato, Nishinari-ku, Osaka. 10:00~12:00.
- 8.5 Popoki at the Seminar on Education for International Understanding, JICA Kansai
- 8.6 Popoki's Hiroshima Day shadows and skype.

From Popoki's friends

Raisins from Afghanistan Project (CODE): The amount of the grapes is increasing year by year with the project. We want many people have chance to taste the Afghan grapes and we have finally begun importing their grapes as raisins. The grapes are dried in the sun in Mir Bacha Kot by the grape farmers and delivered to Japan Fairtrade Committee to get packed. The grapes have a naturally sweet taste with no use of agrichemicals or added substances. The profit goes to people in Mir Bacha Kot. You can order them from us or get more information from: <http://code-jp.org/afghanistan/index.html>

Popoki in Print

- ESD Digital Archives, Kansai Council of Organizations for International Exchange <http://www.interpeople.or.jp>
- “Peace Picture Book Published – linked to disaster support in East Japan” *Kobe Shimbun* (2014.3.25) KIHARA Kana
- “Awards given to 37 groups Daiwa Securities Foundation” *Kobe Shimbun* (2013.8.23 p.8)
- “Reproducing ‘human shadows’ and asserting no nukes” *Kobe Shimbun* (2013.8.7 p.22)
- ‘Draw inner thoughts about disaster’ *Yomiuri Shimbun* 2013.2.16:4 (evening edition; Japanese)
- “‘Safe’ and ‘Secure’ Society is from the bottom-up”, *Mainichi Shimbun Interview with Ronni Alexander*, 2012.10.29, p.1 (evening edition; Japanese)
- R. Alexander. “Remembering Hiroshima: Bio-Politics, Popoki and Sensual Expressions of War.” *International Feminist Journal of Politics*. Vol.14:2:202-222, June 2012
- “Article 9 is at the base of Peace with Popoki” *Kodomo to Mamoru 9 jono kai News*, No.66, 2012.5.12
- “Hope on 60 meters of cloth” Etsuko Akuzawa. (In Japanese) *Asahi Shimbun* 2012.1.21
- “Voice for Peace made into a book” Masashi Saito. (in Japanese) *Kobe Shimbun*, 2012.1.19
- K. Wada. “Conversations with Ronni Alexander: The Popoki Peace Project; Popoki, What Color is Peace? Popoki, What Color is Friendship?” *International Feminist Journal of Politics* Vol.13, No.2, 2011, 257-263
- S. McLaren. “The Art of Healing”(Popoki Friendship Story Project) *Kansai Scene*. Issue 133, June 2011, p.10. kansaiscene.com
- R. Alexander. (2010) “The Popoki Peace Project: Creating New Spaces for Peace in Demenchonok, E., ed. *Philosophy after Hiroshima*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, pp.399-418
- 省窓: Column in *Kobe YMCA News*, No.606, 2011.1, p.1 (In Japanese)
- “If we all participate, something will change! Reflecting on Palestine” *THE YMCA* No.607 June 2010, p.1 (YMCA Japan Monthly Newspaper)
- Hiroshima and the World: What Color is Hiroshima? Chugoku Shimbun Peace Media Center, http://www.hiroshimapeacemedia.jp/mediacenter/article.php?story=20100312140608602_en 2010.3.15
- FM COCOLO 76.5 ‘Heart Lines’ 2010.1.9 Japanese Interview: Ronni on Popoki in Palestine
- “Human Rights, Popoki and Bare Life.” *In Factis Pax Journal of Peace Education and Social Justice* Vol.3, No.1, 2009, pp.46-63 (<http://www.infactispax.org/journal/>)
- Nishide, Ikuyo. “Popoki, What Color is Peace? Lecture by Ronni Alexander.” “PPSEAWA” (Pan-Pacific and south-East Asia Women’s Association of Japan), No.63, 2009.12, p.5
- ‘Friendship’ No.2 2009.11 Itami City International/Peace Exchange Commission, Annual Events, p.1-2.
- ‘Not for But With...’ No.79, 2010.1 Notice of the Popoki Peace Challenge event. P.12
- ‘Nada’ notice of the Popoki Peace Challenge event, 2009.12, p.2
- ‘Yujotte...Kangaeru Ehon.’ *Asahi Shimbun* 2009.7.2 AKUZAWA Etsuko
- ‘Yujo wo kangaete – Ningen to, Neko to, soshite Jibun to,’ *RST/ALN*, No.259 2009.6.28, p.11
- ‘New Books: *Popoki, What Color is Friendship? Popoki’s Peace Book 2*’ (Rebecca Jennison) “Cutting-Edge,” Vol.35 2009.6, p.3
- ‘Thinking about Peace with a Cat: Second Peace Book Published.’ (SAITO Masashi) *Kobe Shimbun*, 2009.4.21
- ‘Popoki, What Color is Peace?’ *Kobe YMCA News*, 2009.3.1. No.593. p.2
- ‘Popoki, What Color is Trash?’ *Kobe YMCA News*, 2009.1.1. No.592. p.2
- ‘Tomodachi ni Natte Kuremasenkai,’ *RST/ALN*, 2009.2.22
- Popoki on the radio. <http://www.kizzna.fm/> Click on 6CH to hear the program and reading of Popoki in Japanese
- *Yasashii kara hito nann desu* Exhibition Organizing Committee ‘Universal Declaration of Human Rights.’ Hyogo Buraku Liberation and Human Rights Institute. 2008.10. ¥500. For information contact: blrhyg@osk3.3web.jp
- “KFAW College Seminar: What Color is Peace for Women? Thinking about Peace, Violence and Gender with Popoki.” *Asian Breeze* No.54 October 2008, p.8 (Kitakyushu Forum on Asian Women)
- *Kobe Shimbun* “Human Rights Declaration Exhibition Panels: 6 Local Hyogo Artists Illustrate all 30 Articles” 2008.10.8. p.10
- “An Interview with Dr. Ronni Alexander.” *The Newpeople*, Pittsburgh’s Peace and Justice Newspaper, Vol.38 No.9, October 2008, p.5
- Human Security – Dr. Ronni Alexander speaks about Hiroshima and Nagasaki.” *The Newpeople*, Pittsburgh’s Peace and Justice Newspaper, Vol.38 No.9, Oct. 2008, p.4
- Popoki in Pittsburgh. Check out the Remembering Hiroshima/Imagining Peace URL: <http://www.rememberinghiroshima.org/>
- * **Back issues of Popoki News:** http://popoki.cruisejapan.com/archives_e.html





What Popoki Means to Me

Mako Hayase

I love yoga practice just like Popoki, so I always look forward to Popoki's easy poga column. Take a deep breath, laugh and relax.♪ I take several long deep breaths, slowly stretch my body under the sunshine, and listen to the voice of my inner-self. Then, Popoki says to me, "I love you just the way you are" and accepts me always, even if my opinion is different from other people and I'm not confident. It's OK that there are different values and feelings. Conflict never happens if we can accept each other's differences. Popoki always reminds me of that, although it is difficult to do even though you understand in your head. I am so happy that I met Sato-nyan, Ro-nyan and Popoki. I keep smiling naturally when I'm with them. I want to accept various values and be a person who can make people smile and happy. I pray for all people connected by the large sky and sea in this world, appreciate the diversity, and feel peaceful. I'm so excited that my circle of friends spreads through Popoki. Popoki, thank you for always being there for me.♪



PLEASE HELP SUPPORT THE POPOKI PEACE PROJECT!

The Popoki Peace Project is a voluntary project which uses Popoki's peace book and DVD to promote peace through various activities such as peace camps, peace workshops, seminars and other activities. Since the March 2011 earthquake, we have also worked in the disaster area and in 2012 published a book about that work: *Popoki's Friendship Story - Our Peace Journey Born Out of the Great Northeastern Japan Earthquake. Popoki, What Color is Peace?* has been translated into Thai, Chinese, Korean, Khmer, Indonesian, Tetun and Bengali, Vietnamese, Arabic and Hebrew. Spanish, Farsi, Lao, Swahili, translations are underway. If you would like to translate Popoki, or have a way to have the book sold at your local bookstore, please let us know.



How to purchase Popoki's books from outside of Japan



1. Go to your local Japanese bookstore: Kinokuniya, Maruzen, etc. (or their website)
2. In the US, thanks to a very satisfied customer, *Popoki, What Color is Peace? Popoki's Peace Book 1* can be ordered from Kinokuniya Bookstore in Los Angeles. The bookstore is at www.los_angeles@kinokuniya.com and the telephone number is 213.687.4480. The price is US\$20.00 plus tax.

Some ways to purchase *Popoki, What Color is Peace? Popoki's Peace Book 1, Popoki, What Color is Friendship? Popoki's Peace Book 2, Popoki, What Color is Genki? Popoki's Peace Book 3* and *Popoki's Friendship Story* from inside Japan

From the publisher, Epic: TEL: 078-241-7561·FAX: 078-241-1918

From Amazon.co.jp or your local bookseller

From the Popoki Peace Project ([popokipeace\(at\)gmail\(dot\)com](mailto:popokipeace@gmail.com))



Contributions are always welcome!

Popoki Peace Project popokipeace-at-gmail.com

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