



It is almost Halloween! What will you do to celebrate? How about giving your neighborhood cats some treats?

Popoki's Hot News!



Event: Thinking about Health and Peace with Popoki!
On 10 October, how about joining Popoki to think about health and peace? What is the sound of your body? How does it smell? What color is 'health'? One key to enjoying every day is to be aware of your own health. And that relates to peace, too!
See page 9 of this issue of 'Popoki News' for more information.

Pieces of Peace



One of Popoki's friends, Tetsuri-nyan, sent the following piece of peace:
"When I am with people who I like or love, I feel peace more."
Please contribute a bit of peace! What sort of 'peace' did you encounter today? Please let us know by sending a message to Popoki's e-mail.

Studying this Autumn!



Popoki will have a poster session at a symposium in Kobe (11/3), join in a symposium in Shanghai (11/9) and participate in an international conference in Japan (11/26) to report on the Popoki Friendship Story Project. Please see "Please Join Us" for details.

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 Friendship Story Project in UGANDA

Mayu FURUOKA

Popoki and I went to Republic of Uganda in September.

To begin with, do you know where Uganda is? Uganda is located next to Kenya in east Africa. There was a conflict between the government army and rebels in northern Uganda until 2006. This time we visited Gulu, the center of what was the conflict area. And there we met former child soldiers, who were abducted and used as soldiers by the rebels and now get support from an NGO. When we visited there, former child soldiers and their neighborhood held a welcome party at an institution for reintegration run by an NGO. Although former child soldiers who were forced to kill people and the neighborhood whose villages were attacked have different feelings, it is helpful to facilitate an amicable settlement between them through holding such a party together in the post conflict.



I explained about our activity, and former child soldiers, their teacher, and children of the neighborhood each drew their feelings about friendship and peace on the white cloth, one after another.

Some children said, "My friend is rain". I asked why, and they said, "Because if it rains, we can drink water." "Plants can grow up if it rains." Honestly, as a Japanese I haven't thought like that. I talked to the teacher (he teaches skills to the former child soldiers in the institution), and he said, "It is natural because children are affected by their surroundings." For sure, many children drew about rain, helicopters (flight training is often done over there), and teaching by teachers at the school.

One of the former child soldiers who learns tailoring skills there drew a sewing machine as his friend, and another former child soldier who likes cats and purple drew cats giving food to each other with a purple-colored pen.

The teacher who teaches skills of carpentry and joinery told us, "For me, peace is teaching skills to students (former child soldiers). Because it helps students to get knowledge, to be self-reliant, and finally contributes to peace."



Thanks to drawing by many children, two cloths were full of nice drawings.



This time I felt that people in Uganda really expressed their emotions naturally. As I wrote in the last Popoki News (No.85), peace for me is "I can express thanks to my surroundings", they definitely can thank to their current surroundings (for former child soldiers, getting support by NGO etc.) even if they sometimes want new things. I hope these feelings will spread all over the area, especially northern Uganda in the future.

Many thanks to people I met in Uganda, and Popoki!!



Kenya Study Tour

Arata Suguro

This summer, I took part in a study tour to Kenya. It was the first time for me to go to Kenya, but I will report about every place that I visited. I was guided by a woman called Maki Nagamatsu, who has lived in Kenya for approximately 20 years. I think that I have been able to learn something about Kenya now.

■ First, I visited "Magoso School" in one of the world's largest slums called "Kibera" in Nairobi, the capital of Kenya. From the entrance of Kibera, three police officers with guns escorted us, but Maki still said, "Using a camera is prohibited, because it leads to trouble." In



Kibera, the streets were narrow, bumpy, and hard to drive on, but both sides were lined with shops, such as a general store or a vegetable shop. These made me feel that the residents live ordinary lives. In addition, the small street was so bustling with a large number of people coming and going because work and schools were closed on Saturday. I advanced to the depths in such a town, and there was "Magoso School" in the place where I entered in the narrow bare ground. This school was launched by Chiaki Hayakawa, who is a friend of Maki's, with the inhabitants of Kibera. More than 300 children are currently learning there. Though the

school was closed, many children gathered and showed a song and dance of each race to us with the Kenyan college students who serve as voluntary counselors. I was overwhelmed by the force and the skill of their songs and dances that emanated from the whole body of the children. Selected teams in the school have been top finishers in the annual national Choral Competition every year, and also seem to work hard at practicing for the championship every day this year. The reason for laying emphasis on the singing activity for the children was not only to raise their educational level and to relieve them from stress, but also, the biggest reason, was "Not to give children free time." Since these children are more likely to get in trouble if they have free time on their hands and return home early, they should be kept in school for extracurricular activities. The comment by one of our guides, Lillian, "Do not give them free time, especially girls," was impressive for me. In addition, the biggest reason why many children gathered there in spite of the holiday was that for "lunch in particular." It means that for many children, their only meal is the school lunch every day, because of poverty. I enjoyed being with the children, but feel sad to look back on them singing as hard as possible in spite of being hungry.

"Kibera" is a town which is not on the administrative map, and the government plans to tear it down. A new apartment complex has been built nearby, but it seemed that few of the inhabitants could pay the rent on the new houses. It made me think about what administration should really do.

■ Then I visited "Lake Nakuru National Park." It is an animal sanctuary around the Nakuru Lake which is famous because in the old days, the lake was filled with flamingos. Many animals gather at the shore of the lake - baboons, zebras, impalas, buffalo, giraffes, jackals, a parent and juvenile rhinoceros.... I watched the figures of the friends of "Popoki" and was very excited. In recent years, the number of flamingos has declined due to the deterioration of



the water quality in Lake Nakuru. And what was even worse, because there was a heavy rain and the salinity of the lake was high, this year the growth of algae which is the food of the flamingos was very poor. It made it difficult to see flamingos, but fortunately I was able to see a small group. One of the reasons why the pollution of the lake has increased is that the



sewers are not maintained properly, although the "waterworks" are maintained through help from Japan. When I heard that, I regretted it very much and was made to think about the way of protection of the natural environment and development assistance.

■ I visited "Maasai Mara National Reserve" on the border with Tanzania. We traveled by car, running for hours on a bumpy road. On the

Tanzanian side of the border is "Serengeti national park" that is famous for its abundance of the wild animals. The animals go back and forth in the very large savanna, having no regard for international borders. The border of this neighborhood was straight; I was made to feel that borders like it are a meaningless thing, pulled so arbitrarily by the organization that people call "states." I could see the friends of "Popoki" - zebras, gnus, giraffes, rhinoceroses, ostriches from whom Kenya Mountain gets its name, a group of powerful elephants with a cute young elephant, a warthog with its young, and a female lion with a tired face that walked just as if she were in a safari park. I was able to have a really good time.

■ Then, I visited the village of the Maasai where Mr. Jackson who Maki married approximately ten years ago used to live. This village is on a hill overlooking the Maasai Mara National Reserve. Villagers make a living in the pastoral continuing the traditional life of the Maasai. We stayed in a tent near the village which has neither electricity nor water service, observed life in Maasai, and visited the village elementary school. This school was built by the villagers seven years ago. They had a sense of impending crisis because practically all the livestock and farming lands are getting smaller, and their children will not be able to make a living in livestock farming in the future. Speaking of "Masai," Masai warriors are well-known. Maki's husband, Mr. Jackson, is a veritable "Maasai warrior" who has hunted the heads of two lions. I heard that Mr. Jackson is very proud of the culture of Maasai, and loves it. He would like to get to know a lot of people this great culture, but "lion hunting" is now banned from the point of view of animal protection, and the children do not have the time to train as "warriors" because they have to go to school. This is why it seems that the number of "true Warriors" is declining, and Maki is very disappointed. It definitely seems to be a time of change for the traditional culture of the Maasai who followed from ancient times.

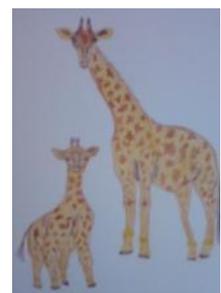


■ On this tour, I strongly felt that the people of Kenya are living completely differently depending on where they live and the environment in which they were born. The reality is hard to understand from Japan, and a lot of things in Kenya gave me an opportunity to think deeply. According to Maki and Chiaki, it is hard to be optimistic about the environment surrounding children of "Kibera" and Kenyan political situation in the future. However, I felt that while sometimes they get angry or worried, Maki and Chiaki continue to work towards creating an ideal future in Kenya. For those interested in Kenya and Magoso School or Maasai, please read the following books (in Japanese) which were written by Maki and Chiaki. There is also an associated web site. Please check it.

- * "Watashi no otto wa masai no senshi " by Maki Nagamatsu (Shinchosha)
- * "Africa biyori" by Chiaki Hayakawa (Ryokoujin)
- * [Http://maisha-raha.com/](http://maisha-raha.com/) "Fund Maisha ya raha"



Ronni 2011



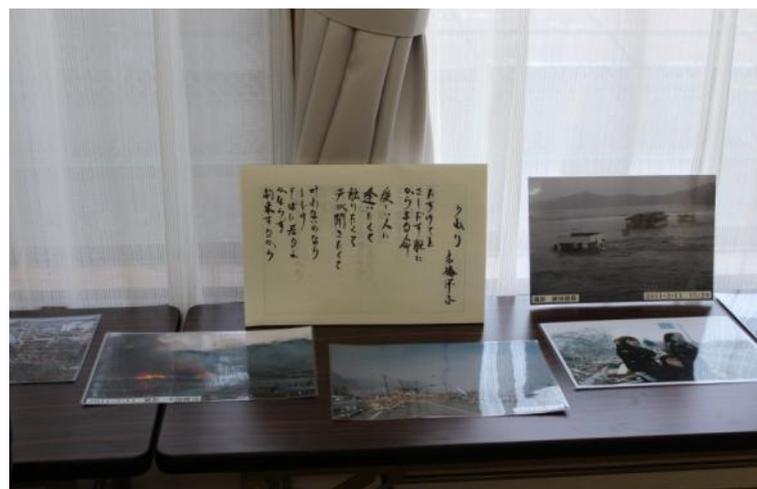
One and a half years since the earthquake...
In Otsuchi-cho and Rikuzentakata-shi

Yusuke Nishiyama

We are friends of Popoki, Ronni-nyan, Satoko-nyan, Aastha-nyan, Suzanka-nyan, Akira-nyan, Taro-nyan, and me, Yusuke-nyan. This time we went to Otsuchi-cho and Rikuzentakata-shi as part of Popoki Peace Project.

We left from Akihabara by bus and arrived in Otsuchi-cho early in the morning. Motomochi Sachiko-san, who is also Popoki's friend, came to pick up us early in the morning. We enjoyed a special breakfast at Motomochi-san's house. After breakfast Aastha-nyan asked her about the earthquake.

The other friends of Popoki's who we met during our trip were Ito Yoko-san and Tobai Yoko-san who are from Otsuchi-cho. Ito-san has truly loved to take photos since she was a child, and now taking photos has become part of her life. Tobai-san always loved to write her original poems and now she is a great poet. They gave us some very good information about how their home town, Otsuchi-cho, was almost completely destroyed by the tsunami which is one of the greatest powers in nature. Because it has the power to destroy everything in a blink of an eye, therefore it looks like huge black wall.



(Upper right : Ito-san explain to us about her home town).

(Left : Tobai-san talks about her experience). (Right : Tobai-san's poem).

Next, we all went to a temporary shopping center located next to the Otsuchi-Kita

school. We went to cafe named "Chiffon" which is managed by Kobayashi-san who is also a friend of Popoki. We ordered her home-made pumpkin soup and bread and it was so delicious. After lunch, she also talked to SuzanKa-nyan about her experience of tsunami.

Next~ We went to new hospital of Ueta-sensei, and he showed us a video about the tsunami. At the time of the tsunami, Ueta-sensei was in his hospital in the center of Otsuchi-cho. When he looked around, his building was surrounded by, and filling with, water from the tsunami. But he decided to never give up. He managed to escape with his staff and family to the top floor, and then was rescued by helicopter next day. I was impressed by his survival power.

Then we went to Michimata-sensei's hospital. He is also doctor in Otsuchi-cho. Michimata-sensei rebuilt his hospital and it now is a cute pink color. He chose the color because he wants to make his home town brighter. Michimata-sensei experienced the tsunami in his house. The water lifted him up to the ceiling and he had just 10cm space to breath. But he confessed that he didn't think of death... he said that with his smile. I was also very impressed by his positive attitude.



(Ueta-sensei's hospital)



(Michimata-sensei and his cute pink hospital)



After we said good bye to our Otsuchi friends, we went to Kamaishi-shi by bus and stayed at a Japanese hotel named "Takakine". Good night...

Next morning~we travelled to Wano Kaikan in Rikuzentakata-shi to take part in an "Ochakko" party. Ochakko began with the purpose of trying to get everyone together to drink tea. Since some temporary houses have been built around Rikuzentakata-shi after the earthquake, Ochakko has been held with the hope to get local residents and people in the temporary housing together.

Everyone who I met at Wano Kaikan was really energetic. I especially liked their lovely smiles above all. We could talk to many people, laugh together... So I think we've made lots of friends.

Fun time is always short... and we had to leave for Ikebukuro the same night. I wanted to stay longer.



(PopKi Peace Project at Wano Kaikan)



(Making Sushi rolls with everyone)

It was my first time to visit Tohoku after the disaster, and my first impression was, "There is nothing here..." Someone who saw the scenery said, "It is grassland." But Ito san said "NO!!! There was our beautiful city which we loved." When I saw the scenery, I felt the leniency and severity of nature. I wonder how nature tries to make everything into



nothing, or to bring it back to nature. Many important things for people were destroyed by the tsunami. But on the other hand, right now many kinds of flowers have spread all over the area... Sometimes the flowers life-force gives us high spirits and bravery. It is a weird relationship... . These four days let me think about how we can live peacefully together with nature.



POPOKI'S EASY POGA

Lesson 53

This month's poga is about balance. It can help you feel stronger and better in many different ways!



1. As always, begin with sitting up straight and making yourself look thin.
2. Next, stand up and using your tail for balance, stand on one leg. Try both legs - one might be easier than the other.
3. Now, without losing you balance, try moving your leg out to the side and back.
4. OK, now that you have your balance, how about moving your leg forward and backward? Remember, one leg might be easier than the other.
5. Did it? Time for the 'success pose'.

Congratulations! You have successfully completed Lesson 53. Do you feel refreshed? Please remember to relax, breathe, laugh and practice for 3 minutes every day.



Please join us!

Next Po-kai: 11.20 Kobe YMCA 19:00-20:50 Rm.306

December Po-kai: 12/18 Kobe YMCA (Po-kai & Ponenkai) Rm.306

11.9 Popoki at Risk Management Symposium, Shanghai. Kobe University Campus Asia Program.

11.10 'Peace and Health Event' Hyogo University of Health Sciences (Port Island, Kobe) Chiiki Renkei Shitsu. Opens at 13:30, program is 14:00-16:00. Po-kai staff, meet at 13:00. Admission Free, but please contact Popoki if you want to attend.

11.24-28 Popoki's Friendship Story at IPRA Conference, Tsu City, Mie Prefecture. (Popoki's session is 11/25).

2013.2.23-24 Popoki in Tohoku (Tentative)

2013.3.23 Popoki at International Rotary Conference, Yoshima, Kagawa Prefecture



Popoki in Print

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- "Hope on 60 meters of cloth" Etsuko Akuzawa. (In Japanese) *Asahi Shimbun* 2012.1.21
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- 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
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- "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
- "Nuclear Security is In
- 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

Aastha Ranabhat

Popoki is a forum where various aspects of life that have significant importance for peace are questioned (often critically) or brought forward, thought upon, and addressed either through: a) open dialogues at public meetings, workshops and seminars or b) actions such as volunteerism, advocacy and activism. Some of the themes and topics that have been directly or indirectly dealt with in Popoki are 'health and peace', 'disaster and peace', 'art and peace', 'environment and peace', among others. Although these or similar topics might be addressed by other peace projects and voluntary groups, what is unique about Popoki is the methodology it uses. The project encourages its participants and others it comes in contact with to also use non-verbal ways to understand, express and build knowledge about peace, which is often easily ignored by many. For example, the project often requires its members to pay attention to sensory processing, i.e. signals (understanding or memory) received by the brain through sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch, as a tool to interpret peace. This was difficult for me to understand in the beginning. During my earlier days in Popoki, I did not know how answering questions about the color, smell, taste, and sound of peace, friendship, and life, among other things helped build peace and/or generate knowledge about it. But now having applied the technique several times and seen its result, I believe that Popoki's methodologies produce effective results. To clarify my argument I would like to illustrate a recent example.

Last month my parents visited Japan to attend my graduation ceremony at Kobe University. This was not an easy trip for them, especially for my mom who had just lost her mother a few days ago. On the one hand she was happy for me for having overcome an important hurdle of my life, but at the same time she was grieving the loss of the most important person in her life; her mother. My mom however did not talk about her feelings the entire time she was in Japan. Except one time, after she attended Po-kai at Kobe YMCA. During the Po-kai, she along with the others had participated in an exercise that required using bodily gestures to express 'anger'. I was under the impression that my parents, especially my mother would not be able to carry out the exercise, not only because of what she was going through, but also because she is extremely shy. But to my surprise both my parents did extremely well in the exercise; they even had fun doing it. They expressed their opinions about why anger is a 'bad thing'. I was very impressed and proud of them for what they did and said. Later that night on our way home from YMCA, my mom told me that she was not angry that she lost her mom or that my graduation (and therefore their trip to Japan) coincided with the timing of her death. She said, "I am just confused. I don't know how to express what I am feeling!" This was the only communication that my mom and I had where she addressed the subject of my grandmother. I therefore believe that Popoki's techniques are extremely useful in expressing emotions and feelings that are difficult to talk about or express otherwise.



This technique is also a useful medium for people who are generally not very outspoken; especially ones who have learnt to silence their feelings. I am therefore extremely grateful to Popoki for teaching me this skill. Learning Popoki's methodologies has been worthwhile and I feel that my thoughts have deepened and compassion personified ever since I have become a part of the Popoki Peace Project. This, I believe for a student such as myself, who is eager to understand the world, improve it for some if not all of its residents and find oneself in the process, is a vital skill to acquire.

So, thank you Popoki for all your valuable lessons. Thank you for the opportunity to connect with individuals with distinct personalities and identities from around the world who however share my imagination of a more 'peaceful' and 'better' world. Thank you for convincing me that despite being worlds apart and despite our prejudices, varying ethnicity, culture, or generational gaps, there is common understanding of the importance of peace and a desire to work towards it ☺.

I am proud of you Popoki and I hope to make you proud of me someday too!!



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 have recently published a new 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, What Color is Peace? Popoki's Peace Book 1* 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. It is also available at Joseph-Beth Booksellers, Pittsburgh, PA.

***Popoki, What Color is Friendship? Popoki's Peace Book 2* is not yet available at these bookstores.**

Some ways to purchase *Popoki, What Color is Peace? Popoki's Peace Book 1* and *Popoki, What Color is Friendship? Popoki's Peace Book 2* 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)

Contributions are always welcome!

Popoki Peace Project popokipeace-at-gmail.com

<http://popoki.cruisejapan.com>



From within Japan, please use our Postal account or Postal bank account:

Account Name ポーポキ・ピース・プロジェクト神戸

Postal Account number: 00920-4-28035

Postal Bank (Yuucho Ginko) account number: Branch No.:099; Branch name: 009 店、special account(当座) 0280350

THANK YOU FROM
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