



Newsletter No.98 2013.10.25

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Halloween. It is not originally a Japanese festival, but recently everywhere you look there are cute pumpkins and other decorations. Popoki is a white cat, but maybe for Halloween he will try wearing a black fur coat.

## Popoki's Hot News!



### JOIN US FOR PEACE AND HEALTH!

We will think about peace and health with Popoki on 16 November at Hyogo University of Health Sciences! Please join us!

### PIECES OF PEACE

One of Popoki's friends, Shogo-nyan, sent the following piece of peace: "I feel peace when I take a walk alone, listening to music when the town is sleeping."

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.

### POKPOKI AND FRIENDS ON RADIO!

Popoki and some of his friends were on the radio program "Beyond the Fence" on KPRG Radio Guam to discuss the military build-up on Guam. You can listen to them or download the podcast of Episode 165, "What is the color of Peace?" by clicking on <http://kprg.podbean.com/>

### 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!



## Global Article 9 Conference

Yuri-nyan (Yuri Kimoto)

Mori-nyan (Kyoko Mori)

On October 14, 2013 in Osaka, a Global Article 9 Conference was held to aim of thinking and appealing about the importance of Article 9 of the Japanese constitution and peace. Many different guests, peace activists, and scholars from home and abroad made speeches. Their speeches showed their unbounded strong will towards peace. They said that we cannot make peace by force, and that we also should never make someone a victim while making peace.

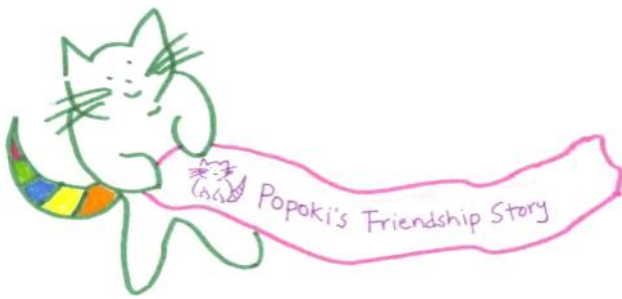
I joined some sub-sessions. One was a talk about an action to introduce Article 9 to the Constitution of the United States by an American movie director. Another one was the story of an A-bomb hibakusha. He talked about his experience of war and how remembers the scene of the atomic bomb before falling asleep, even now. Through the conference, I thought that to work to maintain Article 9 and to express its importance is one way to avoid having children experience war in the future.

There were also several other sessions held during the conference, such as Iraq war, nuclear accident at Fukushima, the base issue in Okinawa, poverty in the world, and so on. This conference provided opportunities to learn about various issues relating creating peace by lots of peace activists from the world.

Because of the voluminous amounts of information, I am unable to process everything I learned at this conference. So, I will keep on learning and try to understand. I also feel that since I did not see so many young people at the conference, I think young people need to be more concerned about Article 9 and peace. And I hope as a country that experienced both the atomic bomb and a nuclear power accident, Japan will appeal more strongly about the importance of Article 9 and making peace to the entire world.

One more thing was about the Popoki booth. The Popoki booth was very popular!! At other booths, various activist groups made assertions, but only Popoki asked slowly to the people, like what color is peace? Asking others is a sign of respect, or a sign I would like to know your opinion, or that your idea is important for me. People are pleased to be asked about themselves. Asking may begin to create peace. I felt that at the conference.





## \*Popoki's Interview\*

My first experience of volunteer bus to Kamaishi  
Mori-nyan (Kyoko Mori)

From Sept. 4<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup>, I went to Kamaishi-shi, Iwate Prefecture, a part of the disaster area of the Tohoku Earthquake. I joined the Kobe University Tohoku Volunteer bus with Kobe University students to support activities, since part of my job at the Kobe University Student Volunteer Center is to manage this program. The volunteer bus program has already sent students 16 times since May, 2011.

Since it was my first time to go to Tohoku, and I joined in midway, I had no idea about the situation of the town, even though we move around the town by car. The students who have visited many times know well about the town. Sometimes they explained the situation, for example, what looks like a small mountain was actually a mountain of rubble covered with growth. Some students worried about me, and they guided me to the center of town where most buildings were destroyed by the tsunami. They showed me the remains of the destroyed buildings, where the dike burst, the destroyed train platform which had stood at the center of the town before the tsunami, and the stand on which one places donated flowers. A few days after my arrival in Kamaishi, I became aware of the former streetscape for the first time. And then I realized that I had been looking at the straight road in the vacant land without giving more than a passing thought to what the streetscape used to be.

Whenever I go back to my hometown, the scenery of the town has changed. I feel sad because it becomes difficult to trace my memory. My 92-years-old grandma lost her original family home several years ago when the house was torn down. Only one pine tree was left on the vacant lot. I cannot forget the clear image of my grandma staring at that vacant lot helplessly. I think the scenery and buildings in the town exist together with human life. I saw the town where the scenery was changed fundamentally in Kamaishi. I felt a little bit sad at not being able to trace the memory of how it had looked before.

In the volunteer bus program, we have mainly three activities. They are footbath volunteers, sewing and needle crafts, and listening to stories about the destruction. I joined the interview of an elderly woman. What impressed me most about her story was that she said the sound of war and the sound of the tsunami were same. When the tsunami was coming, she thought the war had happened again because the sound of the tsunami destroying buildings and houses was same as the sound of bombing that she heard in wartime when she was a child. I felt lucky to have been able to hear such an important story.



I thought that while they have lost their living proof, I would like to keep their proof of being alive in my mind.



Dear Popoki

Seven friends held an exhibition of embroidery at a gallery near Rokkomichi Station called Hana Rokko. One member is Professor Seguchi from Kobe University, who is a good friend of Professor Alexander, and also of the cat she lived with, Popoki, so the exhibit included an embroidered book cover for Popoki's book. In making the book cover, Professor Seguchi used red embroidery thread to trace one of the book's illustrations, making a cute Popoki.

### The front of Hana Rokko Gallery

Copies of Professor Alexander's peace books, *Popoki, What Color is Peace?* and *Popoki, What Color is Friendship?*, are stacked near the book cover display. Many people who came to see the exhibit, particularly those who like cats, bought a signed copy to take home.



### Corner with Popoki's Books



The rest of us have not met you, but Professor Seguchi sometimes talks about you, so it felt as though you were watching over us during our exhibition. That gave me courage to display and sell your books. The stack of books gradually grew smaller, and just as I was beginning to worry, we were surprised by Professor Alexander who arrived with a backpack full of books.

Our last embroidery exhibit was held in Sannomiya 18 years ago, right after the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, in the midst of damaged roads and buildings. The exhibit was held with the help of friends I knew through embroidery work in Tokyo, and was in commemoration of the return of our friend and teacher, Ms. Aoi, from three years of artistic study in Sweden.

Ms. Aoi's Embroidery



Ms. Kaneko's Embroidery

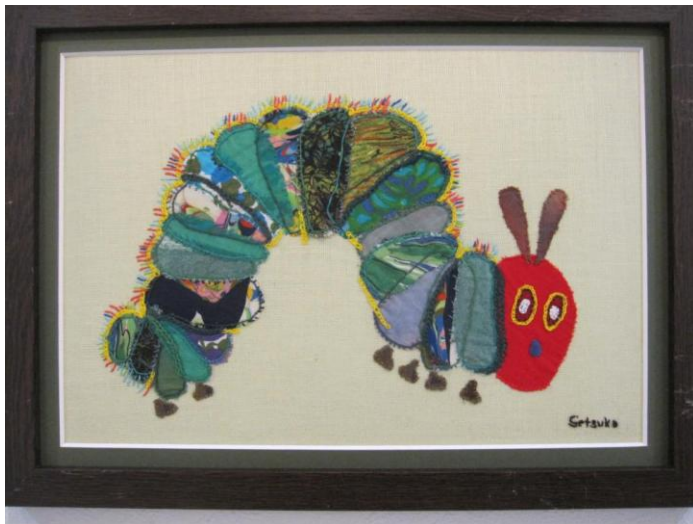


Big Tree and Sky





### Hungry Caterpillar



### An Amusing Display



### A Relaxing Display



Many people who came to see the exhibit made comments such as, “I feel pure and clean,” or “It made me feel warm inside,” or even sometimes, “It is so healing!” I think that is the result of our long friendship with Ms. Aoi and with each other.

Just as Popoki says in his book, the color of our exhibit came from our years of sharing joy and sadness, and helping and supporting one another.

I am not really a very good student, and even if I don't complete the monthly assignment but instead concentrate on things for the charity sale, my friends and teacher do not complain. This time, too, we sold your books, but also raised money for a facility for disabled children in Pakistan and a children's library in Mindanao.

Finally, I want to give one of my pieces, “Cat hugging a heart” to Professor Alexander to express my appreciation for her support of our work, and for Popoki, although he is no longer with us.

Thank you

2013.10.9

Obanoyama  
Junko Kaneko

### **Popoki Joins in the Free Embroidery Exhibit**

It is now quite a while ago, but shortly after Po-chan departed for the moon, Ronni became totally absorbed in drawing sketches of Popoki with colored pencils. From the tips of those pencils came Po-chan in all kinds of poses and with different expressions, looking as if he were about to jump out from the pages of the sketch book.

Then one day, she showed me a small sketch book. As I slowly and carefully turned the pages, I discovered gentle messages of “peace” along with delightful drawings of Po-chan. Once I began reading, I couldn’t stop. The sketches and messages created by Po-chan and Ponni were warm and gentle, but penetrated deep into my heart. I found myself very moved.

Such a small sketch book, with such a powerful impact! I felt it was so precious, and wanted to protect it with a book cover.

I asked Ronni what would be a good page, and to my surprise she said the page where Po-chan has his hair raised and is shouting, “No!!!” I burst out laughing, but now that I think about it, being able to object in a loud voice when you don’t like something might well actually be peace.

I want to thank Aoi-sensei, Ms. Kaneko and all of our embroidery group for welcoming participation by Popoki and Ronni in our Free Embroidery Exhibition.

Po-chan, Ronni, thank you.

Ikuko Seguchi

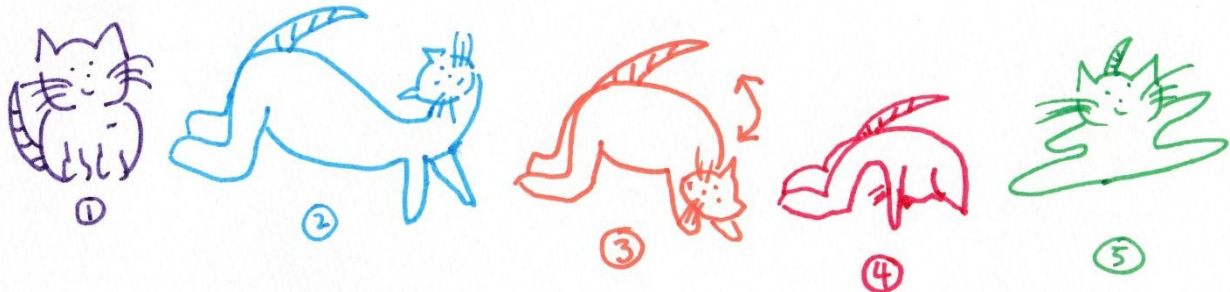
Book cover



# POPOKI'S EASY POGA

## Lesson 65

This month's Poga is about stretching our backs and legs!



1. As always, begin with sitting up straight and making yourself look thin.
2. OK, let's become cats! Get on your hands and knees, and stretching your back, stretch your head back. Raise your tail, too.
3. Now, round your back and bring it up, looking first to the right, and then left.
4. Next, round your back more and bring your head between your arms, looking at your stomach.
5. Did it? It is time for the 'success pose.'

Congratulations! You have successfully completed Lesson 65. Do you feel refreshed? Please remember to relax, breathe, laugh and practice for 3 minutes every day.



## Please join us!

**Next Po-kai: 10/31 Kobe YMCA 19:00-20:50**

11.16 Popoki's Health and Peace Event, Hyogo University of Health Sciences.  
14:00-. In Japanese. Information: 080-6204-8793. All welcome, but registration is required. Cost: 100 yen.

12.6-8 Popoki in Otsuchi-cho Workshop and Popoki Friendship Story Exhibit

12.24 Ponennkai! (Tentative)

\*\*\*\*\*We hope to have a film festival this year, too.

### Popoki's Friends

12.1 "With who do you want to live, and in what way? Changing views of families."  
In Japanese at Liberty Osaka (Museum). 13:30-16:00. Fee: Free, but you must pay admission to the Museum (500 yen). Information: 06-6364-7677; e-mail: [liberty.siteru@gmail.com](mailto:liberty.siteru@gmail.com)



# Popoki in Print

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- **“Reproducing ‘human shadows’ and asserting no nukes” *Kobe Shimbun* (2013.8.7 p.22)**
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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
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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)
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- “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/>)
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- ‘Nada’ notice of the Popoki Peace Challenge event, 2009.12, p.2
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- ‘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
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- \* **Back issues of Popoki News:** [http://popoki.cruisejapan.com/archives\\_e.html](http://popoki.cruisejapan.com/archives_e.html)





# What Popoki Means to Me

**Taylor Hennessee**

**I first met Popoki at the end of the Cherry Blossom season. It was my first time living in Kobe, Japan, and I was excited to meet new friends. Knowing that my stay in Japan would be short, I wanted to fulfill every moment. I strongly felt the four months would go by fast and wanted to learn as much as possible.**

**Before meeting Popoki, I met one of his good friends. He immediately made me feel welcome, and before exchanging spoken words, he accepted me as a friend rather than a stranger.**



**Popoki is amazing because he teaches us to open our minds and hearts. He guides us to accept outside differences, but also how to accept our differences within. When we learn to accept ourselves then it is easier to accept others. Focusing on judgment and dissimilarities creates barriers to seeing others' true characteristics. However, if we can focus more on simplicity and beauty of everyday life then we can find a little "piece of peace" within ourselves, thus finding the beauty in others as well.**

**Before becoming Popoki's friend, I spent a lot of time worrying. Now, I enjoy the little details of passing moments. Every day there is peace that can be felt, but we have to open our eyes to it. As I walk to school and the sun sits on my shoulder, I feel peace through its warmth.**

**For me, Popoki means welcoming happiness into our lives, but also being okay with difficult times. I hope everyone can find peace within simplicity throughout their days.**



## 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'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](http://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* and *Popoki, What Color is Friendship? Popoki's Peace Book 2* 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(at)gmail(dot)com))

**Contributions are always welcome!**

Popoki Peace Project [popokipeace-at-gmail.com](mailto:popokipeace-at-gmail.com)

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THANK YOU FROM  
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