

June 15 Adventure from Niigata to Hirosaki



The scene of Route 7 near Majima station. The sign says Majima Bridge.

June 15, 2012: The day is bright and sunny with thin and wispy cirrus clouds. Again as I did the previous week, I started off from Majima station on Route 345 at 7:35 AM. This time I didn't catch the first ride till 8:25, about 50 minutes later. The driver was a cook on his way to work at a restaurant in Sasagarenagare, a spa and resort area in northern Niigata. His name is Mr. Toki., a very friendly man who was constantly smiling. It may be redundant to call him "friendly" for all who voluntarily stop for me are friendly.

The only drivers who are sometimes not friendly nor talkative are the ones who reluctantly picked me because I approached them when they were parked and asked them to. For this reason, unless I'm absolutely desperate for a ride, I don't like to approach drivers sitting in their car. Most of them will only say no. The ones who do say yes are still sometimes reluctant and fearful. I would rather they come to me out of their own volition and offer me a ride. One lady who I approached actually scolded me for not taking the train! It doesn't make for a pleasant journey to have to deal with people like that.

Sasagarenagare is a 15 minute drive from Majima on lonely Route 345 with few cars. I had hoped to get a ride as far as the junction of Route 7 from where there would be more traffic going north. I walked about a 100 meters further up the road to the end of the shop and hotel area. About 40 minutes later at 9:30 a.m, a car that had just passed turned around and came back for me. The driver's name is Teru and he was on his way to Hokkaido!

Teru has been spending his retirement years traveling and camping around Japan. Though his home is in Amagasaki next to Osaka, he knows the Tohoku and Hokkaido regions very well. He goes from camp ground to camp ground. In the day he rides around the area on a folding bicycle which he carries easily in the back of his car. I suggested to Teru for him to take a free stretch of the expressway to save time, but he was no hurry to go anywhere. Teru preferred to take the slower but scenic coastal road. He took me all the way

to Akita city, a good distance of nearly 200 kilometers from Sasagarenagare! In spite of a relatively show start out of Niigata, this ride more than made up for it. I arrived Akita City at 12:30 p.m.



Maiko

At Akita City, I arranged to meet a lady who had picked me up last year, July 29. Her name is Maiko and she's a nurse care who cares for the elderly. I have friends in Akita and encouraged her to visit them. We had lunch together. After about an hour, Maiko took me to a spot on Route 7 near where she first met me. I didn't want Maiko to go too far out of her way for me. The spot where she dropped me off was heavily congested with mostly city traffic.

I had to wait 2 whole hours for the next ride! The next town of Noshiro was 50 kilometers away. Everybody ignored my sign that said "Noshiro". Finally I put it away and just stuck out my thumb. It was about 4 p.m when the next car stopped: Two men on their way to Noshiro! They took the expressway and went a bit out of their way to take me to Futatsui on Route 7 just past Noshiro.



Children walking home from school/

The next major city is Odate, about 40 kilometers further, and it was now around 5 p.m. After waiting only a minute, a man driving a rather expensive looking car saw my Odate sign and stopped. He was an interesting man, a watch retailer, whose hobby is collecting Rolex watches! He has a 40 year old daughter who is still single, a high school teacher. He said his daughter doesn't want to marry because she saw the way he treated her mother, the "teishu-kanpaku" style, meaning, the MAN is the absolute lord over the house and he expects his wife to fulfill his every whim and desire! I don't think his daughter needs to fear such treatment in marriage because the younger generation of Japanese men are not inclined to treat their wives so bossy and discourteously as their father's generation did.



Setting sun over Mr. Iwaki near
Hirosaki. Mt. Iwaki is an inactive
volcano.

It was after 6 p.m when I arrived in Odate. I walked a bit up Route 7. The next major city is Hirosaki and my destination, about 40 kilometers further. A young man stopped, a dentist by the name of Shuho. He's from Saitama but is now living in Hirakawa next to Hirosaki. Shuho graciously went a bit further for me to take me to Hirosaki Station. From there the hotel where I spent the

night was only a 20 minute walk away.

[June 10 Adventure Hitchhiking from Hirosaki to Niigata](#)



Mr. and Mrs. Sakura in their living room

Sunday, June 10, 2012: I hitchhiked 404 kilometers (253 miles) from Aomori Prefecture to Niigata City in 9 cars. They consisted of 4 married couples, two small children, 4 single men, 2 ladies and one single couple. A highlight of this trip was visiting Mr. and Mrs. Sakurada's home in Noshiro. They picked me up when hitchhiking exactly one month before on May 6 during my previous trip back to Niigata. I also made 3 new Facebook friends.

I left the capsule hotel in Hirosaki bright and early to catch the 6:51 a.m train, the first one going to Akita Prefecture. The fare to Nagamine, 24 minutes and 3 stations down the line, was only 320 yen. Nagamine is next to Route 7, the highway toward home.

The sky was overcast and there was a light precipitation. I opened the small folding umbrella I often carry with me. Traffic on the road was sparse. Around 7:35 a.m. a middle aged couple stopped for me. They saw my Odate sign and turned around. Their destination was Odate but decided take me all the way to Higashi Noshiro, an extra distance of 80 kilometers round trip out of their way!

I sent a SMS text message to Mr. Sakurada just before I arrived, and he replied he would be waiting for me at the convenience store near the Higashi Noshiro exit of the expressway. I arrived a few minutes before him.



One of the riceburgers I had for lunch.

Mr. and Mrs. Sakuada were great hosts. They gave me a good breakfast of fish and rice balls with salad, and a lunch bag for my trip: Two rice-burgers! In the 34 some years I've lived in Japan, today was a first time ever for me to even see a rice-burger! They were delicious!

I spent about an hour at the Sakurada home. During that time a lady friend of theirs visited, a true Bible believing and Bible reading Christian who attends a small church in Noshiro. The population of Japan is said to be 1% Christian, but I would say Bible readers are probably much less, only two or three out of a thousand. Her name is Mikiko and she became my Facebook friend!



Mikiko

Mr. & Mrs Sakurada offered to take me to Akita City, 50 kilometers from Noshiro, just as they did before when I first met them. But because they had no business in Akita City that day, I didn't want to be a burden to them. I told them that the expressway entrance of Higashi Noshiro which is only a few minutes drive from their home would be fine. The time was now about 10:30 a.m.

At 11:05 a.m. a young man named Yusuke stopped for me and took me to Akita City. Yusuke is a software developer. He wanted to drop me off at the train station, but because it was a good hour drive from Noshiro and because the train would be leaving an hour later at 12:10, there wasn't quite enough time to catch it. If I had caught that train, I would have taken it 3 stops down the line to get out of town and back to Route 7. The next train was 2 hours later, too long to wait. Yusuke therefore took me to Route 7 at the point it leaves Akita City going toward Yamagata, the way to Niigata.

Though it was *not supposed* to rain in Akita that day, it did, a constant but light precipitation. I wasn't in a very good location to hitchhike. The traffic was heavy but going quite fast. I walked up the road for at least an hour in the rain holding my umbrella and pulling my luggage behind me (it has wheels). I hoped to find an intersection with a good traffic light, but there was none. I was now in a desolate area in country.

A middle age lady took pity on me and stopped. She told me she would take me to a nearby train station. I declined her offer because she wasn't going very far. Twenty or so more minutes later it began to rain harder and I still hadn't caught a ride. I regretted not accepting the lady's offer. After walking further up the road to what I thought was an intersection, I saw it was actually an overpass going over a crossroad. The shoulder of the road became narrower which made it even harder for drivers to stop. I turned around and walked back the way I had just come to where the shoulder was wider. I stopped walking and started praying while holding out my thumb, smiling and facing traffic.



Route 7 in Akita close to the Yamagata border. Mt. Chokai is in the background.

The rain continued. About 10 minutes later another lady stopped. She was going as far as Michikawa station, about 20 kilometers up the road. Progress! When we arrived at Michikawa, the rain had stopped. There was a traffic light with a push button to turn the signal red for pedestrians to cross the road. I pushed the button every time a group of cars approached me to stop the traffic. This way I get a good look at the drivers faces and see if anyone will make eye contact with me. The first person who does usually offers me a ride. It also gives the drivers more time to check me out and decide whether they want to pick me up.



Another view of Route 7 close to Yamagata

After a few minutes a middle age married couple stopped and took me to Sakata city. The husband said his ancestors are samurai. Samurai families often have records of their family tree of hundreds of years. He knew some interesting facts of history of the area, things you won't find in a school history textbook.

The stretch of Route 7 from Kisagata to Sakata passes by Mt. Chokai which sits on the boarder between Akita Prefecture and Yamagata Prefecture. The Daimyo (feudal lords who were vassals of the Shogun) of Akita and the Daimyo of Tsuruoka quarreled over which prefecture would lay claim to Mt. Chokai's summit. They took their dispute to the Tokugawa government in Tokyo. Because the Tsuruoka Daimyo was richer than the Akita Daimyo, the Tokugawa government awarded the summit to the Tsuruoka Daimyo. He was lord over the Shonai area of Yamagata Prefecture. One of the officials of the Akita Daimyo took responsibility for the failure to gain Mt. Chokai's summit for Akita, and committed seppuku, also known as hara-kiri.



Keita, my new Facebook friend.

The couple took me to the other side of Sakata from where there would be more traffic to Tsuruoka, the next big town about 30 kilometers away. Three young men averaging 26 years old saw my sign and stopped for me. They are in a network marketing business called Amway. One of them became my Facebook friend!



Mr. and Mrs. Hayasaka with their son Ryodai

The three young men dropped me off at an intersection on the Route 7 bypass. The city traffic was heavy with few cars going very far. I walked further up the road hoping to get to a better intersection. After a few minutes, Mr. And Mrs. Hayasaka with their young son, Ryodai, stopped for me. They took me to the very edge of Tsuruoka proper, a few kilometers further up the road. The husband asked me when I hoped to returned home. "Of course, sometime this evening!" I replied. He gave me an incredulous look indicating he didn't think I would make it. It surprised me thought so considering the distance I had already come that day, 250 kilometers with only around 150 kilometers remaining. With 2 hours of summer sunlight remaining I considered it a piece of cake!



One of the tunnels of the Nihonkai Tohoku Expressway. The purpose of the blue lighting on the ceiling may be an attempt to keep the driver alert.

I walked further up the road. After only a few minutes a lady stopped and offered me a ride as far as Sanze, half way to Atsumi Onsen. She took the brand new stretch of the Nihonkai Tohoku, a section of the expressway that is still toll free.



The single couple who took me to Sanze

From Sanze on Route 7 I had to wait at least 30 minutes for the next ride. It was a young single couple who saw my Atsumi Onsen sign. The car was a station wagon with two seats in the front but none in the back. I sat down on the floor next to the back door.



Atsumi Onsen

The couple didn't go quite as far as I had hoped they would go. The end of the Nihonkai Tohoku expressway was yet a couple kilometers up the road, walking distance. I knew there would be more traffic from that point going further. It was now around 6 pm, an hour before dusk. The sky was blue with fleecy clouds, and the low sun illuminated the scenery in golden hues. I walked about 20 minutes.



Atsumi Onsen

Just before arriving to the access point of the Nihonkai Tohoku expressway, a car coming from the way I just walked stopped about half a football field distance up the road. It was a young married couple with their 5 year old daughter. They were headed home to Toyota City in Aichi Prefecture, not far from Nagoya. This was the final ride for me that day. Their route would pass directly through Niigata City! Toyota City is 580 kilometers from the point the family picked me up. It would take them 7 more hours to get home arriving round 2 a.m.!

The husband is from Tsuruoka and was visiting his parents. It was now about 6:30 p.m. He offered to take me to Niigata station from where I could catch a short train ride home, but rather than have them get off the expressway which would delay their journey by at least a half hour, I asked them to let me off at the Toyosaka Service area just inside Niigata city. Another stretch of the yet unfinished Nihonkai Tohoku expressway began at Murakami, about 70 kilometers from Niigata city. I knew the expressway ran close to and parallel with the Shinhaku train line. I wasn't sure what the closest train station was, but knew it had to be in walking distance from Toyosaka SA.

It was close to 8 p.m when we arrived Toyosaka SA. The sun had completely set. My eyesight has weakened the past year, and it's especially harder for me to see in low light conditions. The Toyosaka service area was more like a small parking area with no concession stands and only a restroom. I knew there had to be an access road to it leading to a city street, but the exit to the access road was not apparent. I walked in one direction and then another only to see the expressway on one side and dense forage on the other. I went to a lighted area in the restroom and studied the highway map, The map didn't give me enough detail to determine a direction. I then used the map / position locator feature of my cell phone. It helped me several times before when I wound up in an unknown area. Sure enough, the cell phone map showed roads leading to the service area! With renewed confidence, I walked a new direction, one toward a lighted area and saw the exit of the service area. It lead to a city road. But because it was dark, I still didn't have my bearings and was unsure of the direction to the train station. Again I pulled out the cell phone, determined my location, and walked a hundred meters in the direction I thought might be correct. I stopped and again checked my location. The map clearly showed me I had walked away from the station. I turned around and within 15 minutes found the train station. From there it was only a few hundred yen fare to home. I arrived around 9:30 p.m.

That evening I accessed my Facebook account and wrote to my 3 new Facebook friends that I had returned home safely. Mr. Hayasaka replied: "Wow, you really made it back Sunday evening as you said you would. Congratulations!" I've been in far worst situations than today and still was able to arrive to my destination thanks to the help of my "Higher Power." His name is Yeshua Hamashiach, AKA Jesus of Nazareth.

Summer Adventure Hitchhiking to Aomori City



Route 345 from Majima with my luggage in the foreground.

On June 8, 2012: I hitchhiked 402 kilometers from Majima Station in Murakami, Niigata Prefecture, to Aomori City. The drivers consisted of one elderly couple, two recently married young men, a man about my age driving a large truck carrying tons of rice, a car with 3 ladies and a man, and finally, a middle age lady who took me to the very door of my destination.

Hitchhiking from Niigata to Aomori in the summer is much easier than in the winter. I'm always in a race with the sun to catch the last ride before dark. In the summer I have 2 extra hours to work with. In the winter I often can only hitchhike as far as Odate city in Akita, 100 kilometers short of the goal.

I began hitchhiking on Route 345 which runs along the coast of the Sea of Japan. It's a rather desolate area with not much traffic. However the drivers are usually going at least 20 or more kilometers.



The first driver who picked me up. The background is Nezumigaseki in northern Niigata on the coast of the Sea of Japan.

After only a few minutes the first car stopped, an elderly couple. They took

me as far as Nesumigasaki, an area with many scenic views. I thought to walk from there to a large parking area at Atsumi Onsen, a popular spa visited by many tourists. But after seeing a road sign that said Atsumi Onsen is 10 kilometers further up the road, I quit walking. I had already walked about 3 kilometers.



Motomu who took me to Akita City.

After only a few minutes after I stopped walking, a young man named Motomu who works at Kanshiwazaki Nuclear Power plant picked me up and took me all the way to Akita City, 170 kilometers further or 42% of the way toward my goal! Motomu was on his way back to his home town to visit his parents. Soon his company will transfer him to an oil rig on a small island near Australia. I asked him if his job was dangerous, "Yes," he replied. But at least he'll be able to take his wife with him.

Motomu dropped me off at Route 7 in the center of Akita city. The traffic there was very heavy. Holding out a paper sign showing the town of my destination is ineffective in such a situation. I found it's best just to hold out a thumb and hope for a curious driver to stop and ask me where I want to go. I'm happy just to get a ride to the edge of town from where drivers will be going longer distances.



Two of the ladies in the car that took me to Oiwake just north of Akita City.

In only a few minutes a car with 4 elderly people pulled up, 3 ladies and a man. They found it strange to see a foreigner hitchhiking. It was their first time ever to pick up a hitchhiker. They took me to the Oiwake, outside of Akita city.

From Oiwake, a newly wed young man took me to Odate City, about 90 kilometers further. It was only 2:45 p.m. when we arrived!



The truck driver and his rig that took me to Aomori City.

I stood close to a Lawson's convenience store on Route 7 and held out a sign that says, "Aomori." To my surprise, a large truck stopped! It's quite rare for such a big rig to pull over to the side of the road for me. The driver said he would take me to Hirosaki city, but ended up going further than I

expected and went to the Aomori city Route 7 bypass! It was now 5 p.m.

I continued to walk further up Route 7. I was now in actual walking distance to my goal! But it was still pretty far and would have taken me 3 more hours had I walked it. The final driver was a lady who went out of her way a few kilometers to take me to the very door of my friend's house.

Repairing a Notebook PC



Toshiba Satellite J40. Broken CPU fan on the bottom right

A local company gave me the laptop PC you see in the photo. They often give me older PCs because I'm actually doing them a favor to take away their junk! It costs money in Japan to dispose of materials.

I was interested in this particular laptop PC because the keyboard looked so clean. It was as if it had hardly ever been used! And the specs were not bad. It had 256 megabytes of RAM and a 40-gigabyte hard disk and an Intel Pentium M CPU with a Japanese version of Windows XP. There was only one problem: The CPU fan had failed! I installed software to check the CPU temperature and it was up to 75 Celsius! Windows gave a warning every minute indicating high temperature. I knew the notebook PC could not be used very long with an overheated CPU / Motherboard. It certainly would not run very well for long. The CPU was engineered to drop to a lower speed and performance if its operating temperature increased too high.

The same company gave me another Toshiba laptop a few months previously. The display was dead but when hooked to an external monitor, the laptop did work. A laptop without a working display has zero mobility if it needs an external monitor. I used it for parts.

With two junk laptops gotten for free, I did what I would not do with a customer's laptop PC. I unscrewed each and every screw in both the top and bottom of the Toshiba Satellite J40 laptop PC, put them in order on my desk, removed the bottom plastic case from the top case, removed the defective CPU fan, and replaced it with the CPU fan from the Toshiba laptop with the broken monitor. Because the size of the fan was not the same, it could only be secured with one screw. But it was enough.

I added 256 megabytes more RAM and installed Linux, Fedora 17 on it. This of course destroyed the Windows XP installation entirely, something I could not even use legally because of licensing. Who needs Windows anyway? My new used laptop boots faster and shuts down quicker than it did with Windows!

A totally successful operation! The hardest part was not taking it apart without breaking it, but putting it back together – and without a single screw left over. I think you technicians know what I'm talking about. □

[Hitchhike Adventure from Hamamatsu City back to Niigata](#)



Yusuke and Noriko, the first people to pick me up.

Sunday, May 20, 2012: Today was the last day of my trip and my return to home. The challenge was to hitchhike 600 kilometers (about 400 miles), the same distance I traveled on day one of my journey, but this time I would be crossing Tokyo. It's not easy to cross Tokyo by hitchhiking, I usually take the train. Today I was successful.

After waiting a whole hour at Mikatahara PA next to Hamamatsu, a young man approached me and offered me a ride. His name is Yusuke and he was with his

girlfriend, Noriko. It's not too often that young single couples pick me up; they consist of only 3% of the total.



Mt. Fuji viewed from Fujikawa Service Area

Yusuke and Noriko, both from Nagoya, were going mountain climbing that day and would be getting off the expressway at Shizuoka city. They offered to take me as far as the Fujikawa Service area. From Fujikawa there is a magnificent view of Mt. Fuji in good weather.

After close to another hour of waiting, a truck driver from Kure City in Hiroshima Prefecture offered me a ride as far as Kawasaki which is near Tokyo! Truck drivers are only 6% of the total of people who pick me up, and a truck driver on the expressway is probably less than half that percentage. He was a friendly guy, and quite intelligent compared to many truck drivers I've ridden with. He urged me not to return home to Niigata that day but to spend the night in Tokyo so I could see the total solar eclipse the next day, Monday May 21! "I can't," I replied, "I've got to be home by evening. We have a little dog that goes crazy with loneliness when nobody is around! If I don't return home tonight, there won't be anybody home to care for her!" The truck driver replied, "You're going to miss an opportunity that happens only once in a lifetime for a dog!"



Dog riding in the back of a motorcycle at Kokuho PA in Kawasaki.

The truck driver took me to Kokuho PA in Kawasaki. I had thought to walk to a train station from there and take trains to cross Tokyo to get to the Kanetsu expressway, but changed my mind thinking I might not only save money but time if I could catch a ride to some place in Saitama. It paid off. A married couple saw my Niigata sign and offered to take me to Narimasu station on the Tobu Tojo line! Great! From Narimasu it was only a short train ride to a station near the Miyoshi service area on the Kanetsu expressway, the highway home.

From Miyoshi SA 3 more vehicles took me back to Niigata. One was a couple from Brazil. Non-Japanese who pick me up are only 2% of the total of 2407 drivers who picked me up since I've been keeping statistics from August 2003.

William M. Henry Artwork



I recently visited a good friend who is an artist, William Henry. He is offering high resolution DVDs of his artwork for \$99 US. Anybody interested? The below is a couple low resolution samples of some of the artwork.



William M. Henry artwork



William M. Henry artwork

[Hitchhike Adventure from Osaka to Hamamatsu City](#)





Left to right: Driver
from Hiroshima
Prefecture and Mr.
Sayama, my hitchhike
partner.

May 18, 2012: Today was the second day of my trip. The main purpose was to help my friend in Hamamatsu City, Shizuoka Prefecture, to purchase and set up a laptop PC. It's only 290 kilometers (180 miles) from Osaka to Hamamatsu, half the distance I hitchhiked the day before from Niigata to Osaka, "a piece of cake!"

It was just after 9 a.m and only few minutes after arriving to the Suita Service Area of the Meishin Expressway when a young man walked close to where I was standing. He looked at me and I guessed immediately that he also was a hitchhiker! I've met up with other people hitchhiking, but it's pretty rare, only a handful of people in thousands of times. The man, Mr. Sayama, was on his way to Yokohama, about twice the distance I needed to go that day.

When the Japanese people tell me that hitchhiking is uncommon in Japan, I tell them that's why it's so easy to do it; I have no competition! Of course I'm joking. I didn't consider Mr. Sayama a competitor, but a potential partner in my journey.



Udon noodle lunch

I told Mr. Sayama that he need not worry about me. I would give him preference in case the driver was not willing to pick up more than one passenger. It turned out that we became a team! I met the first driver who took us both to Otsu Service Area in Shiga Prefecture, and Mr. Sayama met the second driver, a man from Fukuyama Hiroshima Prefecture who took me as far as Shinshiro PA before Hamamatsu, and Mr. Sayama to Gotemba. The Hiroshima man bought us all a nice lunch of Udon noodles.

From Shinshiro PA a man working for an IT company took me to Hamamatsu Station.

[May Hitchhike Adventure to Osaka](#)



Jackie next to his French sports car

May 17, 2012: Osaka is about 600 kilometers or 400 miles from home. I made it in a very good time, 8.5 hours in 4 vehicles spending less than \$10 that day for food and a bit of public transportation to get me started.

The first driver, Tomoshi, is an airplane mechanic serving in the Japan Self Defense Force. He's stationed in Higashi Matsushima, Miyagi Prefecture, very close to where the tsunami of March 11, 2011 hit. Tomoshi was on his way to Kanazawa while his wife was in labor. He was hoping to be in time for the birth of his first child! I don't know if he made it in time or not, but he sure helped me get to my destination in a good time. Kanazawa is exactly half way to Osaka from Niigata.

The last driver, Jackie, a rather affluent looking businessman who speaks good English, was driving a French sports car, a Peugeot. I showed his photo to my Japanese friends, and they all recognized the car by the symbol on the hood.

Jackie is in the insurance business, a *dealer* with insurance companies! It's not very often I get to travel in an imported vehicle speaking to the driver in English, but even rarer still, Jackie is one of those uncommon people in the world who is very knowledgeable about [who the real rulers of the world](#) are, their secret societies, and what their agenda is!

Jackie seemed to appreciate hearing what knowledge I have about the subject. He went out of his way to take me to the very area where my friend in Osaka lives.

May 6, 2012 Hitchhike Adventure: Hirosaki to Akita City



Miss Tomoko. She took
from from Nagamine to
Igarigaseki

Hirosaki was under a clear blue sky when I boarded the first train out of town at 6:54 a.m. My destination was home to Niigata and I was hoping to hitchhike all the way back from Nagamine station, just 3 train stations from Hirosaki and right on Route 7, a straight shot to Niigata. It turned out I was able to hitchhike in 5 rides only as far as Akita City. It started to rain just before car #5 and was raining heavily when I arrived in Akita City, still 270 kilometers from home. Heavy rain means the train the rest of the journey.

Car #1: A young single lady who works at Furutobe Spa. She took me as far as Igarigaseki, about half way to Odate City.

Car #2: A middle age man to Odate.

Car #3: A truck driver to Takenosu, part way to Noshiro City. I was surprised he stopped. The truck carries Home Center supplies. It's not very often for truck drivers to stop for me.



Lady who took me to
Noshiro City

Car #4: A middle age lady driving a van to Higashi Noshiro. She past me by, turned around and offered me a ride. It's not uncommon for drivers to turn around after considering for a few moments whether to pick me up. I explained

to the lady some principles of my faith from the Book of Genesis. Favorite words in the Japanese language are “nature” and expressions of appreciation such as “thank you”. I told her that if Genesis 1:1 is true, and we are created beings by God, shouldn't it be a part of our nature to say, “thank you” to our Creator for life and all things He created? She agreed and understood that point quite well!



Mrs. and Mr. Sakurada of Noshiro City

Car #5: Mr. And Mrs. Sakurada of Noshiro City who took me to Akita station. Mr. Sakurada loves history and he was completely turned on when I explained to him the real reason the Japanese Tokugawa government of the 16th century began to persecute Christians in Nagasaki. It was not the true Gospel of Christ that the Tokugawa government feared, it was the influence of ROME, the Roman Catholic church, the Pope and the Jesuits!! The Japanese government knew the power of Rome and what the Pope did to Europe. The Nagasaki Christians they persecuted were all Roman Catholics, people who would have their ultimate allegiance to the Pope, not to the Japanese government. Tokugawa Iemitsu feared revolt. He feared Japan would become a colony of Rome. He therefore closed Japan to foreigners, but *ESPECIALLY* to Roman Catholic countries like Portugal. He had no problem with the English or Dutch because he knew they broke off from Rome after the Protestant reformation. I told that to the driver and it was like turning on a light in his head. He immediately put together the dots and was totally amazed!

[Confirmation: Al-Qaeda Exists only in the Mind](#)



“BBC’s killer documentary called “The Power of Nightmares“. Top CIA officials openly admit, Al-Qaeda is a total and complete fabrication, never having existed at any time.” (Quote from: Top Ranking CIA Operatives Admit Al-Qaeda Is a Complete Fabrication)

In 2010 while riding a train, I met a man from Pakistan. This was just after Terry Jones, the pastor of the Christian Dove World Outreach Center in Gainesville, Florida, U.S., announced he would burn 200 Qurans on the 2010 anniversary of the September 11 attacks. The Pakistani man asked me what I thought about it. I gave him a thumbs-down sign. I don't think it's good when people purposely antagonize those of a different culture or religion and make trouble. Besides that, I don't even believe Osama Bin Laden or Al-Qaeda had anything to do with 911. It was a false flag operation to give G.W.B. the excuse to invade Afghanistan.

The young man from Pakistan then proceeded to tell me Al-Qaeda is not an actual organization. Calling a person in the Middle East a member of Al-Qaeda is like calling a Japanese person you think is a criminal a "Yakuza." The person called a Yakuza may not even be a member of any organized Japanese mob, he may only appear to fit the type. Moreover, there are many different organized Japanese crime syndicates. Just saying "Yakuza" doesn't pinpoint any particular one. The Pakistani man said the U.S. Government will call anyone it doesn't like, "Al-qaeda."

Alex Jones says, "[Al-qaeda was created by the CIA.](#)" as if there is such an organization. This is a misleading statement! I believe "Al-Qaeda" to be CIA disinformation; it's a pseudo organization that exists only in the mind, used for controlling the public and justifying aggression by the government.

[Visit to Hirosaki Park during Cherry Blossom Time](#)



Visit Hirosaki Park in Aomori Japan to see beautiful cherry blossoms.

Spring hitchhike adventure: Nagano, Osaka, Tokyo



The red line shows my route from Niigata to Nagano, Osaka, Tokyo, and back to Niigata. You can see that Niigata Prefecture is neighbor to Fukushima. The damaged nuclear reactors are only 160 kilometers away from my home. I hope you do not believe the hype of extreme radiation levels that some alternative media people are broadcasting about Fukushima! (Soon to be posted on this site.) Click on the map to see more detail.



Two young men who took me from Sakae PA to Yoneyama SA in Niigata



Mr. and Mrs. Hamada of Mie Prefecture. They took me from Niigata to Midoriko PA near Shiojiri City, Nagano Prefecture.



Mr. Tanaka who took me to Osaka



Tomoko (32) who took me to Tokyo from the Makinohara SA in Shizuoka Prefecture

On Wednesday, April 18th, I began another week long hitchhike adventure. This time I hitchhiked 1430 kilometers (894 miles) in 17 vehicles. Among these were only 2 trucks. The drivers and passengers consisted of 6 married couples, 1 single lady, and the rest male company employees. The total cost of the trip was about 10,000 yen or around \$78 US. About 4000 yen was used for transportation in and around Tokyo. The Kanto area of which Tokyo is the center is always more expensive than Kansai (Kyoto / Osaka / Kobe) because it's much larger and my destinations are usually from one end to the other. When in Kanto, time for me is more important than saving money by hitchhiking. It's a nice place to visit, but I'm glad I don't live there. I especially would not want to be in Tokyo in the event of a major earthquake!

My first stop was Shiojiri in Nagano Prefecture to see a dear friend, Esther who has stomach cancer. The second, Osaka to see a friend, and the third, Kanto, Tokyo and vicinity where I visited 5 different homes, fixed one PC, setup Skype on another PC, and attended an inspiring fellowship dinner with old and new friends.

Day 1, Wednesday April 18: Destination Shiojiri City, Nagano Prefecture

Car #1: An older couple who took me to Sanjo city. They stopped for me after a 30 minute wait. The wife was very talkative.

Car #2: Two young men (see photo) driving a truck on their way to Gifu. They are some kind of engineers fixing farm machinery. They dropped me off at Yoneyama SA on the Hokuriku expressway.

Car #3: Mr. and Mrs. Hamada from Mie Prefecture (see photo). They went to a spa in Niigata and stayed 3 days. The closest route to Mie Prefecture from Niigata is through Nagano and they would be passing the Midoroko Parking area! Esther's house is close enough to walk to from Midoriko! Well, it's still 4.5 kilometers and so I hitchhiked.

Car #4 An older man the 4.5 kilometers to Esther's house. I spent 3 hours with her then took a train to Chino (because it was too late to hitchhike further) and stayed a night in Tateshina and another night in Fujimi Town with friends.

Day 3, Friday April 20. Destination Osaka:

Car #5 A truck from Suwa SA to Okurogawa PA on the Chou expressway. The driver's company markets Shingen Mochi, a Japanese sweet made with rice. He gave me a box to give to friends.

Car #6 A foreign couple from Peru! It's not often I meet foreigners. Neither

of them could speak English and my high school Spanish is practically non-existent. I talked mostly with the wife all in Japanese. They were going just north of Nagoya, a bit out of my way. At first I asked them to drop me off at Enakyo SA because it is before a junction that goes south of Nagoya connecting to a faster route going to Osaka, but after 30 minutes of waiting for a ride and still nobody stopping, and because the Peru couple had stopped at Enakyo for lunch, I was able to catch them again before they left the service area and asked them to take me further to Uchitsutoge which is closer to Nagoya.

Car #7 Mr. Tanaka (see photo) to a bus stop just before Osaka! It was great to talk to Mr. Tanaka. He told me his wife is somewhat fearful every time he has to travel on business. He called her on his cell phone so I could introduce myself. I gave a Japanese New Testament to Mr. Tanaka to give to his wife and wrote a little message in the side cover for her.

Day 4, Saturday April 21. Destination Tokyo:

Car #8: The distance from Osaka to Tokyo was the longest leg of my journey, some 530 kilometers. I tried to get an early start and arrived at the Suita SA by 9 a.m. After a 30 minute wait two men on their way to Kyoto offered me a ride. One of them remarked he thought I was probably a Christian missionary of some sort. Both men were friendly and talkative. They took me to Katsuragawa Service close to Kyoto. Just before we parted, one man offered to buy me a cup of coffee but then gave me a 1000 yen bill instead! It's not often drivers offer me money. Of course I never ask them for it.

Car #9 A friendly married couple to Otsu SA in Shiga Prefecture, just past Kyoto.

Car #10 Mr. Setto on his way back home to a city near Suwa in Nagano. At first I thought to go all the way with Mr. Setto to Nagano because it's only 200 kilometers from Tokyo. But because it is on the Chou expressway and my destination is the end of the Tomei expressway, I decided to get off at the Owari Ichinomiya service area hoping for a ride toward Shizuoka on the Tomei.

Car #11 A man to Akahata PA on the Tomei expressway. It was a bit of a wait to meet him.

Car #12 Mr. and Mrs Maesada in their little car to Makinohara Service area in Shizuoka. It was such fun talking to them because they laughed often after hearing of my adventures. It could have been because I mentioned that the first driver today gave me a gift of money that Mr. Maesada pulled 3000 yen out of his wallet and handed it to me! I felt embarrassed and said I don't expect to receive money, I am thankful for just the ride, but Mr. Maesada insisted on giving it. Receiving a gift of cash from drivers twice in the same day is probably a first for me.

Car #13 Miss Tomoko (see photo) all the way to Tokyo! I had to wait a whole hour for Tomoko to come, but it was worth every minute! She was on her way back home to Saitama after surfing with a friend. Because she was going to Saitama, she would be getting off at Yoga, the end of the Tomei, which is

exactly the place I would be meeting a friend. Tomoko listened attentively while I shared with her basic Bible stories from the Book of Genesis and the Gospels for the next 2.5 hours. I hope to continue to communicate with her through Facebook.

Day 7, Tuesday April 24. Destination Niigata and home:

Car #14: Mr. Nozaki who took me to Kamisato SA from Miyoshi SA on the Kanetsu Expressway. He said I'm the first foreigner he's ever met. I hope to stay in touch with him.

Car #15: An elderly couple to Komayose PA just past Maebashi in Gunma Prefecture. The husband who drove seemed to have a hearing problem but his wife understood me better.

Car #16: A company president to Akagi Kogen. I bought lunch there, a bowl of curry rice.

Car #17: The final driver, Mr. Tanaka (the second Tanaka this trip, not related), is from Kawasaki and had an appointment in Niigata city after 5 p.m. He was the most interesting person yet to meet because though he said he is a member of Sokagakkai – a sect of Buddhism which is very aggressive in proselyting others to their cause – he did not push his religion on me at all. Instead he told me of his interest in the Bible. He likes the stories of the Old Testament, and is interested in learning more about Jesus Christ. Not only that, but Mr. Tanaka is one of those very rare Japanese who is very knowledgeable about the Freemasons, the [Bildbergers](#), the [Council on Foreign Relations](#) (CFR), [the Illuminati](#), and even the [Vatican / Jesuit connection](#)! I asked him how he came to learn about the New World Order conspiracy of world take over. He replied that he thirsts for knowledge and spends much time in bookstores buying and reading any book he thinks can help him in his journey in life.

Mr. Tanaka graciously took me all the way to my home in Niigata city. It was not really out of the way for him, but because my area is far from the expressway, the detour added at least 30 more minutes to the arrival time of his destination. He said he would still arrive in time.

Cherry blossom viewing is extremely popular among all Japanese. Families and friends often have a picnic under the cherry trees in full bloom. They sit on tarps and eat lunch and or drink rice wine. When I left Niigata on April 18th, the cherry blossoms had not yet bloomed and I wondered if I would see them this year. Nagano is a bit further south but higher elevation and the cherry blossoms hadn't bloomed there either. But both Osaka and Tokyo have already finished their cherry blossom season this year. When I returned to Niigata the following Tuesday, the cherry blossoms had bloomed and were 2 days past mid point. The blossoms last one week and at the time of this post are already nearly gone. I'll have one more opportunity to see them in Hirosaki Park this coming Sunday, April 29. Hirosaki is 400 kilometers north of Niigata.

Joyce Riley of the Power Hour radio show: Hype, fear-mongering, disinformation and plain lies



Joyce Riley

A dear lady friend in the USA urged me to listen to hours 2 and 3 of the March 27, 2012 Power Hour radio show broadcast hosted by Joyce Riley. She was afraid that I and my family were in **extreme and imminent danger** due to **nuclear radiation** contamination. She knows I live in an area that is neighbor to Fukushima Prefecture, Japan. After listening to what Joyce Riley and her callers were saying, I understood my friend's concern! Click on the audio arrow to hear 1 minute and 45 seconds of the Power Hour, hour 3 of March 27th.

[Joyce-Riley-The-Power-Hour-03-27-12-Hr-3](#)

If Joyce Riley were saying those things *last year March 2011* immediately after the Great East Japan Earthquake, I might think she was giving accurate information. But I think for her to make such claims *now* is nothing but pure lies and fear-mongering!

I knew I could disprove at least one of her statements immediately. I called a friend who lives near Misawa AFB in Aomori Prefecture. He has close contacts with military personnel on the base. He reports *no recent* increase of military personnel sending their dependants back to the USA! I visited Misawa city last year and months after the nuclear disaster in Fukushima. I

saw little American kids with their parents at the Misawa city MacDonalDs. Those children were of course dependants of US Air Force personnel stationed at the near by Misawa Air Base.

May 7 update:



Hirosaki Park May 5th, 2012. Misawa USAF personnel with dependents

The photo shows a man and his wife, their 3 children, and their 2 friends standing to the right and the left. The location of the photo is Hirosaki Park, Hirosaki City in Aomori Prefecture. The 3 men are USAF personnel from Misawa Air Force base in Aomori Prefecture. The lady and the 3 children are the dependents of one of the men, obviously the man holding the baby. This is positive visual proof for you that Joyce Riley was lying!!

When walking through Hirosaki Park last Saturday I saw *many* USAF people. I knew they were USAF because I was one of them at one time, and they were all young with short hair. The people in the photo confirmed to me that they are indeed from Misawa AFB and confirmed that there is **no recent sudden repatriation of US military dependents in Japan.**

Misawa is far more likely to get hit by radiation than my area of Niigata is because it is located northeast of Fukushima while I live west of Fukushima with a mountain range between me and the nuclear reactors. Also, wind blows from the west to the east in this part of Japan. There are no mountains to block radiation coming to Misawa from Fukushima. No repatriation of dependents means the USAF doesn't consider radiation a threat at this time.

The claim about chaos and overly congested Japanese airports is also false. A young man I know flew from Tokyo International Airport (Narita) just a few days ago. He had no difficulty in getting and boarding a flight.

Moreover, if you are reading this 45 days from March 27, sometime past the middle of May 2012, and you haven't been hearing of nuclear radioactive contamination to the point of massive evacuations from Japan and people dying by the scores, you can be absolutely certain that Joyce Riley's program has no credibility whatsoever!

I smelled a rat as soon as I learned that the Power Hour is hosted on the **Genesis Communications Network (GCN)**, so called "alternative media" that also hosts [Alex Jones](#). GCN is affiliated with mainstream media **ABC** and ABC is owned by the *Walt Disney Company*! Whenever I think of ABC and especially Disney, I think of mind control, MK-ULTRA and disinformation. If you have a steady diet of either mainstream media or the compromised big name alternative media, and think you think for yourself and form your own opinions, think again. Those opinions were in all probability *given to you.*

Quotable Quote about Evolution

“We are now about 120 years after Darwin and the knowledge of the fossil record has been greatly expanded. We now have a quarter of a million fossil species, but the situation hasn’t changed much. The record of evolution is still surprisingly jerky and, ironically, we have *even fewer examples* of evolutionary transition than we had in Darwin’s time.” [David M. Raup](#), University of Chicago paleontologist.”

I got this quote from:

http://www.yah-tube.com/videos/scott/27_world_views_in_collision_p7/index.html

Read the truth exposing the **pseudo-science** of evolution: [The Big Lie](#)

WordPress Power



On Monday, March 5th I received an assignment to build a new website, SongwriterMarie.com The next day it was live on the Internet. By Thursday all the material was posted and all the tweaks applied. My client was pleased I did it so quickly. This is all due to the ease of working with [WordPress CMS](#), the power of Gimp (a free alternative to Photoshop), and a bit of knowledge gained from previous experience.



Hitchhike adventure to Hirosaki



Couple who took me from Adatara to Bandaisan SA on the Banetsu Expressway

March 2, 2012: It's been nearly two months since my last trip. Sometimes I wonder if getting older will discourage folks from picking me up, but this adventure proves to me otherwise. It was one of the least expensive considering the distance traveled. The round trip was 906 kilometers in 11 vehicles.

At 7:35 a.m. I began hitchhiking along route 345 from Majima station, just past Murakami. This road runs parallel to the Sea of Japan and very close to it. The day was sunny and views of the coast lovely. Only 10 minutes later a lady picked me up and took me as far as Sanboku, about 20 kilometers up the road and just before the connection to route 7, the main highway going north.

From Samboku I walked about 3.5 kilometers in 55 minutes to Fuya. There were several tunnels along the way. One was about 600 meters long, too long and dangerous to walk through seeing it had no sidewalk for pedestrians, and the traffic was medium. Adjacent to that tunnel closer to the coast was another tunnel that ran parallel to it. It was shorter and for some reason closed to traffic. I could see the end of the tunnel and hoped that there would be a road going further. I walked through it and found yet more short tunnels, all closed to traffic, and walked through them. All the way I saw no one but apparently some do walk through them because I saw footprints and bicycle tracks entering the tunnels. Finally I came back to the main highway, route 7, close to Fuya station. I walked to an intersection with a traffic signal and began hitchhiking again.

From Fuya an older man took me to Atsumi Onsen, a tourist area with a large "Michi no Eki" or parking area with shops and restaurants.

From Atsumi Onsen a mother and son took me to Tsuruoka city, about 140 kilometers from home. Often I get stuck for a while at this point, but shortly afterward a truck driver took me to Sakata city, 20 kilometers further.

I've been stuck for a while at Sakata as well. The next large city is Akita, a good 80 kilometers away. But today a man coming all the way from Osaka picked me up when seeing my Akita sign, and it turned out he was traveling all the way to a town in Aomori right next to my destination! His name is Mr. Kajiwara, and we had a great conversation the entire trip, about 4 hours. He bought me lunch and took me to Hirosaki station, actual walking distance to the hotel where I stayed that night.