

# 2013 Summer Adventure to Osaka



## Trip Highlights:

- I hitchhiked 1077 kilometers from Niigata to Osaka and back and though I was out for 4 days, I spent less than \$15 US. for food and a short train and bus help me on my way
- Got rides to areas only walking distance to the places I need to go.
- Met a man who picked me up some 15 years before! He asked a driver for me and found my next ride!
- Picked up by a group bus full of religious pilgrims! The driver asked me to pray for the trip just before we departed.



Megumi and Risa who took me to Otsu SA from Taga SA



A group bus and its driver, Kensuke Inoue. He took me from Otsu shiga prefecture (near Kyoto) all the way to Ishikawa Ken where he treated me to lunch. The passengers of the bus are of a religious sect of Shinto called "WorldMate".



Fumio and Yukimi Igawa and sons who took me to Oyabegawa in Toyama ken. One more son is in the car.



Atsushi, a man who said he picked me up hitchhiking some 15 years before! He was not going far and so searched and found another driver to pick me

up!



I actually got on this truck with the 666 license plate but got off before the driver left after learning he might not be stopping where I needed to get off! Significant, don't you think?

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## WordPress tricks: Creating a menu on a page using images from a category



My goal was to use WordPress to create a page of images from a category so that I could continue to add more posts to the category and have the page update itself automatically. In other words, I hoped to imitate this HTML page <http://www.deeptruths.com/posters/posters.html> using a WordPress plugin to avoid all manual HTML coding hassle.

I did it using two plugins: [Widgets on Pages](#) and [Ultimate Posts Widget](#)

I had to edit the Ultimate Posts Widget php file to add code just after the img tag to float the images to the left and add some space around them.

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style="float:left;margin:1em;"
```

See [the result](#)!

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## Another hitchhike adventure up north on a rainy day



Carrying an umbrella in one hand while riding my bicycle through heavy rain, I road 15 minutes to the local train station to catch a train just after 6 a.m. It was imperative for me to travel to the city of Aomori, 470 kilometers to the north, and I intended to take trains all the way. But upon arrival at the train station, I learned the trains were not running past Murakami City, only 60 kilometers!

I was glad that just the day before I checked the map for a new route. Hirakida station is the closest to the Arakawa-OKi expressway interchange and appeared to be close enough to walk to. When I arrived at 7'10 a.m. the rain had stopped.

It took me 50 minutes to walk to the expressway interchange but it bore fruit. Only a few minutes wait and I got a ride. Four vehicles later I got as far as the southern border of Akita Prefecture, 200 kilometers from home. By then the rain was so hard I asked the driver to take me to a train station. Happily the trains were running from that point and I made it to Aomori by 7 p.m.

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## Hitchhike Adventure to Tokyo – July 6-7, 2013



First driver who picked me up. He repeated to me 4 or 5 times in English, "Enjoy my life!" I'm not sure whose life he meant.



Miss Akiko Abe and friends who took me to Kamisato SA from Takasaka SA

## Highlights of this trip:

- Had to wait 2 hours and 40 minutes for the first ride! But the next 2 cars picked me up relatively quick and I arrived at my destination in Tokyo (300 kilometers from Niigata) on time.
- The third and final car to Tokyo took me exactly where I wanted to go. He was headed to Yokohama which meant my destination of Yoga in Tokyo was exactly on his way.
- On the way back to Niigata the next day, after an hour wait at Takasaka SA in Saitama, the first car was Miss Aikiko Abe and her two friends. We became Facebook friends! See my [Facebook page for more photos](#).

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**[June 29 to July 1 2013 Hitchhike  
Adventure to Hirosaki, Sendai and  
Niigata](#)**



Route 345 in Niigata Prefecture  
along the Sea of Japan



Helicopter pilot Lt. Abe who took  
me to Tsuruoka



Midori, Marie and Nagisa who took  
me to Noshiro City.



The Shoji family who went 100  
kilometers out of their way to take  
me to my destination, Hirosaki.



Mr. Tateyama who rescued me from  
what he deemed a dangerous place to  
stand on Route 4



Dr. Masegi who took me from  
Bandaisan SA on the Banetsu  
expressway to Niigata City.

## Highlights of this trip

- Mrs. Fujiwara, the fish market lady, picked me up for the 4th time to date. It's likely I'll see her again unless I change my route.
- A helicopter pilot, Lt. Abe who serves in the Self Defense Force took me to Tsuruoka in Yamagata Prefecture. He says he can also fly light

aircraft.

- Approached at a highway rest stop between Akita City and Noshiro by two sisters, Midori and Marie. They offered me a ride to Noshiro City.
  - Got stuck for 2 hours in Noshiro City! One possible reason is I let Midori and Marie take me further to Noshiro Minami rather than Hachiryu which is the beginning of the free expressway where it was more likely to get a ride further past Noshiro. The expressway entrance at Noshiro Minami is narrower and harder for drivers to stop.
  - Rescued from my plight by a man who took me to Higashi Noshiro station. I approached him at a convenience store parking lot asking him where the closest train station was, and he offered me a ride. From there I walked to Higashi Noshiro IC. I knew was only 10 minutes away by foot. The next train was an hour later which meant I had plenty of time to both hitchhike and walk back to the station if I didn't catch a ride in time. But after only 10 minutes wait at Noshiro Higashi IC, I caught a ride from the Shoji family who were on their way to Kita-Akita City. At first they said they would take me to Fatatsui just past Noshiro, but then they decided to take me all the way to my destination, Hirosaki in Aomori! It was at least 100 kilometers out of their way.
  - Pioneered a new way to get out of Sendai. Took a train from Minami Sendai to Tategoshi and hitchhiked on National Route 4 which leads to the Shiroishi interchange of the Tohoku Expressway. Mr. Tateyama took pity on me because he thought the place I was standing on Route 4 was too dangerous. It was indeed narrow and hard for cars to stop.
  - Got a ride on Route 4 by an elementary school teacher on his way to Aizu, the very direction I needed to go. Moreover, he took the expressway from Shiroishi which saved me the time I would have needed to hitchhike there.
- Dr. Masegi, a professor at a university in Niigata, took me back home to Niigata city. One of his hobbies is wind-surfing.