

Dear friends and family,

Happy Chinese New Year... it's the year of the dragon... The dragon is one of the most powerful and lucky signs of the Chinese zodiac. I hope this coming year will be a good year for all of us, especially for those in the Tohoku area.

It's cold here... colder than ordinary winter. Yikes... I would say, because it's snowing in many parts of Tohoku and is COLD. In fact, it snowed in Tokyo twice.

We had a gathering in LA on December 27, 2011. Thank you, Art, for getting the place for us and thank you, Suzy, for organizing it. This time, we had a panel. An article appeared on Rafu Shimpo on their New Year's Day issue. I'm glad that Steve and Patty made it a panel and a few of us had a chance to share our thoughts and experiences.

I did not have a chance to share with those who came to the gathering, but so far, thanks to all of you, I gathered about US\$60,000 so far. It has been used to buy water, food, clothes, underwear, baby goods (formula, etc.) and for transporting the goods and keeping a volunteer center and of course assist volunteers. They have so much stuff from the city and the prefecture and volunteers are trying to keep track of them and take inventory. I'll try to keep it more organized when I go up there.

There are so many individuals and organizations to provide relief work for Tohoku, but we/they are not well connected. I'm planning to go up there early next month to visit several organizations and individuals and see if we can possibly collaborate our energy and work. I'll keep you informed about this.

I think Kenny showed this at the gathering, too, but Dorothy Tamashiro sent me a link. "Arigato" (Thank you):

http://www.youtube.com/watch_popup?v=SS-sWdAQsYg&vq=medium from people in Tohoku.

For future donations, please make checks made out to JAPAN RELIEF FUND and send it to:

Patty Nagano

267 S. San Pedro Street
Unit 609
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Patty lets me use her address, since it's easier for all of you to send checks to a US address rather than to me in Japan.

I meant to send this out much sooner, but a lot have happened since I came home on January 5th. This is actually the busiest time of the year for us, because our Finals Week has just ended and we have entrance exams tomorrow and Friday. I have to go to Singapore for the Ministry of Education research in mid February and might have to go to Shanghai, too. I'll be back in LA in March for my college (business trip, that is).

I'll send another update after my visit to Tohoku in early February.

Tina