

Hello everybody,

What a quick two months it has been. One of my favorite things I've done so far is go to school with my host sister Mayu-chan. Japanese school is very different from American schools in several ways: first and foremost the textbooks are significantly smaller this is because the classes are mostly lecture based.

Also the class time was finished by 12:45, but the students didn't go home right away because the clubs met in the afternoon. I went with Mayu-chan to the school band. This was really fun because my host mom had a flute, the instrument I play in the U.S., and I got to play with the band. The band practice ended at around 5:00 every day though sometimes it went longer.

I also got to stay three days at the home of Tamiko, the chaperone whom my family hosted last summer. I attended several Hippo (LEX) family club activities. At these activities parents and children sing songs, play games, and listen to stories in other languages, including English, French, Spanish, Chinese, and Korean among many other languages.

Also I went to several famous Shinto and Buddhist shrines and temples. I was actually at Tamiko's house for the start of the Olympics. It was a really nice to watch the opening ceremony with Tamiko and her family because watching the Olympics is something I do at home with my family in Kansas.

These are just a few of the many things I've been doing this month. I'm very sure that getting on that plane to Chicago is going to be very difficult. Thank you all for your support of this amazing trip.

マリリン ビュークリ (My name in Katakana, Japanese characters used to write foreign words phonetically.)

真理鈴 (My name in Kanji, Japanese picture characters based on Chinese.)

Mary Lynn Buchele