



# OCEAN BREEZE



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No. 192 2020 Winter

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## Construction of Next-Generation Environmental-Friendly Car Carrier Fueled by LNG

Fleet Management Team, Car Carrier Planning & Development Group

In December 2018, "K" Line placed an order for a car carrier vessel fueled by LNG (liquefied natural gas) with Imabari Shipbuilding Co., Ltd. as a next-generation car carrier vessel with reduced environmental load. Construction has been started and expected completion will be in the fall of 2020. The outline of the vessel is as follows:

### <Outline of the Vessel>

Length Overall:	about 199.9 meters
Width:	about 37.2 meters
Maximum number of vehicles loadable:	about 7,020
Gross Ton:	about 73,800 tons
Country of Registry:	Japan

Due to ever-increasing high environmental awareness, our study of LNG fueled vessel has been accelerating. With the support of the "Model Project for Maximize Reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions from LNG fueled Vessels" a joint project between the Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism of Japan, came to materialization this year when our company marked the 100th Anniversary of its foundation.

In 2015, we formulated a long-term environmental management vision called the "K" LINE Environmental Vision 2050 "Securing the Blue Seas for Tomorrow," with the aim of minimizing all environmental impacts generated by our business activities. In February 2016, we launched an environmental-friendly flagship called "Drive Green Highway," a car carrier vessel with the next-generation environmental technologies such as state-of-the-art energy-saving technologies and SO<sub>x</sub> scrubbers (sulfur oxide purification equipment). In the Environmental Vision 2050, we have set the goal of "Reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by half" and "Replacing majority of energy currently consumed with new energy sources," and this LNG-fueled ship will be a next-generation environmental-friendly car carrier vessel for achieving these goals.

By building LNG-fueled car carrier vessels, we are actively responding to a wide variety of transportation needs from customers both domestic and overseas, while responding to the growing need for environmental friendliness, and contribute to a sustainable society through high-quality transportation.

"K" Line Group is promoting activities that contribute to SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals), and this project is a part of its ongoing activities.



(Note) LNG fuel reduces CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by about 25 to 30%, sulfur oxides by 100%, nitrogen oxides by about 80 to 90%, respectively, compared with conventional fuel oil. It is attracting attention as a potential alternative fuel with less environmental load.

## "K" Line/FueLNG Conclude Ship Management Agreement for Singapore's 1st LNG-Bunker Vessel

Fuel Strategy Team, Fuel Strategy & Procurement Group

"K" Line and FueLNG Pte Ltd. (FueLNG)\* have concluded a ship management agreement for the 7,500CBM LNG-Bunkering Vessel (LBV) that FueLNG will own, operate and carry out all commercial operations.

The partnership will combine "K" Line's extensive ship management and LNG transportation experience with FueLNG's LNG bunkering expertise, which includes more than 160 truck-to-ship LNG bunkering operations conducted to-date. This will provide a reliable, expedient and seamless bunkering process for FueLNG's customers.

The LBV is expected to commence LNG-bunkering service in Singapore, one of world's largest bunkering ports, in 2H2020 after delivery from Keppel Offshore & Marine's shipyard where it is being built. This will be the first LNG Bunker Vessel providing ship-to-ship bunkering in Singapore.

In order for shipping companies to achieve increasingly stringent global regulations on greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from ships, LNG as marine fuel is considered one of the primary alternative fuels to replace conventional heavy fuel oil for its characteristics to emit less GHG and other air pollutants.

"K" Line Group will promote its effort to reduce GHG emissions in accordance with the "K" LINE Environmental Vision 2050, providing logistics services that are more environmentally low-loaded and highly efficient.

\* FueLNG is a joint venture between Keppel Offshore & Marine and Shell Eastern Petroleum (Pte) Ltd and works to build a world-class LNG bunkering network and encourage the adoption of LNG as a marine fuel.



## Launching of a 200,000-dwt Bulk Carrier "CAPE DISCOVERY"

On October 25, 2019, at the Marugame business headquarters Imabari Shipbuilding Co., Ltd., the 200,000-dwt ton Cape size bulker "CAPE DISCOVERY" has been completed.

The ship is compliant with the Common Structural Rules for Bulk Carrier (CSR-BC) for bulk cargo ships, and the main institution is equipped with an electronically controlled engine with enhanced anti-corrosion measures, in order to save energy, we have installed WAD (Weather Adapted Duct) in front of the propeller and Hybrid Fin behind the propeller.

Furthermore, for complying with the regulation of SOx Global Cap from January 2020, the vessel is equipped with a scrubber on the funnel to remove sulfur oxides from the gas discharged from the engine, it is a state-of-the-art ship that gathers world-class technology among Cape size bulkers and she will be engaged in iron ore and coal transport for JFE Steel Corporation under a long term consecutive voyage charter contract.

With a large number of vessels from various types with various sizes - from very large to small -, "K" Line offers its customers a unique range of transport services. "K" Line will remain committed to flexibly and actively responding diversifying needs for shipments of ore and other iron-bearing raw materials.

Coal & Iron Ore Team No.1, Coal & Iron Ore Carrier Business Group



### [Vessel Particulars]

LOA:	299.95M
Width:	50.00M
Depth:	24.70M
Draft:	18.32M
Deadweight:	208,603T
Gross Ton:	107,919T
Main Engine:	MES MAN-B&W 6G70ME-C9.5
Speed:	14.6KTS
Class:	NK
Flag:	Liberia
Builder:	Imabari Shipbuilding Co., Ltd.

## KLNG Joint Hosts Maritime HSSE Contractor Conference in Association with Shell International Trading and Shipping!

"K" Line LNG Shipping (UK) Limited

For two days, on October 10 and 11, "K" Line LNG Shipping (UK) Limited ("KLNG") joint hosted a Maritime HSSE Contractor Conference in association with one of its most valuable customers, Shell International Trading and Shipping Company Limited ("Shell").

The conference has been held by Shell every year since 2013, inviting maritime industry suppliers who have dealings with Shell to take part in debates based on specific safety-related themes. KLNG was contacted by Shell at the end of 2018 regarding the possibility of co-hosting the event. After numerous discussions and preparations, Shell and KLNG were eventually able to co-host the conference, which was a very important event for KLNG.

On the day of the conference, over 100 attendees from around the world gathered for the event, and the venue was enveloped in an air of excitement from morning. The conference began with greetings and opening remarks from Shell Fleet Manager Mr. Philip Williams, and KLNG Managing Director Hiromichi Kato.

Shell introduced its shipping section's initiatives with regard to HSSE so far (including initiatives focusing on communication and organizational culture relating to health, safety, crisis management and the environment, human behaviors and diversity), and the company's aim of achieving a zero incidence rate for accidents through cooperative partnerships within the industry. Mr. Williams also expressed Shell's gratitude at being able to co-host the conference together with KLNG on this occasion.

KLNG's Managing Director Kato explained how safety is the top priority in the shipping industry, and introduced efforts under the "K"ARE Project\*—in which KLNG has been engaged since 2015—which is a strategic plan to improve safety culture maturity and service quality. He went on to express his feelings with regard to co-hosting the conference, saying that he hoped that the conference would contribute to increasing mutual understanding and the building of trusting and cooperative relationships between participants; provide opportunities for changing individual ways of thinking and corporate cultures; and ultimately lead to the realization of a zero incidence rate, which is a common goal for everyone in the industry as a whole.

During the conference, participants split into groups to hold debates based on keywords such as "safety," "leadership," "deepening our impact," and "personal wellbeing." The groups watched tension-filled skits that felt just like a real workplace, then discussed the key issues for concern and possible solutions to those issues, before sharing their ideas with all of the other participants. Each group was joined by attendees from Shell and KLNG, who acted as facilitators, providing support to make it easier for participants to express their opinions and enabling a more active debate.

There was also a panel discussion on safety and physical and mental health in shipping industry workplaces, with Stephen Taylor, Technical Manager, from KLNG participating and leading the energetic debate as a panelist/speaker, together with other members from Shell and other suppliers.

Over the course of the two days, the conference provided a good opportunity to share details once again of how KLNG is engaged in sincere efforts in relation to issues such as Safety Leadership Behaviors and Safety Culture (core values upon which Shell places key importance) in order to ensure safety, which is a top priority for KLNG as a shipping company.

Looking ahead, KLNG will continue to build good relationships with its customers by sharing common values and working to further improve ship management quality and safety, which are core values for KLNG and other shipping companies. In closing, we would like to express our gratitude for being able to participate in this conference as co-hosts, and to everyone for their efforts in facilitating the hosting of the conference itself.

\* "K" ARE Project ("K" LINE Safety Culture Improvement Project):

The "K" ARE Project is a project that focuses not only on necessary systems, schemes and manuals required to achieve safe operation, but also human behaviors, with the aim of fostering an collaborative organizational culture (both aboard ship and in the office) that encompasses: (1) caring about others' well-being and take ownership of responsibilities; (2) building trusting relationships by believing in good intentions; (3) having an open attitude towards dialogue; (4) facilitating learning throughout the organization and learn from mistakes; (5) giving positive recognitions and also constructive feedback in a fair and clear way (6) building a culture where people can speak up and share safety concerns with a view to making improvements; (7) building teamwork; and (8) managing conflicting dilemmas. This helps preventing major accident by: 1) stop escalation 2) enable learning 3) stay vigilant.





## The Community Where I Live ~THAILAND~

Contributed by Mr. Masahiko Taki, K LINE (THAILAND) LTD.

Happy New Year! How are you surviving the winter cold? The New Year issue features Mr. Taki, who is currently away from home, working in Thailand, a country that is hot year-round. The following excerpts some of the more than 40 essays Mr. Taki has written for the editorial notes of their monthly bulletin since his transfer in 2016.

### Determined to Survive in the Hot Country

[April 2016]

Repeatedly having visited Bangkok for business, I was confident that I had already gotten used to the place. However, living here is a different matter. Currently my biggest obstacle is the Thai language. Tokyo is the same in terms of the reality that you can only really communicate using the native language. In this country, however, it is amazing how everyone from abroad speaks Thai despite limitations in their fluency. It seems like the Thai people on the streets take it for granted that foreigners speak Thai. In the past, I took a business trip to Hungary and asked a certain company's representative stationed in that country whether he was inclined to learn Hungarian. "Who would want to learn a language spoken by fewer than ten million people worldwide?" That was a convincing answer. The population of the Kingdom of Thailand is little fewer than 70 million. The size of business is also significant in this country. But I wonder if the Thai people feel happy when they see foreigners speak or try to speak their language. Personally, what makes me happy living in Thailand is the easy availability of liver "Sashimi", which I hadn't been able to eat since returning from Johannesburg. For me, this is very good. Food is a part of culture. How can it be acceptable to ban a food item by law? It is a denial of the culture of a country and is even an act of mental suicide. Our country could perish. I was growing apprehensive about my country. All I can do is to go with the path that I believe is right. So, I decided to move and survive in a different place. It is like the lyrics of the popular Japanese song Michinoku Hitoritabi. One thing is different, though. Unlike Michinoku, I came to a hot, southern country.



Writer of this article

### Conspicuous Flavor in Thailand

[September 2016]

There are 120,000 restaurants in Thailand, half of which operate from a stall. According to information released by JETRO and other organizations, there are a little more than 2,700 Japanese restaurants in Thailand, though a local sightseeing brochure says the number is no longer countable if Japanese restaurants operated by Thai owners are also included. Many new restaurants have opened, and some came here after closing their operations in Japan. Reportedly, however, only about 30% of them survive the competition and manage to take root. About a month ago, The Nikkei ran an article about the “saturation” of Japanese restaurants in

Thailand. Almost all Japanese ingredients are available, and you can eat authentic Japanese food if you are willing to pay as much as you would in Japan. But restaurants that assign all food preparation to Thai staff typically serve strong-tasting food. I am from the shitamachi area of Tokyo and prefer strong-tasting food. Even so, I find the meals from these restaurants too salty. For example, vegetables that look like they are floating in a much larger amount of dressing is a common sight in Japanese-style bars here. This is not limited to Japanese food. McDonald’s French fries are also too salty. I know this is a hot country, but you may not live long if you ingest that much salt. I checked the average life expectancy in Thailand, and it was 74.2, 80th in the world, in 2012. This was higher than I had expected (incidentally, the average life expectancy was 75.6 in Vietnam and 75.2 in China) and much larger than in African nations where dying in your 50s is much more common. As the figure in Thailand was around 67 in 1990, it looks like the country has undergone significant improvements in its people’s dietary lives, healthcare or other things. Whatever it is, one thing is for sure: longevity is extended in conjunction with economic growth. You don’t know what Love is is a jazz standard, but You don’t know what Thai is! is a more appropriate phrase to describe how I have spent this brief six months since being transferred to the country. I have yet to understand the graceful charms of “the country of smiles.”



Left: Furikake (seasoned powder for sprinkling over rice) available in a supermarket.  
Center: Liver sashimi (top) and onigiri or rice balls (bottom) also available in a supermarket.  
Right: A shot from a yakitori restaurant

### Just Shopping around Thailand, a Shopper’s Paradise, Is Fun

[May 2017]

Shopping is one of the things that make you forget the loneliness of working away from home. Lately, secondhand shops are my favorite. Sometimes I go to shops in residential areas. You can basically find anything, although they mostly have the daily necessities that were sold off by expatriate workers and their families when they returned to their home country. Many items, such as towels and china, are still unused and the stores also sell many brand-name clothes, shoes, bags, and accessories. You can even find very unique items like used bottles of perfume. You can also find really good things. I have



Secondhand shop



already made some purchases, like a Baccarat glass and a Bally bag. Just shopping is already fun in this place. It is also interesting to see other customers in the stores. Thai customers far outnumber their Japanese counterparts, like me, whose tastes are somewhat strange. Many of them come in as family and make big purchases. I am not sure what keywords, "made in Japan," "brand-name item," "quality," or "reasonable price" attracts the customers more. Either way, it is true that the country has demand and purchasing power to that extent. The other day, I found a store selling used jazz and rock records in a multitenant building located next to our office. In high school, I used to frequently visit stores of this kind. When I was a university student, I sold most of my record collection for drinking money. I still have a little less than 300 records and brought all of them along with a stereo to Johannesburg when I was sent there. (By the way, a less-humid, stone-built house has superb acoustics.) I didn't have the slightest urge to do the same for Bangkok, a tropical place, and now I spend most of my time listening to CDs. As I write this, I am growing interested in stopping by the record store. Consumption behavior in this country may be close to what it was in Japan 30 to 40 years ago. This makes me feel nostalgic as I am a part of the so-called "bubble generation" in Japan. The likelihood of me recovering from my "mild addiction" to shopping is low. I will fully enjoy this shopping paradise feeling as if I'm contributing to the Thai economy.

### Recommended Food in Thailand

[July 2017]

HIS, a travel agency, conducted a survey of must-eat foods in Bangkok. Poo pad pong curry (curry-fried crab) ranked #1, followed by khao man kai (chicken rice), gaprao (rice topped with basil-fried, minced meat), som tam (papaya salad) and pad thai (Thai-style fried noodles) in that order. However, I am less attracted to Thai food. As far as food is concerned, I am even less interested in the many stalls on the streets. I hate these stalls despite having grown up in my childhood surrounded by the stalls typical of the shitamachi area of Tokyo. The stalls in Thailand are far from hygienic and give off unpleasant smells. Yet, many local people are attached to them. This symbolizes the attractiveness of the chaotic city characterized by the coexistence between the ever-developing streetscape and tradition, as some foreigners complacently put it.

CNN recognized Bangkok as the world's best city for street food for two consecutive years. This December, Michelin will publish a Bangkok restaurant guidebook. It will include high-end restaurants as well as stalls. Meanwhile, the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration prioritizes sanitation and safety\* and aroused controversy when it announced a policy banning the use of stalls to operate eating establishments within the year. Last year, stalls were told to close in some places including Siam, a central area of Bangkok. Allow me to digress a little bit.



At a record store



Street food (a stall)

"For those who travel to Bangkok, the biggest attraction should be Japanese food." These words from a respected colleague residing in Bangkok are very persuasive. Surely, the most recommended food in Bangkok is undoubtedly Japanese food. Here, the availability of Japanese food is taken for granted more than in any other part of the world besides Japan.

\* Stalls block streets and may cause traffic accidents. Sometimes they are a large obstacle to pedestrians and joggers.



A market

A stray dog lying in front of 7-Eleven

ค ค ค ค ค

[March 2018]

This is not a new eye test chart. Each of these characters has a different meaning and they are from the Thai language. Many Thai characters derive from Pali, the ancient Indian language that was used to write Theravada Buddhist sutras. Anyway, these characters are complex and are obviously too hard for us to discern. To me, these characters look like trompe l'oeil or the shadow cloning technique you see in ninja movies and cartoons like Sasuke and Hattorikun. The ninja arts are, in short, a hallucination, but I am amazed by tablet computer's ability to enter and convert the Thai words that are as complicated as or even more complicated than Japanese. The progress of science is awesome. As mentioned in the November 2017 issue, social media has spread across Thailand to the extent that the people in this country use the Internet longer than those in any other country, nine hours and 38 minutes per day. Thai also ranked #1 in the world for time spent using the Internet on smartphones, four hours and 56 minutes per day. Taking an example from the recently controversial Facebook, Thailand ranks #8 in the number of users by country. Bangkok ranks #1 in the number of users by city, and Thai is the twelfth most used language. The excessive use of social media also triggers problems. I read a column lamenting the deterioration of youths' manners and morality. Today it is Thai people, not foreign travelers, that deface Thailand's historical sites and nature, according to the column. Some of these people climbed ruins that are off-limits in the ancient capital Ayutthaya, posed for photos, and posted them on social media (similar incidents have also been reported in Japan). At the beginning of this year, a drunken 18-year-old woman repeated stupid poses on the parapet of Rama VIII Bridge before falling to her death in the Chao Phraya River. The entire event was streamed live and became big news. The streaming video was shot by a motorcycle taxi driver to whom the woman had handed her smartphone. I viewed the video. It's no joke. Social media can be really scary if you use it the wrong way. It is common that your photos and comments are posted without your knowing it, which can cause unexpected misunderstandings and accidents. There are no ninjas in Bangkok, but we see many things that cause delusion, confusion, or illusion. You need to be careful using a smartphone. I try not to exchange LINE accounts with anyone whom I meet by chance and am not and will not be familiar with.

### Note that Nà Means Water

[September 2018]

Let me give you a Thai language lesson. In Thailand, water is called Nà. Ice is NàKhæng, literally meaning solid water. Tears are Nàtā, meaning eye water. Hxngnà is a water room, or, in other words, a restroom. You will add to your vocabulary in this way. It is a well-known fact that the Menam River, the former name of the Chao Phraya River, came from a Chinese person who mistook the Thai word Mæñà meaning a river. Incidentally,

Taki is น้ำตก, literally meaning “water-fall”. In Thailand, many people may associate water with golf courses. Bangkok and its surrounding area are basically flat and golf courses unfortunately reflect this in their slight undulations. As if providing an alternative, many courses are located in “risky” areas with a pond nearby. The other day, I fell into the pond while playing golf with a client. Instead of my ball, my body was completely immersed in water. That was the sixth hole of a golf course I had never been to before. A pond occupied the area to the left of the fairway. However, the water surface was completely covered with thick algae and, to a stranger, looked exactly like grass. Worse, there was no pile or anything separating the ground from the water. On my way to the ball, I stepped on what I believed to be a large grass bunker near the green. In an instant, I disappeared from sights of the other players. In the water, I still had my putter in my hand. The pond was more than two meters deep. In the next moment, however, I rose from the bottom of the pond to get back on land thanks to my usual fitness training in a swimming pool. It was like a joke. Shocked and dismayed, I took off my shoes and made a par putt with water dripping from my hair. Unfortunately, it ended up a bogey. Looking back, I would praise myself for having continued and finished the game after the mishap of having to buy all of my new clothes and shoes. I could have been injured or even died. On that day, I was popular with the caddies and was asked to pose for a photo with them at the end. Later, my local colleagues laughed over the story. “I suggest that you call yourself Tk น้ำ (fall into water), not น้ำตก (“water-fall”),” some of them said. This is not a laughing matter.



Tk น้ำ? (LOL)



A golf course

### Love Coffee?

[February 2019]

It looks like the prices in Bangkok are about 30% of those in Tokyo. The conversion ratio of a baht, the currency in Thailand, to Japanese yen is roughly 1:3. Assuming 1,000 baht to be equivalent to 3,000 yen, the calculation goes as  $3 \times 3 \times 1,000$  plus something extra. To Thai people, 1,000 baht is nearly equivalent to 10,000 yen. For example, we usually tip a golf course caddie 300 baht. To the caddie, the tip is worth 3,000 yen. A university graduate's starting salary generally ranges between 15-20,000 baht. Based on the above, coffee is expensive here. Starbucks and other cafes can be found almost everywhere in central Bangkok and typically price a cup of coffee at 100 baht or more. This is equivalent to more than 1,000 yen in Tokyo, but the cafes in Bangkok are always crowded. Customers are not limited to wealthy people only and also include many with middle or higher incomes. I heard that the coffee market in Thailand was 50 billion baht in 2017; the annual amount of coffee consumption per capita was 200 cups; and the market is expanding



A café for middle- and low-income customers



From left: exterior and interior view of a Starbucks café



by little less than 10% annually. Cafes targeting low- and middle-income customers price a cup of coffee at 60 baht or less. At more expensive cafes, the sky is the limit for prices. Reportedly, some cafes offer a cup of coffee priced more than 500 baht. I heard that the way to enjoy coffee may be divided into phases. Thailand is currently in the 3rd wave, characterized by greater focus on where the beans are from and how to brew coffee. Japan is in the 4th Wave in which they place more importance on who and how to brew coffee. In terms of where coffee beans come from, the Golden Triangle attracts my interest. Located in the northeastern part of Thailand, the Golden Triangle includes parts of Cambodia and Laos. In the past, poverty-stricken minorities grew poppies, which are used to make opium. In 1988, a foundation set up by the royal family began to encourage the successful shift of Golden Triangle to coffee plantation. The other day I read an article on JAL's starting to serve coffee from the Golden Triangle on its Bangkok flights. The coffee tastes (again!!!) bitter "strong", so Thai people generally add a lot of sugar to it.



A café for middle- and low-income customers

Coin laundry

## No Washing Machine?

[August 2019]

When I was transferred to Bangkok, I started to live on my own for the first time. Room cleaning is included in the rent. Chores such as doing the laundry, preparing simple meals and grocery shopping take a considerable amount of time and are troublesome if they comprise a significant part of your everyday life. As you engage in these chores, you find evening hours on a weekday or a holiday go by very quickly. I lived in the company's bachelor dormitory for about five years. There we were provided with breakfast and supper and I often traveled to and from my parents' place. I was not alone. I have cooked rice by myself only once since I was born. It was when I was in an elementary school, during a home economics class. The table on this page shows the rate of diffusion of washing machines in Bangkok and in Thailand overall. The figures are much smaller than you would expect. It's unbelievable considering the fact that Japan reached 100% in the 1970s. One of the main factors that contribute to the lag in diffusion is housing conditions. On the streets you see many old buildings that almost look like a stage setting. Newly built properties have small rooms due to a sharp rise in land prices. It is not unusual that a low- or mid-priced apartment for rent in central Bangkok has no washing machine. Kitchens are very small. Since they mostly eat at stalls, they rarely prepare meals at home and need to do no more than wash dishes. The absence of a washing machine is neither because of the poor hygiene of Thai people nor their standard of living lagging behind the Japanese by nearly 50 years. Having said that, I hear quite a few people in rural areas still believe that hand-washing is a better way to remove dirt. It looks like coin-operated laundries, which are also seeing a resurgence in Tokyo, supplement the absence of washing machines at home. Since rain suddenly comes here especially in the rainy season, you cannot hang out laundry before leaving home. However, hanging them indoors causes underwear and the like to smell like a wet rag due to the poor condition of the waterworks. Certainly, a dryer's function is convenient. By the way, middle-aged men working away from home are a sort of institution in Bangkok. Many men of this kind can be seen at restaurants nearby, conveying a lonely atmosphere from which I cannot escape either. I would rather die than become the aging person smelling like a wet rag. Even lonely, you want to age cleanly and peacefully. Anyway, my life in Bangkok continues.

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Bangkok metropolitan area	64.2%	61.8%	63.0%	61.3%	63.0%
Nationwide	63.2%	64.8%	65.7%	65.9%	66.7%

## Epilogue

[January 2020]

Producing more than 2 million vehicles and exporting 1.2 million vehicles annually, Thailand is a great ASEAN automobile-manufacturing nation. K Line (Thailand) Ltd. is a well-established business in the industry and celebrates its 56th anniversary this year. While K Line (Thailand) is strong in car-related operations, it is more like a general logistics company. There are many local staff members and they have an attachment to "K" Line. Thai people are pro-Japan overall. Expatriates from Japan should find it easier to live here than in Western countries. Furthermore, the Thai and Japanese resemble each other in appearance. However, trying to force Japanese workstyles will get you nowhere here. It is important to recognize and respect the differences, even if they are hard to understand. This holds true in all parts of the world. In 2020, I will keep working hard with my colleagues from "K" Line all over the world. Cheers!!!

2018 Christmas masquerade with the Car Carrier Group



K Line (Thailand) holds a Christmas masquerade every year. In 2018, we were dressed in costumes associated with ghosts. Our colleagues in the Car Carrier Group were dressed like characters in Gegege no Kitaro. In 2017, the subject for the masquerade was Rock&Rock and we dressed as KISS, just joking. The subject for the 2019 masquerade scheduled on December 20 is Aztec. Does it mean ethnic costumes from Aztec civilizations? We are struggling to interpret it.

Your continued support and advice will be highly appreciated.



## ~Extra Edition~

### Six-thousand-kilometer Trip Across America

Contributed by Mr. Nobuyuki Murakoso, "K" Line America, Inc. Richmond office

Do you know the old Japanese TV program Transcontinental Journey Across America? If my memory is correct, the TV program had participants travel by bus bound for New York and losers of the quiz were left behind on the spot. I was about elementary school age when the TV program was broadcast. At that time, even in my wildest dreams I could never imagine how big the country, more than 25 times larger than Japan in total land area, would be.

As you know, the United States is an automobile nation. You need an automobile anywhere you live in the country except some urban areas sufficiently furnished with public transportation. It's almost three years since I was transferred to "K" Line America. Right after I was assigned, I bought a car that was new at that time, and it already has more than 50,000 miles (approx. 80,000 kilometers) on it as I write this.

I decided to travel across America for a vague reason. I thought, "Since I have this valuable opportunity to live in the United States, I should do the things I can do only in this time of my life." That was it. As many of you may know, my decision to travel was given energy when I saw a video that a Japanese woman living in the United States posted on YouTube.

According to Google Maps, the shortest distance between Richmond, Virginia (A), where I live, and Los Angeles, California (J) is approximately 2,600 miles (approx. 4,200 kilometers). I often use a car to travel short distances. Based on the experience that I often have business trip by car if it is short distance, I estimated the longest mileage I could drive per day without trying too hard, to be 600 miles<sup>1</sup>. This would take four or five days just to travel across the continent. I would depart in the morning on Saturday and return on the next Saturday. The last day of the eight-day period would be spent in a flight back from Los Angeles. This means I could spend seven days driving. Honestly, I was unsure whether I could complete the mission. Considering that I would have two extra days made my decision considerably easier. Just the fact that I drove across the continent would be enough, but I would like to take this opportunity to stop off and see things. In the early part of the trip, when I still had a lot of energy, I would concentrate on driving west so I could visit the national parks in the Grand Circle.<sup>2</sup> I would single-mindedly drive to Oklahoma City (C), seemingly the middle of the route. After that the driving would be adjusted to the remaining time and my physical condition.

Planning to take a plane back from LA, I parked my car at the Richmond Airport and rented another car for 1,200 dollars. I wanted



Writer of this article



The day before, I cut a sheet of cardboard to hollow out a letter, K and spayed it on a car.



I ate the amazingly tasty fried chicken at Gus's World Famous Fried Chicken in Little Rock, Arkansas.



Cadillac Ranch is a line of ten Cadillacs buried vertically in the ground. You can scribble on them as much as you like.

to drive a Japanese car which would be easier to drive, in order to make sure I didn't have car trouble along the way. Luckily, I was able to rent a Nissan Rogue SUV. Furthermore, it was almost brand-new, with only about 4,000 miles. I got plenty of rest on the eve of my departure and left home early the next morning.

To tell the truth, since I came to Richmond, I had never even been to the neighboring town which is about an hour away from my home by car. The world beyond that was totally unknown to me. Several hours after I had set out, by the time I entered the neighboring state of Tennessee, I was determined to go on the journey since I could not go back anymore. I spent the first night in Nashville, Tennessee (B), drove west and spent the second night in Oklahoma City. Up to that time, the trip was trouble-free. I headed for Oklahoma because I wanted to drive the famous Route 66 extending from Chicago, Illinois to Santa Monica, California. Many of you may know this old national route. I wanted to take the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to drive the route.

In the afternoon on Day 3, I decided to stop at a steakhouse near Amarillo, Texas (D). One of my colleagues who is also an expatriate recommended it. The restaurant is known for its speed eating challenge in which, if you eat all of it, you could eat a 72-ounce (approx. 2 kilograms) steak for free and get prize money. The record at that time was 4 minutes and 18 seconds, held by a woman. It is next to impossible to eat all of it in the record time if you use a knife and a fork. Drive west from the steakhouse, and you will find another well-known spot, Cadillac Ranch. Ten graffiti-covered Cadillacs are half-buried in the ground. This amazing art installation is quite typical of America. The day before, I bought white and red spray paint at a home improvement store and cut a sheet of cardboard into the shape of a K before marking the date on it. Despite a lack of artistic skill, I dared to take part in the art. From there, I drove south and arrived in the White Sands National Park (E) in the southern part of New Mexico. Incidentally, my choosing this destination was mostly attributable to the influence of the abovementioned YouTube video. The desert, spotlessly white as far as the eyes can see, is in fact a crystalline plaster and would dissolve in water in regular conditions. The scarcity of rainfall throughout the year keeps the white desert unchanged.

If I wanted to, I could drive through the State of Arizona and head for Santa Monica, the final destination. Only three days had passed since the start of the journey, and I still had enough time before the flight back home, so I drove north toward Four Corners (F), a tourist destination where the boundaries of four states, Utah, Colorado, New Mexico, and



Well-known only to those in the know, this is the halfway point of Route 66.



The steakhouse is well-known for its 72-ounce steak speed eating challenge.

Arizona meet at a single location. I arrived at 8 a.m. before the shops would fully open, so I could take photos before the line of visitors formed. A pair of middle-aged women made merry and repeatedly posed in front of a camera and took photos of each other, ignoring the sign that told visitors not to take more than three photos per person. I drove west again, past the well-known Monument Valley (G) and Grand Canyon (H) before staying in Sedona, Arizona, the celebrated sacred place. Beautifully lit by the morning sun, the gigantic Red Rocks were really impressive. From Sedona, I drove the mountain road of Route 66 toward Las Vegas and saw the well-known fountain show at the Bellagio Las Vegas hotel before heading for Santa Monica, the final destination. Since I had known about high gas prices in California, I filled up the gas tank before entering the state. In the United States, gas prices are generally lower than those in Japan and roughly range between 65 and 85 yen per liter with some differences among states and cities. I couldn't believe my eyes when I saw the sign at the gas station in the first town I came to after entering the State of California. It was 60 yen higher per liter than the gas station where I had just filled up moments ago, only a few kilometers away. (The price was 4.70 dollars per gallon or 130 yen per liter, which may rather be more reasonable compared with the average gas prices in Japan.) I was really shocked. The sight of a customer filling up his gas tank at the expensive gas station gave me another shock.

In the late afternoon the day before returning to Richmond, I arrived in Santa Monica, safe and sound. The place was filled with tourists and no one paid attention to the South Carolina plate on my rental car. When I took photos, some people waved at me, making me feel I was welcomed. I had successfully traveled across the continent, driving 3,700 miles (approx. 5,950 kilometers) and putting 116 gallons (approx. 440 liters) of gas into the tank. Before that, it had been a long time since I had experienced such a sense of achievement.

Self-content throughout, I completed the seven-day journey across the continent and I am already beginning to think about traveling across the northern part of the continent.

1 One mile is 1,609 meters.

Six hundred miles (approx. 965 kilometers) is almost the distance from Tokyo to Shimonoseki, approx. 1,000 kilometers.

2 Grand Circle is an area in the southwestern United States with many national parks and other public lands.



The Movie Forrest Gump made Gump Point famous.



Four Corners:  
This is where the four states Utah, Colorado, Arizona, and New Mexico meet.

