

6. Three Friends in the Snow of Wisconsin

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This is the first time the three of us who received scholarships for a study-abroad experience at the University of Wisconsin-Madison have had a chance to meet. Madison is the city of education, and is among the top ten universities in the U.S.

Our visit to Madison, Wisconsin, was supported by the Isara Amantakul Foundation, a non-profit mass communication organization. Additional support was provided by the Wisconsin Alumni Association Thailand and the Wisconsin Alumni Foundation of Thailand. We received encouragement from Pongsak Phayakvichien, the president of the Isara Amantakul Foundation and Mr. Piyabutr Cholvijam, the chairman of the Wisconsin Alumni Foundation. The funding was provided for Thai journalists who had received awards from the Isara Amantakul Foundation and educational institutions and professional organizations which supported and promoted the potential of individuals in the field of mass communication. This one semester program is the initial activity under the new "Professional Visiting Program."

The second semester at the University of Wisconsin begins in the cold season. I can tell you that it was really cold! The depth of the snow could be measured in feet.

The three of us came from a tropical country. The first day our feet touched the ground in Madison (after traveling for more than 16 hours and passing through security at Narita Airport and again at O'Hare Airport, Chicago), we were exhausted.

The time in Thailand is 11 hours ahead of Wisconsin. It took us some time to adjust. It was good that three of us came together and stayed together so we could support and encourage each other.

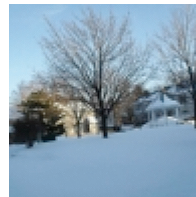
This kind of cold is exciting for Asian people like us. Experiencing real snow was quite different from what we had imagined. What does it feel like to be so cold that your bones turn to ice, your face becomes frozen, and your legs get stiff? We found out!



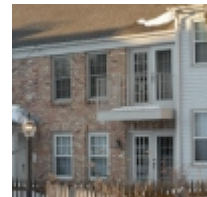
The capital building, a model of the Capitol Building at Washington D.C., covered with snow.



Lake Mendota, bordering the university, was covered with ice.



The area at Old Sauk where the three friends live.



We live on the first floor of the apartment .