



The Ogawa family: Kyoko, Tomohisa and Keisuke. (Photo by Betty Leonard)

## Japanese 'Rascal' fans visit

Submitted by Betty Leonard  
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On July 31, the Sterling North Society received an email from Keisuke Ogawa, asking if it would be possible for his family to visit the Sterling North home on Wednesday, Aug. 23. It isn't unusual to get email requests to see the house at various times, but what was unusual was that this family was coming from Japan and they had only two destinations. First, they were going to Missouri to watch the solar eclipse and then they wanted to come and visit Edgerton to see the Sterling North home. Keisuke and his wife Kyoko have fond memories of watching the Rascal cartoon when they were children. When asked what some of his favorite parts of the book were, Keisuke said that he remembered Rascal with the sugar cubes and the part in the story about the Irish picnic at Racetrack Park. Their 5 year-old son, Tomohisa, watches the cartoon almost every day on video.

The family was met at the house by Betty Leonard, a member of the Sterling North board and Mika Conway, who served as the translator. After touring the house, ringing the bell in the Methodist Church belfry, walking to the library and Child High School, everyone went back to the house for blueberry pie, which Tomohisa loved!

They enjoyed another one of Sterling and Rascal's favorites – strawberry soda. The family was presented with a gift bag of things from the gift shop for them to take home and remember their visit to Edgerton. The tour then continued with a stop in Central Park to see Saunder's Creek and then they went to Racetrack Park. Stopping at the cemetery, they were able to see where Sterling's parents were buried. Then it was on to Indianford where they saw people fishing near the Indianford Dam, a favorite area for Sterling and Rascal. The last stop was in Busseyville to see the home, with a gorgeous view of Lake Koshkonong, where Sterling was born. The tour lasted four hours and by that time it was 5 p.m., so they got to see the television interview that had taken place when they first arrived at the house. All of them seemed to enjoy seeing themselves on television and Keisuke taped it on his phone so they could show it to family and friends in Japan.

The Sterling North home is a treasure in our community and it gives members of the society great pleasure to know that people all over the world continue to have an interest in visiting the area where Sterling and Rascal shared so many adventures in a bygone era, a better era.

### The historic Sterling North Home

Partial reprint of story by the late Mark Scarborough, former reporter for the Edgerton Reporter

Acclaimed author Sterling North's writing career started in Edgerton, with his first published poem likely composed shortly before his family moved to their 409 W. Rollin St. home.

Now known as the Sterling North Childhood Home Museum & Literary Center, the Queen Anne-style building is maintained and operated by the Sterling North Society.

Open Sundays 1-4 p.m. from April through December and by appointment, the museum is furnished so today's visitors can pretend the North family has just left for a 1917 picnic at Richardson's Grove at Newville.

Every stick of furniture, every accessory, is "to period," down to the Willson's Monarch flavorings in the kitchen and the early 20th Century toys casually tossed around Sterling's second-floor bedroom.

North's children, David and Arielle, always remember their father busy at his desk and typewriter. Both the desk and the typewriter are now on display on the second floor of the Sterling North Museum here. There are also copies there of many of North's books, as well as posters promoting the Walt Disney films made from North's two best-sellers, "So Dear to My Heart" and "Rascal."

For more information on the Sterling North Society and the Sterling North Childhood Home Museum & Literary Center, where a gift shop is also located, visit [www.sterlingnorthsociety.com](http://www.sterlingnorthsociety.com) or [www.facebook.com/SterlingNorth](http://www.facebook.com/SterlingNorth), call 608-884-3731 or email [sterlingnorthsociety@gmail.com](mailto:sterlingnorthsociety@gmail.com).



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