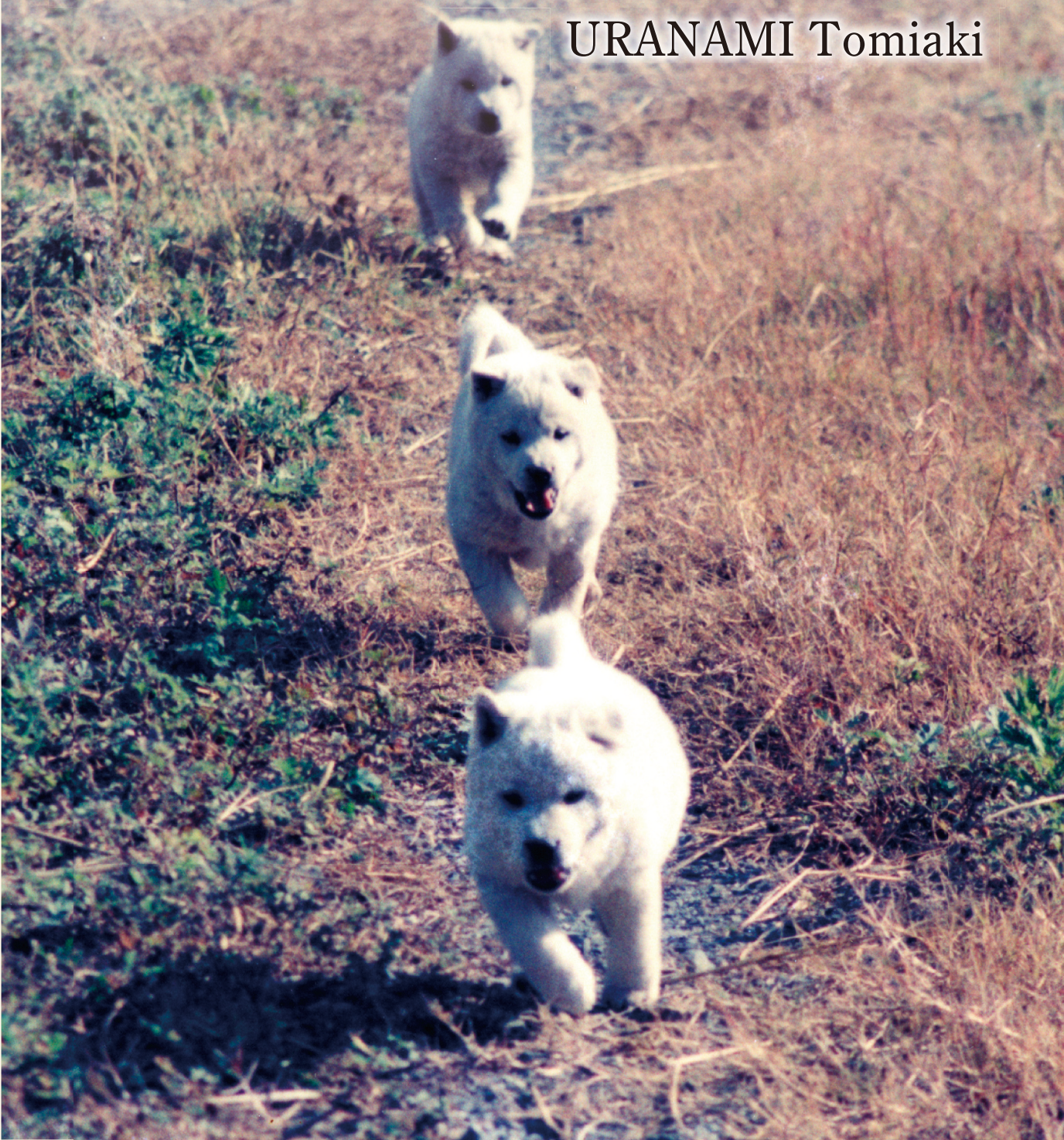


日本犬の神髓

The Essences of Japanese Dogs

URANAMI Tomiaki



Cover photo – By author

“Yushi Sasso” (Brave and Prominent): Pet Line Award, 5th
Photo Competition for Our Heart-to-Heart Relationships
with Pets in 1990 – Hosted by Yomiuri Shimbun,
sponsored by Petline Co., Ltd., and supported by Kyocera
Corp.

Title: NISHINO Shoko (Mr. Kawagishi’s butler)

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Hachiko in the Pass

On September 29, 1999, I visited Ikutora Station on the JR (Japan Rail) Nemuro Line in Minami Furano Town, Hokkaido. The station was used for shooting a film “Poppoya” (Railroad Man) as “Horomai Station”.

I drove on Route 38 and through the top of the Jukai Pass (a.k.a. Ikutora Pass) located on the border between Furano City and Minami Furano Town. Then, I found the monument of “Hachiko in the Pass” at a corner of a parking lot on right hand side, which I had read since before.

At that time, I headed for the location of the film without stopping there. After visiting the shooting place, I came to the parking lot where there was the “Hachiko in the Pass” monument. It was splendid. I would like to introduce the history of this monument, which was written by TSUCHIYA Yoshio in Vol. 4 of “Kotan” in 1987, a journal of the Natural Treasure Hokkaido Association.

Monument of Loyal Dog (Hachiko in the Pass)

Hachiko: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hachik%C5%8D>

The Ikutora Pass (a.k.a. Sannoyama Pass) is located on the border between Furano City and Minami Furano Town on Route 38.

On the top of the pass is a monument on which a word “Jukai” (Ocean of trees) is inscribed. The great natural forest of the Sakhalin fir and the Yezo spruce is really mystifying. It is just the ocean of trees and its view is one of the best in Hokkaido.

Many drivers are also fascinated with this magnificent view.

A light red Hokkaido, male, started to draw attention from people in October 1974. The dog was gazing at passing cars, sitting on a small hill on the opposite side of the monument.

Local villagers sympathized with the dog and some of them even gave food to him, as he was supposedly left by his owner who came here to see the ocean of trees or by someone heartless. In addition, some drivers who regularly pass here put some food for the dog.

But he never tried to eat as long as he recognizes any human around him.

He was watching cars passing through the national road during daytime. He rushed to the road whenever he found a black car passing. At night, he

withdrew to his cocoon in the deciduous trees.

Supposedly, he knew that he would have enough food at a larger town rather than in this remote pass. However, he never did so and was earnestly waiting for his owner, and such his attitude drew people's sympathy and strongly impressed them.

Naturally, the dog started to be called the "Hachiko in the Pass".

The town government put up a notice, saying, "This dog is looking for his owner". This was also covered and introduced to all around Hokkaido and Japan by the media.

On January 16, 1975, Hokkaido was hit by strong wind and heavy snow. A blizzard hit the pass, making it impossible to see almost anything.

In the morning of January 19, when the snow storm was gone, Hachiko was found dead in the accumulated snow.

Judging from the situation, he was supposedly run over by a snow plow on the previous night, resulting in the tragic death.

"How much was he longing for his owner? We wish we could find the owner. He was persistently waiting for the owner here".

Villagers who lived at the foot of the pass and cherished Hachiko, including SATO Yasushi, buried him in the pass and arranged a Buddhist monk to console his soul.

On his tomb, the master of Zenshoji Temple wrote a message, "Namu Kanzeon for Hachiko in the Ikutora Pass".

As soon as this episode was reported in the media, many dog lovers in all around Hokkaido sent condolence money to the town hall.

Some villagers proposed, "If possible, use the money to build a monument to praise Hachiko forever in response to the goodwill of the people who sent it", and the proposal was materialized. The place was fixed at a corner of the parking lot that was approximately 200 meters away from the spot where Hachiko was longing for his owner. In early summer of 1975, TATE Daisuke, mayor at that time, and 50 others attended the unveiling ceremony.



Monument of "Hachiko in the Ikutora Pass"

This monument would become the biggest tribute to Hachiko who was persistently longing for his owner and showed his backbone as the Hokkaido. All the participants filled themselves with deep emotions toward the dog. On a 2.5-meter high and 1.5-meter wide granite tombstone were inscribed the figure of Hachiko by SUGIMOTO Katsuyoshi, a painter living in Asahikawa City, Hokkaido, and the message “Monument of Hachiko in the Ikutora Pass” below. On the base of the monument was the following poem.

Legend of Loyal Dog

Descending the slope, encountering a dwelling of warm-hearted people
Looking in the distance
With majestic and pristine nature in the north
On January 18, 1975 in deep snow
A stray light brown Hokkaido dog
Succumbs here in the Ikutora Pass
Never demanding any cocoon or food in a human dwelling
Supported by love and blessings of people coming here for more than a year
Why does he persistently gaze at cars passing, simply waiting for his owner?
Waiting here
Where's his owner?
It's a pity of him
He's unforgettable even after he's gone
His days are remembered forever

In memory of this loyal dog, the monument is built with the goodwill of generous people.

(sic)

I took care of three male Hokkaido dogs between 1972 and 1984. I often brought them to a mountain. They had a good response and always cared me. In terms of loyalty to an owner, the Hokkaido were better than the other Japanese Dogs I had taken care of (4 Kishu and 1 Shiba).

The film “Poppoya” became a blockbuster in Japan’s film world. It is said to be impossible for Hollywood to produce such a film as “Poppoya” no matter how much it spends or no matter how long it takes.

This is because “Poppoya” depicts the mentality of the Japanese people in addition to the passion of TAKAKURA Ken, the lead actor who is called the greatest treasure of Japan’s film world.

Japanese Dogs also have their spirit. In this trip, I strongly felt that we Japanese Dog enthusiasts have to be committed to the preservation of the dogs by respecting the spirit.

Reference cited

“Kotan”, Journal of the Natural Treasure Hokkaido Association
Vol. 4, 1987

(4) “Japanese Dogs” Vol. 6, 1999

Tiger pattern of medium-sized Japanese Dogs

A headquarters report about the fifth board meeting of the Nippo, which was carried in its journal “Japanese Dogs” (Vol. 6, 1999), said in its Item 7, “A tiger pattern shall not be specified in a pedigree of the Kishu or Shikoku” with regard to that of a medium-sized dog.

Based on this, a tiger pattern of the Kishu and the Shikoku is not supposed to exist for the Nippo headquarters. According to the association, only some of the Kai and the Hokkaido have the tiger pattern among all medium-sized Japanese Dogs.

At present, neither the Kai nor the Hokkaido are displayed in an exhibition of the association. But a female Kai dog was displayed in an autumn exhibition of the association’s Tottori Branch in 1993. The Kai had the tiger pattern and a straight tail, and her body was small but very agile. She was gentle and favorable, and one of the most attractive dogs there.

In the association’s exhibition, the tiger pattern can be seen only in the large Akita. A female Akita dog was displayed in an autumn exhibition of the Kinki Union of the association in 2000. She had a very high bone mass with hair with a clear tiger pattern.

The first Japanese Dog I had was the Hokkaido. I took care of three male Hokkaido dogs between 1972 and 1984. Two of them had red hair and the rest had a spotty pattern in the hair. Unfortunately, I had not had a one with the tiger pattern, but I have been interested in the pattern of the Hokkaido since that time.

As there is an Ainu word “Ru” to express the pattern, the Hokkaido with it have existed since a long time ago.

The Hokkaido have unique regional lines that cannot be seen in any other part of Japan. They consist of the Chitose line, the Iwamizawa line, the Biratori line and the Atsuma line.

The most distinctive is Atsuma, which is called the “Atsuma tiger”. It is in the southeast of Chitose City where Hokkaido’s main airport is located, and takes approximately an hour by car from the city. It is a quiet agricultural town in a corner of the Yufutsu Plain.

There is the Association to Preserve the Natural Treasure Hokkaido, Atsuma in the town, which was established in 1936, and its exhibition is still held. The association has addressed the preservation of the tiger pattern Hokkaido by

Dignity of Japanese Dogs

I would like to express my sincere sympathy to the victims of the Great Eastern Japan Earthquake that occurred on March 11, 2011. I pray that all suffering people can get back to their peaceful lives as soon as possible.

I travelled around the eastern part of Hokkaido with my brother's family between August 19 and 21, 2011.

We used this summer holiday as they were looking forward to seeing the Kishu dog at "Rausu Daiichi Hotel", which has been active in controlling brown bears in the Shiretoko Peninsula. They also like dogs.

At 8am on August 19, we departed from Kobe Airport on All Nippon Airways (ANA). We arrived at New Chitose Airport at 9:50am. Then, we connected to a flight for Nemuro Nakashibetsu, departing at 11:45am by ANA, and arrive at the final destination at 12:35pm. On the connecting flight, we saw Lake Akan, which was beautiful on that day, on left hand side of the plane.

For travelling around the eastern part of Hokkaido, we rented a car at the airport.

Before we arrived at "Rausu Daiichi Hotel", we enjoyed the Milk Road that runs straight in the green dairy land, the Kaiyodai observatory with a 330-degree panorama and a round horizon, Lake Mashu that is cobalt blue and mysterious, the Oshinkoshin Falls designated as "Japan's best 100 waterfalls", a beautiful sunset on the Sea of Okhotsk, the Trans-Shiretoko Road and the Shiretoko Pass.

My brother's family was totally fascinated with the beautiful nature in the eastern part of Hokkaido.

We were warmly welcomed by NAKAGAWA Masahiro, president of Rausu Daiichi Hotel.

We really enjoyed the outdoor hot spring bath and local specialties in Rausu.

In the morning of August 20, Mr. Nakagawa brought Ichi (male, 11 years) to us before we departed for whale watching, a colored Kishu dog which has been active in hunting brown bears (Photo I). This was our

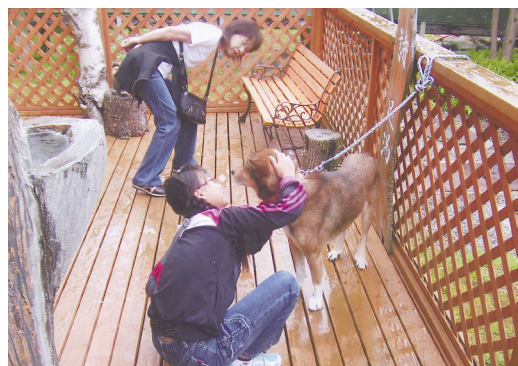


Photo I: Ichi (11 years)

top priority in this trip.

The current Ichi is the fifth generation from the former Ichi of ISHIHARA Ken, the “godfather of the Kishu”, which was a son of the legendary Yoshitomi Kentaro.

I contributed articles about the pedigree of the Kishu, which Mr. Ishihara bred, to the Nippo journals “Japanese Dogs” Vol. 4, 2004 with the

title “The Kishu fighting brown bears”, Vol. 2, 2005 with the title “Nature of Japanese Dogs”, and Vol. 5, 2008 with the title “Yuho forever”. There was a lot of feedback from many Japanese Dog lovers about these articles.

According to Mr. Nakagawa, Ichi has captured about 30 brown bears. Yuho, Ichi’s father, captured about 70 bears.

I heard of fierce battles between Ichi and brown bears from Mr. Nakagawa. Ichi fights a bear that grows as heavy as 400kg by fending off its punches. A bear’s growl and Ichi’s bark are exchanged.

However, Ichi has calm and considerate eyes in front of us. He is sedate with us whenever Mr. Nakagawa is there.

Photo II shows a scene that Yurina (5th grader) is touching Ichi on the neck. He is never disturbed.

This is really how the strong is supposed to be. He embodies the essences of Japanese Dogs, which are being considerate and courageous.

A strong dog having real gustiness and courage are considerate and calm. I have seen Yuho twice, and the Kishu dog was the typical one that was always ready to fight a battle for life.

As Ichi got older, he has become more similar to Yuho, his father. Both of them are appreciated by the people in Rausu for preventing brown bears from attacking them and for defending the town for life.

In the afternoon, we visited the Shiretoko Nature Center in Shari Town. After we watched a video of four seasons in Shiretoko on a huge screen, we requested YAMANO Hidenao of the Administration and Management Section, the Shiretoko Nature Foundation, who gave us a detailed explanation about the video, to show us the Hokkaido, introducing my experience that I had seen the dog for hunting brown bears in 2004. He kindly accepted our request and took us to the administration building.



Photo II: Ichi and Yurina

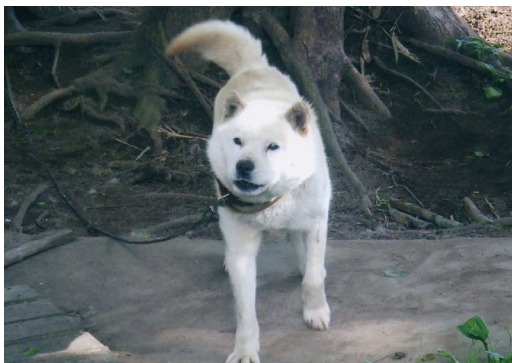


Photo III: Repun (11 years)

In the building, KASAI Shinsuke, in charge of protection, management and research, the Shiretoko Nature Foundation attended us. There were two Hokkaido dogs in the forest near the building, which were Repun (11 years) and Nupuri (9 years).

Photo III shows Repun. It has a big head and a body with a high bone mass, which are typical of the

Hokkaido, and its eyes are clear, symbolizing its good-naturedness.

Photo IV shows Nupuri, which is tough, quick and sharp-looking.

According to Mr. Kasai, the two Hokkaido are used for patrolling to prevent an accident caused by a brown bear, although they have some other duties. In particular, Repun's handling of a brown bear is, according to him, excellent.

When somebody was chasing an injured brown bear, it was hiding in a tree across a river and noticed him, and rushed to attack him. Then, Repun stood between them and skillfully controlled and finally captured the bear. Thanks to Repun, his life was saved.

However, as shown in Photo V, Repun plays with Yurina at home when Mr. Kasai is there. From this, it is impossible to even imagine that Repun fights a deadly battle with a brown bear.

I learned from Repun that a really strong dog is full of tenderness.



Photo IV: Nupuri (9 years)



Photo V: Repun with full of tenderness (Mr. Kasai is on the left)



Photo VI: Mr. Nakagawa (standing on right hand side) is explaining.

Photo VI shows my brother and his family who were receiving an explanation about site photos of brown bear control and other related materials from Mr. Nakagawa in the morning of August 21 before we headed for Kushiro. He is a wildlife protector and has organized useful documents in chronological order.

This trip was a precious opportunity for my brother and his family to experience Shiretoko, a mysterious land and a World Heritage site.

I was dispatched for rescue efforts in Miyagi Prefecture that was damaged by the Great Eastern Japan Earthquake as an emergency firefighting rescue team member.

It is not easy to rescue people. It is impossible to do it without experience, physical strength, knowledge and preparation. Operations in a dangerous and rough frontline of a disaster as a firefighter always require significant physical energy and preparedness.

I was encouraged with the gustiness ready for fighting for life and tenderness of Ichi and Repun. Real strength lies in tenderness. They embody real braveness.

It is the greatest pleasure for me as a Japanese Dog enthusiast studying its essences to have actually encountered those having real dignity, such as Ichi, the Kishu and Repun, the Hokkaido.

Japanese Dogs are a living Japanese tradition. Consideration and courage are what Japanese people and Japanese Dogs have in common.

In this trip, we fully enjoyed the beauty of Shiretoko, a mysterious land, and the dignity of the Kishu and the Hokkaido that are active in controlling and hunting brown bears.

“Japanese Dogs” Vol. 5, 2011

Kizuna (ties)

(Toward KAWAGISHI Shinichi's "Road to Happiness")



I encountered with Mr. Kawagishi at the exhibition and hunting competition hosted by the Hidaka Branch of the Association to Preserve the Natural Treasure Hokkaido in September 2002. There, I saw HAYASHI Yuka, his assistant, skillfully handle three Hokkaido dogs. I requested him to approve the photos to be used in my article that was contributed to the journal of the Japanese Dog Preservation Association.

Then, I found many ideas about Japanese Dogs in common with Mr. Kawagishi as we discussed with each other by phone.

The Tokachi Branch of the Association to Preserve the Natural Treasure Hokkaido,

for which Mr. Kawagishi was the manager at that time, held an exhibition and a hunting competition on the last Sunday in August every year. He suggested me to take a summer vacation to come to Hokkaido.

As I liked the place, I assisted the exhibition and hunting competition in Tokachi five consecutive times from 2003.

I have been to Hokkaido 21 times and become an expert of travel to Hokkaido. Now, I am a tour guide there for my family and friends.

Mr. Kawagishi held Japan's first display of dogs of the same line as the Hokkaido as a part of an exhibition of the Tokachi Branch of the Association to Preserve the Natural Treasure Hokkaido. This became a good opportunity for such dogs that were used only for breeding.

After that, Mr. Kawagishi became the examination department manager of the Headquarters of the Association to Preserve the Natural Treasure Hokkaido and significantly contributed to the world of the Hokkaido by hosting displays of dogs of the same line as the Hokkaido at exhibitions of the association as the virtual leader in the world.

As a musician, he taught about 800 students and, among them, about 80 have



been active as music experts.

He has released many music CDs and used the profits for the Eye Bank, his lifework.

Mr. Kawagishi told me, “I have my music CDs, so you publish a book as your personal history”. As a result of my contemplation, I decided to follow his advice.

Under guidance of Mr. Kawagishi, I published a book “The Essences of

Japanese Dogs” in 2009.

Thanks to my encounter with Mr. Kawagishi, I can now take in the phrase, “Glory in life is achieved through small, small efforts”.

I was dispatched for rescue efforts in Miyagi Prefecture that was damaged by the Great Eastern Japan Earthquake as an emergency firefighting rescue team member. It is not easy to rescue people.

It is impossible to do it without experience, physical strength, knowledge and preparation.

The photo shows Repun, a Hokkaido dog active in controlling and hunting brown bears, which I met in Shiretoko in August 2011. He was full of tenderness while having gustiness to be prepared for fighting the bears anytime for life to protect human lives. Consideration and courage are what Japanese people and Japanese Dogs have in common. Repun embodied the dignity.

As a person who has made utmost efforts to protect people’s lives and properties as a self-defense official and a



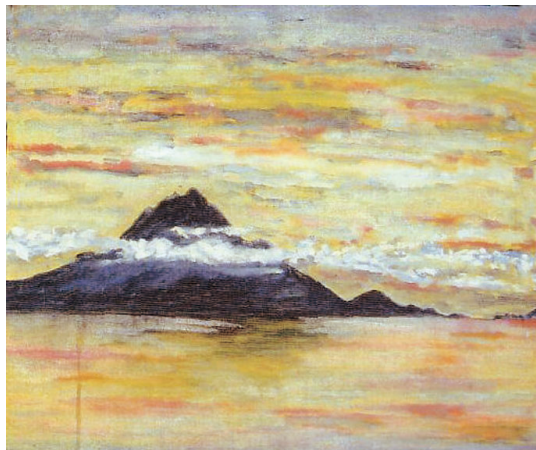
firefighter, I was encouraged by Repun's dignity.

Senses of independence and public morality are required for happiness. It is the temperament of the Japanese people to dedicate themselves to independence and public duty for happiness.

Real happiness is realized through the promotion and nurture of pleasure and happiness with efforts, mercy and wisdom.

Ties can be generated with utmost efforts made for the public.

This is my congratulatory message for the publication of "Road to Happiness" with the title "Kizuna (ties)". Congratulations.



"Rishiri Fuji from Wakkanai" F10
In 1975 by KAWAGISHI Shinichi



Afterword

On December 8, 2007, a film “A Tale of Mari and Three Puppies” was shown, which was produced based on a true story in Yamakoshi Village in Niigata Prefecture in the 2004 Chuetsu earthquake. I watched the film four times at a cinema and many times on DVD.

I have a special feeling for this film. The dog starring as Mari is the Shiba, the same as my current one. As a firefighter, I am working for protecting people's lives and properties. Before I became a firefighter, I served for the Ground Self Defense Force for two terms – four years.

At the GSDF, I went through rigorous training for jukendo, or the Japanese martial art of bayonet fighting that is called “Combat of combats” and rugby football that is called the “fiercest team combat sport on earth”.

Thanks to the hard training for four years, I was able to have my physical strength, mental strength and self-control cultivated. That has become the base for me to complete my duties as a firefighter.

I read a note written by NAGASHIMA Tadayoshi, an incumbent member of Japan's House of Representatives and the former mayor of Yamakoshi Village at the time of the 2004 Chuetsu earthquake in Niigata Prefecture. The note was carried in a monthly magazine “Seiron”. All the villagers succeeded in evacuating even in the darkness thanks to rescue efforts of members of the Self Defense Forces, especially the 30th Infantry Regiment of the GSDF, risking their lives. Mr. Nagashima's note was full of gratitude for the SDF.

People in an isolated village in Ojiya City, Niigata Prefecture showed a sign “SOS” on a road, and it was found first by TAKAYAMA Kazushi, the then master sergeant of the Niigata Rescue Team, Japan's Air Self Defense Force.

The rescue team of the ASDF is the “last resort” for rescue efforts that any of firefighters, policemen and the Japan Coast Guard personnel cannot make any longer. Duties of Mr. Takayama as the master sergeant and a medic are to descend from a helicopter at the sea or in the mountain and rescue people who request for help after going through the harshest training regimes, such as airborne ranger qualification of the GSDF, diving qualification of the Maritime Self-Defense Force, and the license for emergency lifesaving.

Master Sergeant Takayama died in the line of duty during training on April 14, 2005, on the following year of the Chuetsu earthquake.

Mr. Takayama was selected as the “4th SDF personnel for the people” in 2005

and an article about him was carried in Sankei Shimbun together with a photo of his family members.

I wrote to the members of the Niigata Rescue Team of the ASDF. At a later date, I received a phone call from one of Mr. Takayama's colleagues. He expressed his painful feelings he had gone through whenever he saw the photo of Mr. Takayama's family, saying it was very difficult for him to bounce back without being able to help crying.

Various things came to my mind from the start of the film, such as the SDF that brought me up, Master Sergeant Takayama of the Niigata Rescue Team of the ASDF, and my dogs I have taken care of.

It is not easy to rescue people. It is impossible to do it without experience, physical strength, knowledge and preparation.

My motto is "A man has to be strong. The weak can never save people". My belief is "Action before theory", and I always keep myself in good shape and train myself.

Japan that is not rich in natural resources has prospered as a developed nation thanks to the people's courage, integrity, diligence, simplicity, cleanliness and morality. These lead to bushido (Japanese chivalry). I am convinced that such public spirit has contributed to Japan's growth.

The Hokkaido, the Kishu and the Shiba I have had were all considerate and courageous. I learned a lot from these dogs.

Looking back my life, I have been able to live a fruitful life thanks to the Japanese Dogs as the living cultural heritage.

I would like to express my gratitude to Japanese Dog lovers who have been in touch with me, seniors and colleagues in the SDF and the fire department, and the national and local governments and people in society for bringing me up.

Biography

Born on July 7, 1959

Current position: Deputy battalion chief

Graduated from Hyogo Prefectural Tatsuno High School

Completed two terms in the Ground Self Defense Force

Have taken care of the Hokkaido, the Kishu and the Shiba among Japanese Dogs

Budo (martial arts) history: Sumo, jukendo and toshu kakuto (hand-to-hand fighting)

Other sport history: Rugby football

The Essences of Japanese Dogs

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