

## Saburo

Saburo was one of nine dogs and an uncountable number of cats kept by a 'collector' family in Kagoshima Prefecture. Although the family of eight could have easily taken proper care of their animals, they chose not to do so. Instead a group of dedicated volunteers went there as often as possible to provide food, housing and medicines for the animals. They had been going there for four and a half years.

When we went to Kyushu in February, en route to Saga where we were dealing with the rogue breeder case, we stopped by the collector's place. Although many of the cats were sick, the dogs looked in pretty good shape, although tied to their kennels the whole time without walks. One dog however, was tied by about 30 cms of heavy chains and wire to a tree, which meant he could hardly reach let alone get into his kennel. His coat was matted with dirt and feces and he was, not surprisingly, a very sad and aggressive dog. This was Saburo and he had been tied like that for ten long years.

Although we had been warned that the family could be extremely nasty, we seemed to have hit them on a 'good day' and with some chatting up, they agreed to surrender the dogs to the volunteers who would look for homes for them. When

people like this agree to something, it is vital to get the animals away from them before they change their minds. Eight dogs were shifted from there within two days but Saburo was left behind as we couldn't handle him and had nowhere he could go.

Saburo was on our conscience, we had to do something for him. The family were reluctant to let him go. We negotiated with them and we said if they could build a decent pen for him where he would be able to move around freely, we would arrange for him to go to a vet to be given a thorough check up and a haircut.

We returned to Kyushu early in April. The vet had said we had to bring Saburo to the clinic, he couldn't go there. We set off to get Saburo out, armed with an array of tools for cutting the chains and the fence. The chains were too thick even for the bolt cutter we had brought with us. There was only one way to free him and that was to cut down the tree. Saburo was extremely hyped by this activity and increasingly aggressive. We managed in the end to get a noose around his head and to manipulate him into a cage.

We drove at high speed to the veterinary hospital where the vet had to give him

## Update on Saga 7th April 2007 - 佐賀事件」最新報告——2007年4月7日

Visited two hokensho in Saga on 2nd April, where the dogs given up by the rogue breeder were being kept. The number of dogs in both places had decreased significantly since the Prefecture has been actively finding homes for them. At Karatsu hokensho seven Akitas remained. Two dogs had scabies but they were being treated. The conditions had improved since our last visit. The dogs had dry pallets to sleep on, they were being walked occasionally and by the welcome they gave the men who were looking after them, we could see they were much happier. We next went to Kito hokensho where only five dogs remained; two Akita, two Shibas and a Kaiken. The conditions again had improved with dry pallets, but we felt the dogs were being given less attention than those in Karatsu. They seemed aloof or indifferent when the employees went in. As we say, "dogs never lie about love."

Since this visit we have heard that all the dogs have now been adopted after neutering.

We then went to the breeding place in Kashima but as the hokensho had told us all the remaining dogs had been transferred to the Koei Pet shop in Saga city with only a couple of Akitas left, as guard dogs on the premises.

The following day we went to the Kouei Pet Shop where conditions are the same. Dogs, mainly Shibas are still kept in miserable little cages. Some Shiba puppies were outside in an enclosure which means this man is still breeding.

May 31st 2007 is the deadline for breeders and pet shops to register under the new law and to have their premises inspected. The problem is how often this is done and how thorough the Prefecture is in its inspections. Breeders will clean up their places for the inspection but once that is over, they will revert to their old habits. Hopefully, Saga Prefecture having faced media pressure over its mishandling of the rogue breeder's place will get its act together. The outcome of the prosecution is still unknown but we hope this particular breeder will be prevented from continuing his cruel business and give up all his dogs.

4月2日、佐賀県入りした私どもは、悪徳ブリーダーが手放した犬を預かっている県内2箇所の保健所を訪ねました。県が熱心に飼い主を募ったおかげで、両施設ともに犬の数は激減していました。唐津保健所に残っているのは、秋田犬7頭で、そのうち2頭は疥癬にかかってはいるものの、治療がなされています。以前に訪ねたときと比べて、状態は改善されていました。犬の寝場所には乾いたすのこが敷かれ、時々散歩にも連れ出されています。世話係の人たちになついている様子から、彼らが前よりも幸せなことが見てとれます。次に、杵藤(きとう)保健所に行ったところ、残っているのは、秋田犬と柴犬が2頭ずつと甲斐犬1頭の5頭だけ。こちらも乾いているし、飼育環境が良くなっています。ただし、唐津に比べるとあまり構われていないとの印象を受けました。彼らは、職員が入って来てても喜ぶでもなく、無関心な様子。よく言われるように、「犬は愛情に関して嘘をつかない」ものです。

今回の訪問の後、すべての犬が不妊去勢手術を済ませ、すでに、新しい飼い主が決まったそうです。

杵藤保健所の次に、鹿島の繁殖場に行ってみると、保健所職員が話していた通り、男が手元に残っていた犬はすべて佐賀市内のコウエイペットショップに移されていました。現場にいたのは、番犬用の秋田犬2頭だけでした。

翌日、コウエイペットショップを訪ねてみましたが、状況は以前と同じ。犬たち——ほとんどが柴犬——は、相変わらず惨めな小ケージに収容されていました。外の囲いには柴の子犬が数匹入っているのは、男がいまだに繁殖を続けている証拠でしょう。

今年度から、新動物愛護管理法に基づき動物取扱業者の登録が義務化されますが、5月31日までに、繁殖業者やペットショップが県に登録申請して立入り検査を受けなければなりません。その際に県が行なう検査のやり方が問題で、何回実施するのか、また、どのくらい徹底したものなのか・・・が注目されます。繁殖業者は検査に備え、必死で施設をきれいに片付けても、終了した途端に、もとの悪癖に立ち戻るものです。悪徳ブリーダーの監督、管理ミスをめぐってメディアの圧力を受けた佐賀県は、今度こそ、真に実効性のある検査を実施してほしいものです。告発結果については未だわからないものの、件のブリーダーが、非道な商売を続けることを禁止され、すべての犬の所有権を完全に放棄するよう、私どもは切に願っています。