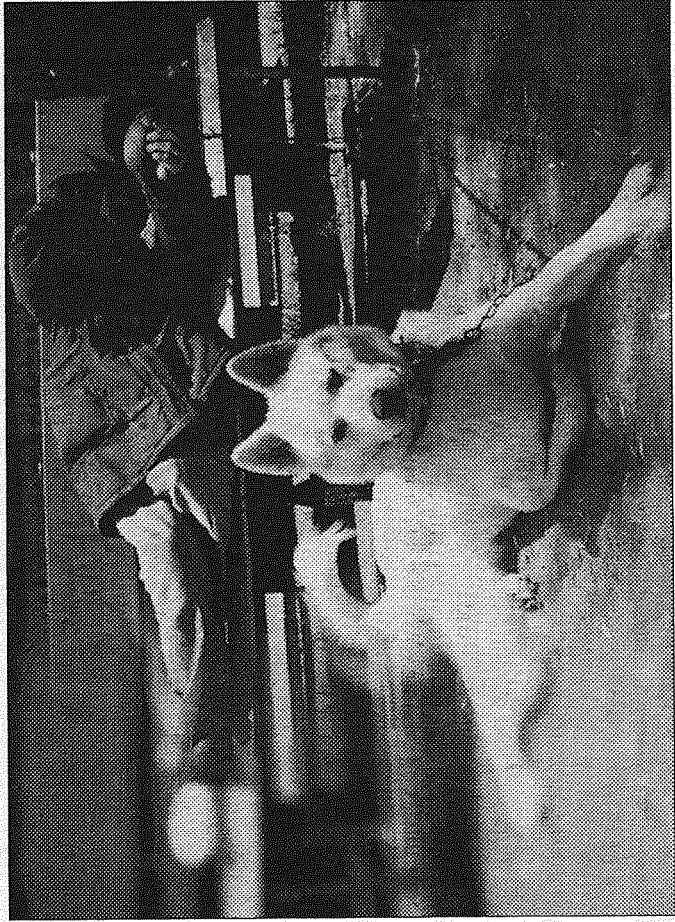


Faithful dog follows his master to grave

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Yomiuri Shimbun



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Chako and Sugawara photographed together in June 1995

ten called out a greeting when they went by. Sugawara said he found Chako when the dog was about 4 years old. When he bought a bento, Sugawara would eat only half the food and mix the rest with water for Chako.

The dog was often seen sitting patiently while his master watched sumo matches on an appliance store's television, and would run to a bar that Sugawara frequented to "inform" the female proprietor when Sugawara collapsed somewhere in a drunken stupor.

After his death, it was learned that Sugawara once worked in Hokkaido as a carpenter but became a vagabond after separating from his wife.

A veterinarian at the animal control center said Chako was weak and in a state of shock when he was brought in. He no longer had any trace of the vigor apparent in a photograph taken last June.

Employees at the center arranged for Chako to be cremated and his ashes placed in an animal cemetery in Aoba.

SENDAI—It was a sight to break the heart. Amid the neon lights of Kokubuncho, Aoba Ward, the largest entertainment district in Sendai, a middle-aged homeless man lay dead in mid-October. Clenched in his fist was the leash of his white Akita dog, Chako, who sat nearby and snapped at drunken passersby who tried to touch his master.

But death would not long separate the pair, who for two years had been a daily presence in Aoba's Ichibancho shopping arcade. The day after Chako was taken to the city's animal control center, the faithful dog followed his master to the grave.

Local officials said the man, known only as Sugawara, probably fell while drunk and struck his head. His body was accepted by relatives from northern Miyagi Prefecture.

Sugawara and Chako slept and walked the streets together every day, becoming well known in the arcade. Bar hostesses of-