

Keynote speech

Animal Rescue in the Wake of the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake

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Fifteen years have now passed since the day that fateful day in January 1995 when the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake took the lives of approximately 6,500 people and seriously injured 10,683, while totally destroying 104,906 houses, partially destroying 144,274, and completely burning a further 7,036. In addition to

people, many animals were killed or harmed by the earthquake, which is estimated to have claimed the lives of 4,300 dogs and 5,000 cats alone. On January 20, 1995, the Tokyo Headquarters of the Great Hanshin Earthquake Animal Rescue was established under the guidance of the Prime Minister's Office, and on January 21, the Great Hanshin Earthquake Animal Rescue Headquarters was established under the guidance and with the cooperation of three animal welfare-related organizations, namely, the Veterinary Association of Hyogo Prefecture, the Veterinary Association of Kobe City, and the Hanshin branch of the Japan Animal Welfare Society (JAWS), together with Hyogo Prefecture and Kobe City. Later these five organizations came together to set up the Great Earthquake Animal Rescue Memorial Association, which brings us up to the present.

At the time of the earthquake I was working as the Director of the Kobe Animal Rescue Center. In the face of that totally overwhelming and unexpected event, our animal rescue efforts began in the midst of a chaotic situation. I was extremely grateful for the guidance of Dr. Baba, a veterinarian who quickly came to the site upon hearing that the animal rescue effort was starting. At the time, around half of the members of the Veterinary Medical Association had suffered the partial destruction of their premises or worse. So we had to establish and operate a rescue center at the Kobe City Animal and Pet Management Center with about 30 members, which was about half of the full membership. It was a sudden emergency, so we didn't have any time to prepare or any financial resources to draw upon and we were forced to make use of whatever was available. We borrowed plastic greenhouses from the Nishi Ward Agricultural Cooperative and converted them into shelters by following their instructions. When the information that the rescue center would be open from January 27 was released, I was confronted with a situation I had never experienced before and this made me feel close to

panicky. But we were able to overcome the situation because we operated the rescue center in cooperation with an army of volunteers who quickly came along to support our efforts, including people from the veterinary medical associations of other prefectures and from animal welfare organizations. All of these people broke their backs trying to improve the lives of the animals in our care even a little, such as by carrying relief supplies to the tents, carrying food to shelters, mending any open seams in the shelters, and even sleeping on cardboard on the floors of corridors during the cold of winter. They did all this because they understood how petrified the rescued animals must have been since even the people were severely shocked. This Rescue Headquarters was constructed by the volunteers who took care of the animals, the veterinarians who treated them, and the local veterinary medical associations and animal welfare organizations that supported these efforts.

Because our activities were strongly supported by the public, we were able to gather a large number of monetary donations. But as April came around and with the temperature rising, we found we were unable to continue in the same way we had been operating from the beginning. Accordingly, since there was an empty space available near the Kobe City Animal and Pet Management Center, we constructed three 2-story prefabricated buildings for use as new shelters. When these facilities were completed in the middle of May, the shelter environment improved dramatically and the number of cases of animal treatment declined equally dramatically. Somehow the animals' spirits improved. We had a certain amount of anxiety about handing over adult dogs and cats to new owners, but we were able to find new homes for a total of 1,045 animals. From this time, the transfer of adult dogs came to be carried out at the Kobe City Animal and Pet Management Center. In order to rescue animals in need, the Animal Rescue Headquarters and the Kobe City Animal and Pet Management Center, centered the Veterinary Association of Hyogo Prefecture, the Veterinary Association of Kobe City, and the Hanshin Branch of JAWS and with the support of over 20,000 volunteers, conducted animal rescue activities over a period of 16 months, took in 1,556 dogs and cats, and medically treated a total of approximately 8,000 animals. We deeply appreciate the enormous contributions made by so many people, as our activities could never have been carried out without their support and cooperation.

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Shigekatsu ICHIDA Chairperson, The Great Earthquake Animal Rescue Memorial Association



Fifteen years have now passed since the day of the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, and today I would like to talk to you about the animal rescue activities that we performed over the course of a year and four months following the earthquake. We

began our work in a situation in which we were literally groping in the dark, but somehow we managed to get through to the end.

[Slide 2] This is a view of Awaji Island back in those days. The photograph was taken from the direction of the rescue center. The Akashi Kaikyo Bridge was later constructed in this area, and the epicenter of the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake was around here. Sannomiya [downtown Kobe] lies in this direction. I expect you can recognize this from the topography of the mountains.

[Slide 3] This is the famous “Nada no Sake” brewery. As you can see, here are the remains of the storage tanks and other structures that have been completely destroyed by the quake. These are the kinds of scene we don’t really want to remember. The brewery does still remain here although the facilities were destroyed. In fact, this is one of my least favorite memories.

[Slide 4] This photo was taken in Nagata Ward, Kobe, where approximately 7,500 houses burned down. [Slide 5] At the time, we watched on TV as firefighters just stood there holding hoses with no water coming out because the water pipes had been damaged. It was a catastrophic situation. The entire area was reduced to burned out ruins.

[Slide 6] This is Nishi-Shimin Hospital. This hospital plays a central role in providing Kobe’s medical care. The 4th, 5th and 6th floors of the building collapsed

unexpectedly. However, above and below the level seen here, the floors were not completely destroyed. According to an earthquake specialist, each earthquake has its own peculiar wavelength, and in the case of the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, the wavelength was such that it caused damage around this area. Indeed, the Kobe City officials who were working at the Kobe City Animal and Pet Management Center at the time of the quake were kept extremely busy taking care of people day and night. [Slide 6]

[Slide 7] The wall of this building also peeled off due to the earthquake, although the building itself did not collapse. The accumulation of roof tile debris and other things falling from above reduced the width of the road by about half. So although we had assumed we would be able to use this road, in practice it was impossible to pass through. That was the situation we were in. Dr. Hayata, who was the Chairman of the Veterinary Medical Association, was very worried about the safety of the association’s members as they tried to get around Kobe City. When he moved around Kobe himself he used a motorbike. If he had tried to use an ordinary passenger car, he could never have managed it due to the constant traffic congestion and large number of impassable roads. Naturally, at that time we had a lot of trouble making contact with people in the areas that were badly damaged, totally destroyed or burnt out, and we failed to make contact in a lot of cases.

[Slide 8] This slide shows a dog gazing at us with a look of astonishment. This was a case in which, even though it was suffering just the same as many other animals, it had a place with a roof over its head which provided some protection against the elements.

[Slide 9] It may be a little difficult to see, but there is a

dog in this photograph, one that was brought to an evacuation center. Initially, the animals, just like the people, were happy together at the shelter. Together they could share a feeling of mutual safety. But after three or four days, perhaps a week, at the evacuation center, inevitable issues of territoriality – such as assertions that “this is my space!” - began to occur. Not all the evacuees were fond of animals so, naturally, problems began to develop at this stage. It is difficult to incorporate the evacuation of animals into an evacuation center unless those evacuees accompanied by animals and those who dislike animals are carefully segregated.

[Slide 10] The earthquake struck at 5:46 am on January 17. The clock in this picture was running a little behind when it stopped. On January 21st, an on-site headquarters, which was called the ‘Southern Hyogo Prefecture Earthquake Animal Rescue Headquarters’, was set up. We heard about this on January 22nd. In the case of Kobe City, parts of Nishi, Tarumi, Kita and Suma Wards, (which are mainly in the mountain areas), had suffered comparatively light damage. So the members of the Veterinary Association of Kobe City got together and decided to set up an Animal Rescue Headquarters at the Kobe City Animal and Pet Management Center, which is in Kita Ward. The Veterinary Association of Hyogo Prefecture studied a variety of places, but they couldn’t find anywhere suitable. So the Prefecture was rushed into developing its Animal Rescue Headquarters in a valley adjacent to Sanda Golf Course. Kobe City’s shelter was opened on January 27 and Hyogo Prefecture’s Sanda Shelter was opened on February 16.

[Slide 11] This is the organization chart from that time. Some of the names written on the chart are rather old. For example, the Prime Minister’s Office is written as “Sorifu”. That’s how things were back then.

This [red text] shows the Tokyo Headquarters. Representatives of the Japan Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (JSPCA), the Japan Veterinary Medical Association, the Japan Animal Welfare Society (JAWS), the Japan Pet Care Association, and Japan Animal Protection Management Association were

the main supporting organizations, and there were a number of other supporting organizations too. When we look at other more recent major natural disasters such as those in Niigata and Hokkaido, for example, this kind of support structure seems natural, but it is important to grasp that the effort will come to nothing unless there is an on-site headquarters. In the case of Kobe, the Great Hanshin Earthquake Animal Rescue Headquarters was established under the guidance and with the cooperation of three animal welfare-related organizations, namely, the Veterinary Association of Hyogo Prefecture, the Veterinary Association of Kobe City, and the Hanshin branch of JAWS, while Hyogo Prefecture and Kobe City participated in an advisory capacity. In order to rescue animals, we of course had to establish actual animal rescue centers. Of the two centers that were established, the Kobe Animal Rescue Center was under the control of the Veterinary Association of Kobe City and the Hanshin Branch of JAWS, while the Veterinary Association of Hyogo Prefecture was mainly responsible for operating the Sanda Animal Rescue Center. Both of these centers were set up in response to a sudden emergency situation and we were not used to doing this kind of thing. So we were unsure of what should be done. Under the circumstances, we were able to manage thanks to support from the Tokyo Headquarters and from many other directions. For instance, Dr. Baba quickly arrived to help us. As he had previously worked in the area affected by the Persian Gulf War of 1990-91, his guidance was extremely helpful and much appreciated.

[Slide 12] This is a rough map of Kobe. Here you can see Nishi Ward, Kita Ward, Suma Ward and Tarumi Ward, which I mentioned before. The Kobe Animal Rescue Center, and the Sanda Animal Rescue Center are located here. The epicenter of the earthquake was located roughly here below Awaji Island. These days, the Akashi Kaikyo Bridge stretches across the straits here. This area actually sustained the greatest damage from the earthquake. Here is the area where a 500-meter section of the Hanshin Expressway collapsed. Although the pictures weren’t shown very much, this other area was also badly damaged. An elevated section of the Shinkansen collapsed, so if a Shinkansen train

had been departing from Shin Osaka at the time, the consequences could have been horrific. Meanwhile, in Kobe, the homes of many members of the Veterinary Association were badly damaged or destroyed. At the time, the Association had about 70 members, and approximately half of them had homes that were either half destroyed or completely destroyed. The homes of the other half suffered partial damage.

I'm giving you this schematic description so you'll appreciate how difficult it was to get to the Kobe Animal Rescue Center. In normal times, people could use trains such as the Kobe Electric, Hanshin and Hankyu Railways or the JR line. But in the period following the earthquake, none of these railway lines were in use. So the majority of people coming to the Kobe Animal Rescue Center used the JR Bantan Line or the Fukuchiyama Line. They would come to Sanda along this route, which was relatively free from obstructions.

Although they had seen TV images, the volunteers' impression on first arrival at the Rescue Center was, "This earthquake doesn't seem like anything special – it's just a place with a lot of animals" - or some words along these lines. Then, one evening after they had finished taking care of the animals, the vet in charge of the volunteers said, "If you still think it's all no big deal, let's visit the lower area of Kobe." He then led them down there. Many of the volunteers were young so they were naturally rather noisy, but when they reached the devastated area they grew silent. Some of them began weeping as they came to realize how much the situation differed between the upper and lower areas of the city.

[Slide 13] This photo was taken when we started building the shelter. Actually this is a plastic greenhouse. We didn't have any chance to make preparations, so we had to manage with what was available. At the time, among the members of the Veterinary Association of Kobe City there was only one veterinarian specializing in the care of large animals (cattle, for example) as well as farm animals (e.g., chickens). This vet borrowed a large plastic greenhouse from the JA (Japan Agricultural Cooperatives), and gathered about 20 people to help

construct it. Among the first animals brought into this greenhouse were a Muscovy duck and a monkey. They were among the animals that had been rescued. The floor was plain asphalt because the greenhouse was set up on the surface of a road inside the Kobe City Animal and Pet Management Center. In the background, you can see a green color. We planned to use the back of the greenhouse as a cat shelter so we obtained a disused net from a golf driving range and used it as the cat shelter partition. In any case, it was vitally important for us to manage the situation with what we had on hand at the time.

[Slide 14] This photo shows the scene in the greenhouse after the shelter's operations had actually begun. In principle, this shelter was for emergency evacuation use, not for permanent keeping. And we had very little choice about starting up in this way. Our policy was to take proper care of evacuated animals as far as was possible, so at the very least, we took the dogs for walks every morning and evening, and the vets checked the animals' health every day.

[Slide 15] This slide shows various scenes of volunteers taking care of the animals. Everybody did their best to care for the animals they grew fond of or those they were best able to handle. The staff worked hard day and night.

[Slide 16] When volunteers from the Kobe Animal and Plants Environmental College visited the shelter, they performed shampoo and trimming. They also stroked or cuddled those animals that enjoyed being made a fuss of, or simply waited for the less trusting animals to get used to them naturally. It was impossible for us not to be kind to these suffering animals because they were in such a poor state. When the caregivers cuddled the distressed animals, some of the animals would bite because they had not been treated in that way by their original owners. Animals that sink their teeth into people usually do so suddenly and without warning. Some animals, while they may grimace or growl at people, usually don't bite. Some behave in a very friendly way, until they are being put into a kennel. Then they suddenly change and sink their teeth into

their handlers. There were some serious cases where, despite having given the volunteers ample warning, and particularly where a particular dog was known to have a biting habit, nevertheless a volunteer would go into the shelter, and within an hour get bitten so badly that they were forced to retire from duty. We had some volunteers like that and it was a problem point. Fortunately, we were mainly handling dogs and cats. But if we had been handling snapping turtles or poisonous snakes, the situation would have been much more difficult to deal with.

[Slide 17] This picture was taken on a sunny day. It shows volunteers taking animals out on a leash so they could sunbathe. The man standing is Dr. Hayata, who was Chairman of our organization at the time. He is seen here giving an explanation to some volunteers, which he often used to do in this style.

[Slide 18] This slide shows some veterinarians treating small animals. We would examine even those animals that were uninjured soon after their arrival at the facility. This is a treatment scene. It looks as if we have everything we need but, in fact, we didn't have much space to work in. So when the treatment was over, we would clear things away, wipe the table clean, and then use it as a staff dining table. Then after the volunteers had finished their meal and the table cleared away for the evening, we would lay something on the floor for more comfort. At the beginning, there were no mats or tablecloths, so volunteers would spread out sheets of cardboard. At first, we didn't pay much regard to the situation but towards the end of the first week, the volunteers said it was too cold and asked us to please do something. That was on January 22 or 23, when the weather was definitely colder.

However, we were lucky, because right in front of the Animal and Pet Management Center was the Disaster Prevention Center. So we negotiated with the staff there and asked if they had any spare blankets or similar. Their initial answer was, "You are taking care of animals so why do you need blankets?" So we had to explain that "the animals are not staying there all by themselves. We have a lot of volunteers taking care of them." Finally,

the staff at the Center understood that people were sleeping at the Animal and Pet Management Center too. After that, they helped us out by giving us blankets and many other things. That was the process we went through. So whenever I see these photos, I once again realize just how hard things were at that time.

[Slide 19] This is the Rescue Center's acceptance procedure system. When an animal arrived, first we would write out a pledge card and take a photograph. This was very especially important and the photographs extremely important. The reason was that it was not always clear who had brought a particular animal to the center, and whether they were the owner or not. There were many cases in which, for example, the animal was brought in by a relative or a neighbor of the actual owner. We were sometimes confused as to "who on earth brought this animal in? What are we doing?" On occasion we were asked accusingly whether we were a proper organization or not. But when we had the photos, if that did happen we were able to show the animal's photo and say, "this person brought this animal here." The person doubting us would understand immediately and we did not have to go into lengthy explanation. Also, we received many inquiries about lost dogs and cats. People would ask whether a specific animal was being kept at the Rescue Center. But even if we were given a description of a cat's pattern, and even if that was in some detail such as "a white bit here and yellow color there," we would be unable to identify one individual from among so many cats. However, if we had only one single photo of the animal we could roughly understand what kind of cat it was. So whenever an animal arrived or left the Center, we would make certain to take its photo and confirm the identity of the person bringing it in or taking it away. We also prepared a pledge card to be signed by the person bringing the animal to the Center or by the new owner when somebody adopted an animal and took it away. We made them a promise to take care of the animals properly by having them sign a written pledge.

We also asked the owners about any immunizations their animals had received and about the kind of foods they were accustomed to eating. But the main point

was to find out in what way the animal had been kept. That was the point that most needed to be questioned. According to the owners, different animals had been taken care of in various ways. Some of the animals were well loved and taken care of properly, while others had been treated as so-called "watch dogs". Consequently, there were many dogs that, while they had always received a walk in the morning and evening, and proper feeding, they had not been petted or otherwise treated with affection. So, there were some dogs at the center that bit volunteers even when handled in a friendly manner. So more than anything else, we wanted information on how each animal had been kept. But many people who brought animals to the center were reluctant to tell us what they thought might be unwelcome information. Looking back, I think we should have asked more about this point as well.

After this kind of procedure was finished and the animals were judged OK for the time being, they received a physical examination. Then, provided they were free from abnormalities, the animals were given a distemper vaccine, (and in springtime were also vaccinated against rabies). With that procedure completed, they were accepted into the shelter. Animals found to have something wrong with them were given a variety of examinations. Simple medical examinations could be performed at the Center, but for x-rays or ultrasonic scans, etc., the Center facilities were inadequate at the time so the animals were taken to a veterinary hospital. It was very important for us to find out whether an individual animal needed surgery or had a contagious disease. If the latter was the case, the animal had to be isolated of course, whereas if surgery was required this was performed at the veterinary hospital.

However, at the time, because all treatment was volunteer-based, even when animals received professional surgery all we veterinarians ever received were a few words of thank you. Although our group and other veterinarians were able to carry out these activities, each one of us had sustained some level of loss due to the earthquake. Most of us had homes and clinics that had been damaged, in some cases heavy

damage. From around April, veterinarians whose homes had been totally or partially destroyed helped out at the Center. Now that I look back on it, I feel that it would have been better if we had at least paid those veterinarians a treatment fee. But in fact we didn't pay any treatment fees at all.

[Slide 20] This shows the new shelter which consisted of three 2-storey prefabricated buildings. They were about situated about 20 meters high up, although it doesn't seem that way in the images, which is why they were sometimes empty. For some reason, this ground level was not used. Actually, in the case of Kobe, an entire mountainside is often used for cemeteries and this place was one such cemetery. So we set up the shelter there. This is a view from the rear. Basically, the second floor was used for cats. Roughly, there was one window for each room, and five of the rooms were used as cat rooms. Cats infected with FIV or FELV were isolated from the other cats in a different room. The first floor was used for kennels with paddocks at the front and back. This is the front entrance. We had to put this sort of fencing all over in order to stop dogs from running away and to guard against the risk of somebody falling.

[Slide 21] This is an inside view of a paddock. The space is quite broad and we thought it would be better to put sand on the floor. We did this and we housed dogs that got on well with one another. In cases of dogs that were incompatible with others, we would only put one dog per paddock. From around this time, both the dogs and the staff began to feel far greater calm.

[Slide 22] This is the cathouse on the second floor. Even though they were kept in cat boxes, some cats could get along with each other and others could not. So we would take out a group of cats that showed some compatibility with each other and let them play around for an hour. Then we would put them back in their boxes and take out another compatible group. The volunteers did this constantly almost all day long.

Now, this window faced towards the west, so the room warmed up in the afternoon sun. This was fine in winter, but it became very hot in the summer. So although it is

not shown in this photo, an air conditioner was installed as well as the extractor fan. We made this extractor fan ourselves but later found it was too dangerous to use. Some of the Veterinary Association members with practical skills installed a net over the window and a cover on the extractor fan. We all worked hard to ensure safety.

[Slide 13] This is the examination room. It was set up inside a transport container. The shelter and the reception area I showed you before were a little distance apart. So we made this simple examination room in the upper area. By this time, the animals had calmed down for the most part, so we considered this level of facility to be sufficient.

[Slide 24] This chart shows the kinds of diseases or symptoms suffered by cats with abnormalities and the numbers of cats with each symptom. The number-one category was digestion difficulties such as diarrhea and vomiting, as might be expected. Of course, there were some cats infected with FVR, etc. Part of the problem was that some other organizations brought us cats that had watery eyes and runny noses due to FVR telling us, "Because your place has veterinarians, we are hoping you can do something about it." As a result we had a great many cats coming down with runny noses and sneezing and had some real problems.

Additionally, unexpectedly, there was a lot of eye disease. At the time, visitors to the Rescue Center would sometimes comment on how nice it was that we had a big blue sky above us. Of course, it was only that the sky was clear on that particular day, and that is why it looked so blue. But the reality was mostly different. Down in the lower sections of Kobe, houses that had mostly or totally collapsed in the earthquake were being broken up and turned into rubble. When large numbers of such houses are torn down, even despite the sites being sprayed with water, thick clouds of dust are produced. And this was happening all across the city. So the dust clouds were everywhere and, with our animals exposed to such an environment, it was only natural that there would be a huge increase in respiratory disease and eye disease.

A little before the Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake struck, there had been an earthquake in Miyagi Prefecture. One person carrying out rescue work after that disaster told us that she came across many rescued animals with digestive diseases. I think that when animals are under stress, significant increases in digestive diseases can be expected.

This [same] slide shows diseases among the dogs at the Center. As one might expect, digestive diseases were extremely common, although there was a high incidence of respiratory diseases too. I think stress has a considerable effect in damaging the health of animals.

[Slide 26] The next slide shows the numbers of dogs brought to the Center. These are the numbers brought in, these are the numbers taken away, and these are the average values. As you can see, February, March and April marked the peak time for accepting animals at the Center. The prefabricated shelter was completed around May 12. Also, we continued rescuing animal victims of the disaster to the end, but we did not take in so-called "ordinary" animals – that is, dogs and cats no-longer-wanted. So gradually the number of animals taken began to taper off.

[Slide 27] Here we see the situation for cats, which was similar to the case with dogs. Up to this point in time [on the chart], a great many animals arrived and the number was particularly high in February. But after that it declined in this way.

[Slide 28] This data shows the number of treatments carried out at the Rescue Center. Naturally, the greater the number of animals taken in, the greater the numbers treated increase. It is true that from May, the number of animals at the Center and treatments did decrease but this compares to an earlier period when we had to treat 40 or 50 animals per day. Moreover, after the animals were taken into the prefab housing, etc, they seemed to be calmer.

In total, we treated more than 8,000 individual animals. At the beginning, among the members of the Veterinary Association of Kobe City, there were only about 20 to

30 people who were able to work on a volunteer basis. The other vets had almost no means of taking part in rescue activities because their own homes or hospitals had partially or totally collapsed due to the earthquake. By April, when their own situations had been resolved to some extent, we could ask these other veterinarians to participate in our rescue activities. By this time, the number of vets we needed was not so large, so the Center was able to function with two or three vets from the Veterinary Association of Kobe City. Later, there were three or four volunteer veterinarians available to help on a rotating basis, so we asked others to help out about once a month and made a schedule accordingly. However, even as late as April or even May, the road system had still not been fully restored. So when our volunteers traveled to the Rescue Center from places in the east end of Kobe, such as Nada or Higashi Nada Wards, the round trip – usually a half an hour drive - could take up to four hours due to traffic congestion. This meant that if we asked a veterinarian to be on duty from 1pm to 4 pm, they may have to leave home at 11am because the road trip could be expected to take two hours. Upon arrival, they would work until 4 pm without eating lunch. And if the work involved time-consuming surgery, etc., they might not be able to leave the Center until 5 pm or later, with a journey home taking until 7pm. This meant they would not be able to perform their volunteer duties at the Center unless they took a whole day off from their regular work. Given this reality, we were reluctant to ask other veterinarians to help.

Given the tragic circumstances of the post-quake time, there was a certain community atmosphere under which people felt they could not refuse if asked to help out. I know that because whenever we asked for help, everybody always said, "Yes, I will be there." I always felt sorry for imposing on the veterinarians who helped us. There was a peculiar atmosphere while we were running the Center. Looking back now, it seems strange, but it really was like that.

[Slide 29] The next slide shows the places where the veterinarians and veterinary students who helped out at the Center came from. Of course, we greatly

appreciated all the help we had from Hyogo Prefecture and Kobe City, but the people who came all the way from Yokohama, Tokyo and many other distant places to help us in the first few months until April were also invaluable. They regularly came when the Center was extremely busy and formed a superb workforce.

Another great workforce came from among the substitute veterinarians, to be specific, the so-called 'assistant director' class. We really appreciated their assistance. On the other hand, the more senior 'director class' of the substitute veterinarians each had their own way of working and were very fussy. They would order our people to "do something this way" or "do it that way," and never asked the local veterinarians, "What do you need us to do? Please tell us." In contrast the assistant director substitute veterinarians always asked us "how should we do such and such?" and then followed our instructions. So they were very easy to work with and we appreciated their help very much. Although some of them could only work up until April, they were very helpful in being able to work while the Center was at its busiest. After that time, the amount of treatment decreased gradually.

Even then, up until the end of May, one or two of these outside veterinarians came to help us every day. Also, veterinarians from Osaka City and Osaka Prefecture helped us out over a long period when the situation at the Center had calmed down to an extent but when we still required some outside help. Both kinds of help meshed together nicely and allowed us to operate successfully, for which we were very grateful. And apart from these volunteers, veterinarians from all over Japan from Hokkaido to Kyushu made efforts to help us.

[Slide 30] The next slide shows the places where the ordinary volunteers came from. A surprisingly large number of people came from Hyogo Prefecture. Many who came to help lived quite close to the Center, such as from Nagata, Hyogo, Chuo, Nada and Higashi Nada Wards. These areas were severely damaged by the earthquake and the local residents faced very tough times at the beginning. But by May and June, the situation had improved to the point where many

people were no longer so busy recovering from the quake. Some told us they had received a lot of assistance from the Center, and now wanted to help us back in return, even if only for a week or so. Others said that they had received assistance from others after the earthquake, so if there was anything they could do they would be happy to oblige. For example, one man asked us, "I'm a carpenter. Is there anything I can do?" So we asked him if he could build us a roof or construct other things we needed at the time. Another person had come to Kobe from Nagano to do electrical work at an evacuation center for people. Then he heard that there was a rescue center for animals, so he visited us and asked if there was anything faulty he might be able to put right for us. At the time, the volunteers had a TV reception problem, and the fuse in washing machine had a tendency to blow. He was a professional in electrical engineering so he understood the problems immediately and completed all the tasks we gave him in a single day. Such help was greatly appreciated. Since the Center was in Hyogo Prefecture, large numbers of people living in the neighboring prefectures such as Osaka also came to help.

[Slide 31] This slide shows where the people who adopted dogs from the Center lived. As you might expect, they included people from all over Japan, ranging from Hokkaido to Kyushu, although the predominant number were residents of Hyogo Prefecture. After all, 420 dogs is a large number. The main reason why so many people from Hyogo adopted dogs was that they came to the Center in large numbers to help care for the animals. While doing so they found individual dogs they liked, and subsequently adopted them. Another important characteristic of the Center was that we didn't euthanize even a single cat or dog. I can still remember one particular dog that was more like a wolf than a dog. It had a really terrifying growl, and I have no idea how we managed to get it into its cage. It was the kind of dog that nobody would ever consider adopting. We sent this dog to an animal welfare group in Tokyo on the condition that they would not put it down if we asked them to accept only one animal.

The Rescue Center had opened for the first time on

January 27. At that time, the following story was being covered on TV. A pet owner's house had burned down and the owner had no other place to go. If another place was made available to him he was told he would not be allowed to bring the animal along. This was very sad for the dog but he had no other alternative than to have it euthanized. So he took it to a veterinary hospital where the dog was put down. There was much criticism of this decision, and we at the Center also received criticism from people who assumed we were operating in the same way. Animal Management Centers do not have a very good image in the first place. In response, we explained that we did not euthanize animals. Also, because of the earthquake, the Animal Management Center had been forced to suspend its usual work completely. But all the same it was difficult for us to obtain public trust, and that was distressing.

[Slide 32] This slide shows who picked up cats from the Center. In the case of cats, the geographical spread of the adopters was comparatively smaller, although just as in the case of dogs, people living locally accepted many cats.

[Slide 33] This slide shows the result of our questionnaire on why people decided to adopt a dog or cat from the Center. The answers included "Because there was an earthquake" and "I wanted to have a dog/cat" or "because the opportunity arose." Of the almost 60% of the respondents who answered, "Because there was an earthquake" when asked, "On what did you base your choice of animal?" the most common response related to their first impression - "Our eyes met," or "The animal came up to me," etc. It appears that these factors appeal to people most strongly.

[Slide 34] To the question "Is there anything to which you have to pay special attention?" around 60% responses had nothing to report, But among the "Yes" answers, the specific concerns included the animal running away or falling sick. In particular, there are dogs that can be very difficult to treat medically if they fall ill. These include dogs that bite when they are being lifted onto the examination table or simply when stroked by someone feeling sorry for them. Some of the adopters

of such problem dogs came to us for advice on how to handle their animals. So it was always helpful if the original owner had provided such information when first bringing their dog to the Center.

To the question "Do you have any trouble (with the animal you adopted)?" approximately half of the respondents answered, "Yes." Among the most common troubles they encountered were barking for no reason, excretion problems and illness. Actually, at the beginning, some people came to the Center and said, "I will take an old dog or a dog that has a handicap, such as a thin and sickly-looking one." Their rationale was that "a cute dog can easily get a new owner if I don't take it." So the result figures include such people, who adopted problem dogs.

[Slide 35] To the question "Does your dog cause problems?" 85% of the respondents indicated no problem. I was a little surprised by this result. Also, 77% answered that "things were as they had hoped" and only 12% answered that they would take such a dog "this time only". These responses were better than we had expected. Indeed, we had believed at the start that it would not be possible to find new homes for the adult dogs at all. But in almost 8 cases out of 10, things went successfully.

[Slide 36] This photo shows the scene when Prince and Princess Hitachi visited the Center to offer us encouragement. In the photo, Princess Hitachi is holding a puppy, and she took this back home with her. The photo also shows the windbreaker that Dr. Hatata was wearing. We felt bad about only doing animal rescue work while continuing to receive donations, and we had heard that a group of special needs people in Nagata were making windbreakers and shirts. So we thought, "let's have our own windbreakers made, sell them, and use the proceeds to fund our operating expenses." So we had these windbreakers made in blue and white, and asked people to support our work by buying them.

[Slide 37] These photos illustrate our efforts to recruit foster owners. Particularly during 'Be Kind to Animals

Week', a series of events were held in various places around Hyogo Prefecture. This shows the scene of an event held in Himeji, but similar events were also held on Awaji Island and also up in Toyooka near the Sea of Japan. We obtained information about these events and sent volunteers to various places accompanied by dogs and cats from the Center.

[Slide 38] On May 29, 1996, the Center finally closed down. These photos show the construction of the prefabs, shelter, and a plastic greenhouse. These over here show how we covered things with blankets, etc., in an effort to keep out the worst of the cold. The figures shown are for the Kobe Rescue Center, but together with the Sanda Rescue Center, we rescued a total of 1,556 animals.

[Slide 39] The book shown here details the story of the Kobe Rescue Center and the facts associated with the rescue effort. Dr. Ota, professor of veterinary science at Azabu University served as the Chief and authored this book. He also reported on this subject at the World Veterinary Conference in Buenos Aires.

So I hope that, with this talk, I have been able to give you a full outline of the rescue activities we carried out 15 years ago in Kobe. Thank you very much for your attention.

阪神・淡路大震災における 動物救護について

市田 成勝
(大震災動物救護メモリアル協議会会長)

【Slide 1】



【Slide 5】



【Slide 2】



【Slide 6】



【Slide 3】



【Slide 7】



【Slide 4】



【Slide 8】



【Slide 9】



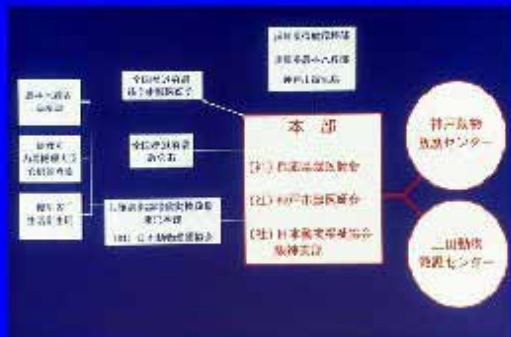
【Slide 13】



【Slide 10】



【Slide 14】



【Slide 11】



【Slide 15】



【Slide 12】



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【Slide 18】



【Slide 22】



【Slide 19】



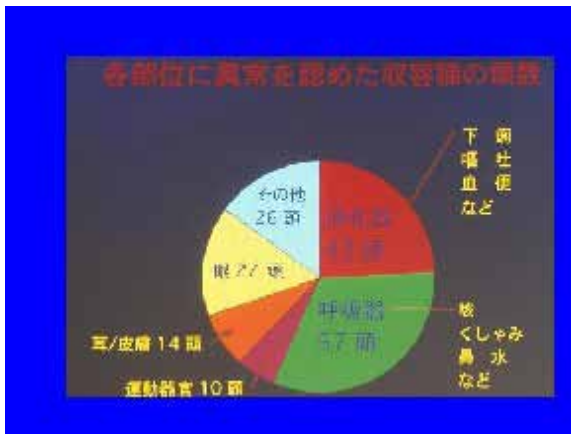
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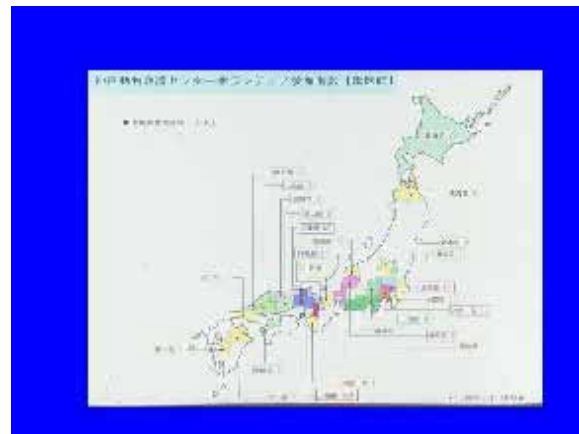
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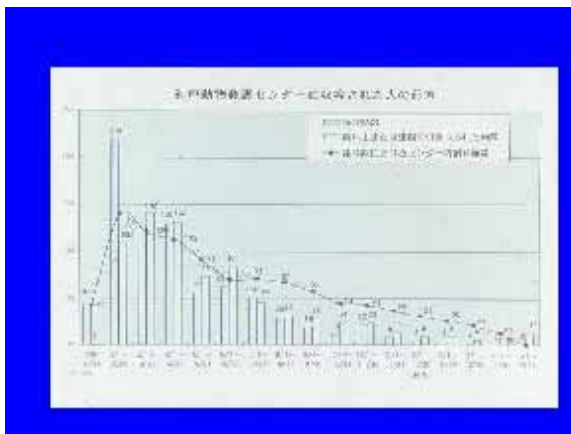
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【Slide 25】



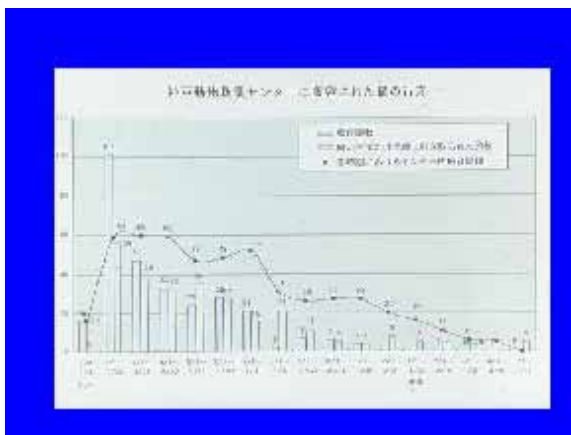
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【Slide 26】



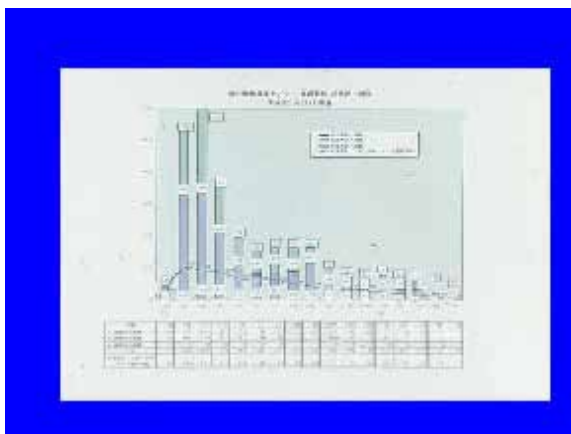
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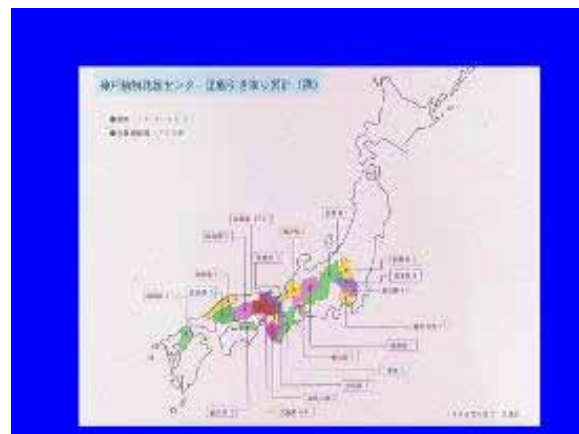
【Slide 27】



【Slide 31】



【Slide 28】



【Slide 32】

