

Half Staff – Chikako Atsuta

Friday, August 20, 2004



Chikako Atsuta, 39, died August 20 at Massachusetts General Hospital after being involved in a traffic accident while she was biking to work.

Ako, as most knew her, lived in Gloucester from 1998 to 2001. Though she was living in Somerville at the time of her accident, she kept Gloucester close to her heart and often visited close friends in the city. Born in Osaka, Japan, she graduated from college in Tokyo and began work there as a journalist for Jiji Press. In 1996, she moved to Wellfleet with her American husband. Her marriage ended soon after she arrived in the United States, but she stayed in the Boston area, eventually finding work at Open Book Systems in Rockport.

At the time of her death, she was working at TWI in Brighton as a translator and Web designer for the official Tiger Woods Web site. She was an enthusiastic, curious and deeply artistic person who wrote poetry, studied photography and took art and acting classes. She took drawing classes and worked as a model at the Rockport Art Association. Some of her writings, including essays about Gloucester, are posted on the Web. Many of her poems were featured on the site www.redpaper.com, and others are at Dogtown Uncommon on the site www.capeannweb.com. Last month she took the stage at Artbeat 2004, a Somerville arts festival, to read her poetry. A tribute to her, and some of her work, can be found at www.ako.name.

She had the ability to become fascinated by an idea or subject, and forever sought new experiences and friends. She loved the water, whether a hot bath or a swim at Good Harbor Beach, and loved to travel. Her favorite way to explore was by bicycle or on foot. She looked upon every day life with a sense of gentle mischief and sly humor.

She is survived by her parents, Toshihiro and Machiko Atsuta; her sister, Mami; and her brother-in-law, Joachim, all of Osaka, Japan.