

# AMIGOS DE LOS ANIMALES de Guanajuato, A.C.

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## Focusing on Education

During the spring and summer of 2009 Amigos members, student volunteers from Guanajuato's college-preparatory high school, and personnel of the city's new Animal Control Center (CECA) have been working together to raise awareness the city's new regulations to protect domestic animals from neglect and abuse. Four events were organized by Amigos de los Animales and the CECA to encourage pet owners to treat their animals humanely and responsibly.

The first event took place on May 23 in Encino Park, where five students handed out flyers to passersby about the regulations, rules for being a good pet owner, and the advantages of sterilizing pets.

On May 30, eight students gathered on the Plazuela de El Truco, across the street from City Hall, with Amigos board members and veterinarian Luis Alberto Fernández Ferro CEPA and his staff.

On June 20 and 21 Amigos and student volunteers had a stand at the Annual Dog Show in the city's popular park called Los Pastitos. Besides handing out the flyers to adults, they offered children copies of a coloring book called (in Spanish) "Lend them a Hand," a flyer on the advantages of sterilizing dogs and cats, and a short story entitled "Diary of an Abandoned Dog." Their tent was decorated with posters made by the students illustrating their messages.



*Student volunteers at our May 30 event*



*Amigos's exhibit during Veterinarians' Day (August 17) in the Jardín de la Unión*

## Getting on board

On the premise that changing attitudes is the best way to change behavior, Amigos is planning to run a series of advertisements on city buses provided it can find sponsors for the ads. Each advertisement will be shown on the back of a bus for 90 days, drawing attention to a particular issue involving the treatment of companion animals and the city's new regulations. Copies of the advertisement will appear inside 10 to 15 buses over the same period. The company that sells the space on the buses and prints the advertisements has offered Amigos a 50% discount from their usual charge. The advertisement pictured here is one of the first planned for the series. Each ad, costing us 1,500 pesos (US \$115), will be seen by thousands of people every day.

If you would like to sponsor a bus advertisement, we'll give you credit in our next newsletter and (if you wish) on the signs that appear in the buses. Just go to our Web site and designate your contribution for a bus ad. We also welcome ideas for the ads.

**Nos dan su amor incondicional.**



**Merézcalo por tratarlos bien.**

**AMIGOS DE LOS ANIMALES**  
de Guanajuato, A.C.

[www.amigosanimalesgto.org](http://www.amigosanimalesgto.org) • (473) 734-2307

*Above: One of the planned bus advertisements*

## Borrowing others' excellent ideas

The Fundación Dejando Huella in Puebla, Mexico, leads a permanent social awareness campaign. One of its most important tools for achieving that awareness is the use of a superb series of short, clever educational videos about pet owners' responsibilities created by Tonatiuh Ramírez and Bendita Producciones. The videos were part of Tonatiuh's Master's thesis, directed by Dr. Louisa Greathouse, current president of the Foundation. The spots impressed us so much that we asked them and the foundation if we might use them in our education program in Guanajuato. With their generous permission, we are now showing the videos to people who attend our spay/neuter campaigns and, upon receiving authorization will request a local television channel to air them as public service announcements.

One of the videos begins by showing a car traveling along a country road. The car stops, and a little boy hops out. A ball is thrown to him, and he begins to play with it. Suddenly the car takes off without him. He runs after the car, calling out to his family and desperately trying to catch up. The camera then zooms in on the car and we see the impassive family inside—consisting of two adult dogs. The spot closes with the message: *Never abandon your pet.*

Another video shows a small, three-legged dog wandering on a city street searching for food. It is obviously homeless, and one's heart goes out to it. Next we see the dog being fed and petted by a kind woman who has adopted it. The camera pulls back and we realize that the woman too is missing a leg. We now feel happy for both of them.

To view these and other videos produced by the Fundación Dejando Huella, go to YouTube and look for the following links. It is not necessary to understand the Spanish voice-overs.

ABANDON: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MHx-YqjuCMI>

ADOPTION: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OVyrg9pfmvY>

VACCINATION: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kHFJ68Nbgq>

SPAY/NEUTER: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8gwphxqMl40>

MISTREAT: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oqEDve7S1TI>

## Reaching newspaper readers

For the past several years Guanajuato's popular weekly newspaper *Chopper* has been publishing articles submitted by us on a variety of topics as part of our education program. The articles aim to raise awareness of the needs of companion animals and to provide useful information to pet owners. Lately we have stepped up the rate of submissions, and *Chopper's* editor has agreed to devote a column to the organization twice a month. Recent articles have focused on Tulu, the rescued dog featured in our last newsletter; how to determine whether a person who claims to be a veterinarian is qualified to practice; why it's important for your dog to have an ID tag; sterilization as a humane alternative to discarding unwanted puppies and kittens; teaching a child how to behave around dogs; how to humanely discourage puppies from biting; and the cruelty of organized dog fights. Forthcoming articles feature protecting your dog or cat from extremes of weather and foods that are harmful to dogs. Our sincere thanks to the authors of these articles, and to the publishers of several that previously appeared elsewhere. Thanks also to Tom Reavley for his translations. We welcome suggestions for future articles.

Amigos A.C. has been receiving positive publicity in other local newspapers too, thanks to the efforts of President Eduardo Rodríguez. The education events in May and June, for example, merited a full-page article in the periodical *Personalidades*, complete with color photographs.

## Under construction: new Web site for Amigos

We are redesigning our Web site and expect to have the new version up and running shortly after this newsletter appears. The revision is a collaborative effort of board members and Web-page designer Ashley Fell, who is volunteering his expertise for this project. The new design should make it easier to navigate the site and, we hope, more pleasurable.

If you have tried to make an on-line donation to Amigos recently using PayPal, you have been directed to do so through our Canadian affiliate, Mex-Can Pet Partners. The reason for this is that PayPal requires that Amigos be registered with CEMEFI, the registry of Mexican philanthropic societies. Amigos has been registered with the federal government of Mexico as a voluntary, nonprofit association since its inception in 2001 and annually files a tax return with Hacienda, Mexico's federal tax agency. After learning of PayPal's requirement, in May of this year, we applied to CEMEFI for inclusion in its registry. Such applications take a while to process. In February we applied for associate status in INDESOL, Mexico's umbrella organization for charitable organizations (similar to the United Way in the United States), which provides matching funds to its associated charities. Although INDESOL does not have a membership category for humane societies, we are hopeful that Amigos will qualify for associate status by virtue of contributing to the health and safety of the Guanajuato Municipality. We are awaiting a decision from INDESOL. In the meanwhile, donations to Mex-Can Pet Partners designated for Amigos de los Animales will be made available to our organization.

To make a donation to Amigos, Inc., simply go to [www.amigosanimalesgto.org](http://www.amigosanimalesgto.org), click on "Click here to make a donation through our affiliate Mex-Can Pet Partners," then click on "Make a donation." You will be prompted through the PayPal process. Please indicate that your donation is for Amigos de los Animales de Guanajuato.

## Our April spay/neuter campaign

On April 26 a voluntary team of veterinarians, vet technicians, and others sterilized 73 dogs and cats in the village of San José de Cervera, near the city of Guanajuato. Participating in the project along with local volunteers were four veterinarians from the city of León, a physician and two nurses from the Health Center in Santa Teresa, a vet technician from San Miguel de Allende, and three volunteers from Mexico City. The campaign offered this important service to pet owners unable to afford the customary charges for spay/neuter.

This was Amigos's 22<sup>nd</sup> campaign since our establishment in 2002 and the first of three campaigns we have planned for 2009. It was co-sponsored by Guanajuato's Health Department,

the Urban Health Center, and the Health Center of Santa Teresa. The Urban Health Center donated medical supplies and printed posters announcing the event. High school students from the city's Preparatory School also participated in the campaign.

The campaign took place in San José de Cervera's primary school "Miguel Hidalgo," where three classrooms were converted into anesthesia, surgery, and recovery units. Volunteers set up the equipment, registered the cases, help prepare the animals for surgery, assisted the surgeons, attended the recovering animals, talked with pet owners about post-operative care, organized a rummage sale to help defray the cost of the campaign, and cleaned the equipment afterward. Community members not only emptied the classrooms in preparation for the campaign and cleaned them afterward, but also served breakfast and lunch to the visiting volunteers.

Staff from the Urban Health Center and Amigos volunteers visited the village several days before the campaign to announce it to the village's school children. They gave the children flyers to take home to their parents and put up signs around the village about the campaign. On the day of the campaign, work began at 8:30 a.m. and ended at 6 p.m.

Most of the animals sterilized were females—43 dogs and 20 cats. Seven male dogs and three male cats were also neutered. Given the reproductive capacity of unsterilized dogs and cats, the cumulative demographic effect of the campaigns is impressive. Most important, they prevent untold suffering on the part of unwanted and abandoned animals.



*Preparing a dog for surgery*



*Preparing postoperative medications*



*In surgery*





*The recovery unit*

## **Special Thanks to a Special Person**

We take this opportunity to extend a special thanks to Mariana Grobet of Mexico City, who each month for the past two years has made a generous donation to Amigos. We honored her dedication to the organization during our campaign in April. Mariana, her brother Jesús, and Jesús' girlfriend Bere drove from the capital to volunteer their services for the day.



*Mariana Grobet with Amigos president Eduardo Rodriguez after receiving her certificate of recognition for outstanding support*

## Recent Donations and Support

We depend upon the donations we receive from our supporters to provide services to the community. Our sincere thanks go to the following donors and volunteers for their recent support:

**Best Friends:** Carolyn Crowder, Marlene Davis, Mariana Grobet, Sandra Ward, Erwin Wilkins

**Benefactors:** Phyllis Duffy, Nancy Hager, Patricia Heinke, Peregrina Ledesma, Ron Mann, Simone Rodrigue

**Family memberships:** Stevie and Judy Dunbar and Ian McCleod, Lee Jordan, , Tom Reavley and Guille Amézquita, Mark W. Schumacher and Natalie Roseth

**Individual memberships:** Laura Weiss

**Government support:** Bajío/León International Airport, Centro de Control Animal, Centro de Salud Urbano, Centro de Salud de Santa Teresa, Dirección de Salud

**Other donors:** Angel Dettenreider, Paco and Rosa Roseth

**Volunteers:** Carla Acosta Martínez, Paty Almanza, Chesed Alvarado Almaguer, Sharon Antón, Berenice Arce, Maria Azundon Villagas, Bernardo Calzada, María Sarai Carrillo Puga, Dr. Octavio Centeno, Maria Chan, Dr. Jesús Cuello, Marlene Davis, Sandra Echeverría, Dr. Luis Alberto Fernández Ferro, Carlos Alberto Fonseca Rosales, Gabriela Fragoso, Jesús Grobet, Mariana Grobet, Nancy Hager, Krizia Haidé, Marcia Hernández, Oliva Hernández, Diana Hernández Ayala, Mónica Estefania Hernández Segoviano, Dr. María Eugenia Herrera, Jolene Gailey, Jim and Kelly Karger, Dr. Enrique Jesús López Jara, Verónica Mares, Cinthya Monsarrat Alba, Estephanie Moreno Rocha, Dr. Miguel Ochoa, Mary Lou O'Day, Krizia Oliva, Dr. Juan de Jesús Ortiz Romero, Dr. Guadalupe Padilla Zavala, Laura Cristina Pantoja Quintero, Dr. Jasmín Perryra Mubarqui, James Pyle, Victoria Rangel, Chris Rantoja, Terri Rasmussen, Dr. José Luis Reyes Gómez, Rubi Rocha, Eduardo Rodríguez, Julia Salido, Max Sampson, Edward Schiff, Verónica Septién, Kathy Snelling, Tom Reavley, Itzel Alexa Tovar Hernández, Dulce María Vargas López, María Asunción Villagas, Sandra Ward, Lori Wilson

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