

AMIGOS DE LOS ANIMALES de Guanajuato, A.C.

Newsletter No. 23 • December 2009

In this issue:

Frankie 1

The veterinarians who support our work 2

74 animals sterilized during our 23rd campaign 6

Amigos Inc. receives a cash award from a US charitable trust 7

This holiday season support Amigos with a gift to a needy Mexican child 7

Recent donations and support 8

Frankie

Frankie showed up at a spay/neuter campaign we held in the city two years ago. He had mange and was coated with engine oil—which many people here mistakenly believe to be a cure for the parasite. The person who brought him to the campaign decided not to keep him after learning that Frankie would need shots and frequent baths for several weeks to clear up the mange, and so Marlene Davis took charge of him.



Frankie with mange and coated with engine oil

Marlene is the founder of the Canadian organization Mex-Can Pet Partners, which finds good homes in western Canada for dogs rescued in Guanajuato. She lives in Guanajuato and cares for the rescues, making sure they are in good health before arranging for them to travel to their new homes in British Columbia. Frankie was placed with Steve and Marie LeFebvre in

Victoria. On the left is a picture of Frankie when he arrived at the November 2007 campaign. Here is what he looks like today.



Frankie today with a friend

If you or someone you know is planning to travel to Vancouver, Victoria, Seattle, Portland, or nearby destinations and would be willing to accompany a dog rescued by Mex-Can Pet Partners, please contact Marlene at their Website, listed on the last page of this newsletter. Marlene will make all arrangements for the dog's travel, check the dog onto your flight at the León International Airport, and have the dog's adopters meet you at your destination to handle the Canadian or US Customs procedures. A very small dog can ride in the cabin with you; a larger dog will ride in the cargo section of the plane.

American, Aeromexico, Continental, and American, Aeromexico, and Mexicana Airlines

allow pets in the cargo hold. American, Mexicana and Continental allow small animals in the main cabin if their carriers can fit under the seat and the flight is under a

certain number of hours. On the basis of our experience, we do not recommend Continental Airlines to people planning to travel to or from Mexico with larger dogs.

The veterinarians who support our work

As you know from our previous newsletters, a major focus of our work is spay/neuter. We usually conduct three intensive spay/neuter campaigns each year (see the article on page 6 for a report on the most recent one). For those campaigns we rely heavily on a handful of veterinarians in the city who are willing to give up an occasional Sunday—their only day off during the week—to volunteer their time and expertise for this purpose. Without their participation, the campaigns could not take place.

Besides participating in the campaigns, those vets offer low-cost canine and feline sterilizations to families unable to afford the fees normally charged. We pay up to half of the reduced fee in such cases. We pay the entire sterilization fee when an Amigos volunteer brings them a rescued dog or cat for adoption, and we also pay to have the animal vaccinated against potentially fatal diseases such as distemper and parvovirus. We do not have a shelter, and therefore all our rescues are offered for adoption through the clinics of vets who have boarding facilities. The rescuer pays for the animal to be bathed and treated for intestinal parasites prior to adoption, and for it boarded by the vet until adopted.

The vets often treat rescued animals for injuries or communicable diseases that are endemic here, such as mange. The rescuer pays for these treatments. If an animal is too badly injured or too ill to be saved, it is euthanized under anesthesia at Amigos's expense.

The veterinarians who participate in our clinic-based program are extraordinarily dedicated to their profession and generous with their time and expertise. We profile in this issue the ones who consistently support the program.

María Eugenia Herrera Alberú

Dr. Maru Herrera and her husband, Dr. Miguel Ochoa Rivera, are the proprietors of Clínica Can-Cat, currently located at No. 42 Calle Alonso and at No. 25 Calle Alhóndiga. In January they will close their Alonso branch and both work at the Alhóndiga clinic.

Maru was born in Tampico but grew up in Mexico City with her ten siblings. At the age of 13 she decided to become a veterinarian. Initially her plan was to help rural Mexicans by treating their livestock. While studying veterinary medicine at the Universidad Autónoma de México (UNAM) in Mexico City, however, she decided instead to specialize in small species. She received her diploma in veterinary medicine (small species) from UNAM in 1984.

She and Miguel have lived in Guanajuato for 26 years. They have one son, Rodrigo, who is studying medicine in Guadalajara.



Maru Herrera, DVM

Maru has served on Amigos's board of directors and currently is an advisor to the board. She has been instrumental in recruiting students from the city's college-preparatory high school to perform their required community service as Amigos volunteers. The students have been helping us conduct educational projects and our spay/neuter campaigns.

When asked about the most interesting case she has ever had, she recalled a case that was brought to her the day after a spay/neuter campaign that Amigos had organized in the village of Los Nicolases in 2006. (Caution: squeamish readers may wish to skip the rest of this paragraph.) The female dog had bitten through her sutures and opened her wound, causing her intestines to fall out. As Maru began operating on the dog, she realized that the dog had also *eaten* half of her own intestines. It was therefore necessary to do extensive repairs of the intestines before resuturing the dog. Despite the grave damage she had done to her body, the dog made a full recovery.

Maru considers the most satisfying aspect of her career to be improving the lives of the animals she treats. She has seen positive changes in people's attitudes toward their animals during her years in Guanajuato, but more education is needed. Her wish is that all pet owners would be conscientious about caring for their pets and consider them to be part of their family. "Pets are not toys for children," she says. "When people adopt a pet they should take responsibility for its welfare."

Besides handling medical cases requiring surgery or treatment, Maru grooms dogs. An appointment is needed for grooming. It is also best to make an appointment for nonemergency medical care, such as checkups and vaccinations.

The Can-Cat Clinics' hours are Monday–Friday, 10:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and 5:30– 8:30 p.m. The same schedule applies on Saturdays, except that the clinics close at 8:00 p.m. unless there is an emergency case requiring one of them to stay open longer. Their telephone numbers are (Alhóndiga) 732-9353 (Alonso) 732-8381. During the remainder of and the year while the Alonso clinic remains open, Maru usually works at the Alonso clinic on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, and at the Alhóndiga clinic on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays.

Felipe Javier Manríquez Cueva

Dr. Felipe Manríquez, a native Guanajuatense, has been involved in animal rescue for many years. He helped to found the organization Centro de Protección Animal, which has worked tirelessly to promote the legal protection of animals in the state and city of Guanajuato. He serves as vice president of that association.

Felipe's clinic is located at No. 13-E Callejón Potrero; the telephone number is 732-5417. Its hours are from 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday.

Felipe decided to become a veterinarian at the age of 8, when he witnessed an act of cruelty toward a defenseless dog. He attended the Veterinary School of the LaSalle University of the Bajío in León, where he received his diploma in 1982. He also studied human medicine for one year.

Felipe and his surgeon wife, Gloria Jardón, have two daughters, one of whom is a veterinarian living in Mexico City. Gloria has often participated in the Amigos spay/neuter campaigns along with Felipe.



Felipe Manríquez, DVM

Many cases that Felipe has had to attend have been dogs wounded by vehicles. His ardent wish is that pet owners would be more responsible toward their pets and keep them off the streets, as required by state law. He also would like the city to achieve 100% enforcement of the new regulations to protect domestic animals from abuse and neglect.

Felipe is too modest to talk about his accomplishments, but perhaps one case can be mentioned as representative of his dedication to homeless animals. About a year ago a member of Amigos asked if he could help rescue a female street dog that had had a litter of puppies and was being mistreated by some people living along the *callejon* (alley) where she had made her home. The callejon, a walkway at the stop of more than 80 steep steps, could not be reached by a vehicle.

The Amigos volunteer collected the six eight-week-old puppies and brought them to Felipe for sterilization and adoption. All were quickly placed in homes. Afterward Felipe trudged up the steps and tried to capture the mother, but she was too skittish. A week later he tried again, this time giving her food laced with tranquilizer. When she became groggy, he was able to anesthetize her and then slung her over his shoulders and carried her down the steps to a waiting car.

After operating on Bella, as we named her, he put her on the flat roof of his clinic, where he has a big doghouse, water, and shade. Then we tried to socialize her. To make her feel less isolated, Felipe lent her several other puppies to mother, and she immediately bonded with them. Every day Felipe and the Amigos volunteer would spend some time with Bella, trying to gain her trust. But she remained wary of being approached, and eventually it became necessary to sedate her again in order to move her to better surroundings.

It took both great patience and swift action on Felipe's part to anesthetize her the second time, but he finally managed to do so. Again, he had to carry her down many steps to a waiting car.

Bela has been living with Marlene Davis ever since. Bela adores Marlene and now greets visitors to her home. She may finally be ready for adoption by a gentle, patient person.

Miguel Ochoa Rivera

Dr. Miguel Ochoa was born and raised in Mexico City. One of nine children, Miguel initially planned to study agronomy because the idea of working in a rural setting appealed to him; but at age 18, when he entered the Universidad Autónoma de Mexico, he decided to become a veterinarian. At UNAM he earned a degree in veterinary medicine (small species) in 1984; he also received a diploma in veterinary othopedics in 2006. It was at UNAM that he met his future wife and professional partner, Maru Herrera.

Until 2008, Miguel and Maru shared the first Cat-Cat Clinic located at No. 43 Calle Alonso. After purchasing the building at No. 25 Calle Alhóndiga last year, they opened a second clinic, also called Can-Cat. In January of 2010 they will close the Calle Alonso clinic and work together again at the Calle Alhóndiga address. (See the section on Maru Herrera for their office hours and contact information.)

Miguel's most interesting case involved an English shepherd that had been shot in



Miguel Ochoa, DVM

the hip with a bee-bee gun. One of the pellets migrated through the dog's system, perforating its intestines in numerous places.

Miguel had to remove the dog's small intestine and repair it by cutting out the traumatized sections, and then put the intestines back into the dog's body. Happily, the dog made a full recovery.

The most satisfying aspect of Miguel's career is treating and curing sick and injured animals. He hopes to see a more prevalent culture of caring for animals develop in Guanajuato so that animals can live out their lives with the dignity and care they deserve. His advice to pet owners is that they consider their pets as members of the family.

Miguel has served on the Amigos board of directors and frequently advises the board. During our spay/neuter campaigns he usually is in charge of the anesthesia unit. He hopes that more people will join Amigos and support its activities.

Moisés Rivera Hernández

Dr. Moisés Rivera has his practice in the Guanajuato suburb of Marfil. His Pets Veterinary Clinic is located at No. 12-A Pozo de la Peña, a short, elevated street that rises from the main road through Marfil next to the business called Impulsora Eléctrica de Guanajuato. The telephone number is 734-5753. Moisés's hours are from 10:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. and from 4:30 to 8:30 p.m., Monday through Friday; from 10:00 to 6:00 p.m. on Saturdays; and from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Sundays.

Born in Mexico City, Moisés moved to Guanajuato at the age of 17. Initially he studied to become a cattle-raising technician at the Center of Bachillerato Tecnológico y Agropecuario in Pénjamo, Guanajuato. But he switched to veterinary medicine and in 1996 he earned his degree at the La Salle University of the Bajío in León. Later he opened his own clinic, which specializes in small species, in Marfil. He chose veterinary medicine as his field because of his love for animals. Occasionally he is asked to attend a farm animal that is ill or injured.



Moises Rivera, DMV

Moisés is married and has three children. Their ages are 16, 10, and 4.

When asked about his most interesting or challenging medical case, Moisés recalled a severe trauma case involving a dog that had been hit by a car. The dog's foreleg was stripped of flesh and muscle down to the bone. Over a period of three months he repeatedly repaired the muscle damage and grafted skin from other areas of the dog's body onto the injured leg. Eventually the wound closed and the dog made a full recovery.

Moisés has long been a dependable partner for Amigos in our clinic sterilization program and our campaigns. He believes strongly that pet owners should sterilize their dogs and cats to prevent the unnecessary suffering that results from unwanted, abandoned litters. His advice to pet owners is that having a pet implies the responsibility of caring for all its needs and realizing that it deserves to live with the family that adopts it.

Octavio Centeno Hernández

Dr. Octavio Centeno has recently opened a new clinic and pet shop located at No. 37 Calle de Guadalupe, just above the Las Huertas Parking Structure. His hours are from 5:00 to 9:00 p.m. on Monday through Friday, and from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Saturdays. His telephone number is 734 - 0756. A native of Guanajuato, Octavio decided to become a veterinarian when he was in

high school. He studied veterinary medicine at the University Michoacana de San Nicolás de Hidalgo in Morelia, receiving his degree in 1994.

He specializes in small animals, including nonmammals. His pet shop features hamsters, reptiles, turtles, and fish, as well as rescued puppies and kittens. His most unusual medical case was an injured iguana.

During weekdays Octavio works in the Secretariat of Health, where he is responsible for environmental health. A major problem in rural areas, he told us, is contaminated well water.

For Octavio, the most satisfying aspect of his veterinary work is treating animals and teaching people how to take care of their pets. He advises his clients to sterilize their dogs and cats before they can begin to reproduce, and to keep their pets healthy by regularly vaccinating them and treating them for parasites.



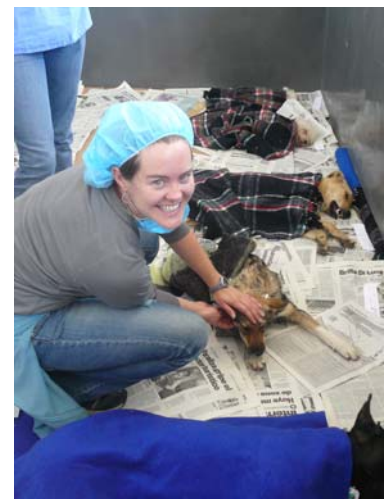
Octavio Centeno, DVM

74 animals sterilized during our 23rd campaign

On November 8 nine volunteer veterinarians sterilized 74 dogs and cats at Guanajuato's Animal Control Center (CECA), a modern facility located in the neighborhood of Yerbabuena. The campaign, our 23rd since our establishment in 2002, offered this important service to pet owners unable to afford the customary charges for spay/neuter. It was co-sponsored by the city's Department of Health and the Urban Health Center. Erin Wilkins provided funding.

Participating in the campaign were 5 local veterinarians, 4 veterinarians from the city of León, a US veterinarian, 2 vet technicians from San Miguel de Allende, 10 students from the University Preparatory High School, and Amigos's regular cadre of volunteers.

Three areas of the CECA were converted into anesthesia, surgery, and recovery units. Volunteers set up the equipment, registered the cases, prepared the animals for surgery, assisted the surgeons, attended the recovering animals, and instructed pet owners in the post-operative care of their pets. While waiting for their pets to recover from surgery, the owners were shown educational films, and a rummage sale was held to help defray the costs of the campaign.



Left :Dr. Miguel Ochoa preps a cat for surgery

Above: The surgical unit

Right: Volunteer Rebeca Beeman calms a waking dog

A few days before the campaign Amigos volunteers announced the campaign and passed out flyers at schools in Yerbabuena. On the day of the campaign, work began at 8:30 a.m. and ended at 6 p.m.

This was to have been our third campaign of the year. But at the last moment we had to cancel a campaign planned for a rural community in September because we were unable to gain access to the school where it was to be held. Despite this setback, as of now we have sterilized 563 animals this year and 4,961 since establishing Amigos.

Amigos Inc. receives a cash award from a US charitable trust

We have just learned that the Alice Morgan Wright – Edith J. Good Trust has awarded US \$1,500 to our US affiliate, Amigos de los Animales de Guanajuato, Inc., to enable us to expand our campaign of public education through a series of bus advertisements in Guanajuato. The money will be used to purchase billboard-size advertisements that will be placed on the backs of city buses and signs containing the same messages placed inside the buses. Each advertisement and sign will bear a message encouraging the humane treatment of animals. These ads will have the advantage of being seen by thousands of people every day for a period of three months. The award was given upon the recommendation of The Humane Society of the United States and Humane Society International.

While this is great news for the companion animals of Guanajuato, it still represents only 10% of our budget for 2010. We depend on generous donations from individuals like you to make up the difference. We hope you will consider making a donation to Amigos so that we can continue our important work. Below is a suggestion for helping both animals and children in Guanajuato.

This holiday season support Amigos with a gift to a needy Mexican child

Here's how: Make a donation to Amigos of US \$15 through PayPal at our Website, www.amigosanimalesgto.org, and we will deliver an Amigos tote bag with a present inside it to a Mexican child who otherwise might not receive a gift. The sturdy bags, made of recycled material in a variety of colors, are printed with the popular dog and cat designs created by board member Julia Salido. Just indicate when you make your donation that it is for a "gift bag." Why not order several?

The bags are handy for carrying groceries and other purchases, and they make great Christmas stocking-stuffers. They can be purchased locally for 50 pesos (US \$3.82) from the Donkey Jote Bookshop at Positos #30 and the veterinarian clinics that participate in our program. The proceeds help fund our education, rescue, and spay/neuter activities.



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: Alice Morgan Wright – Edit J. Goode Trust, Sandra Ward, Erin Wilkins

Benefactors: Sharon Anton, Peter O'Callagan and Jocelyne Roy, Diane Carter, Mariana Grobet, Nancy Hager, Peregrina Ledesma, Ron Mann, Simone Rodrigue, Eduardo Rodríguez

Individual members: Carolyn Waite, Ruthie Wornall

Donors-in-kind: Angel Dettinreider, Laura Weiss, Ruthie Wornall

Other donations: Sharon Anton, Marsha Heinke

Volunteers: Patricia Almanza, Dr. Lupita Ayala Ledesma, Berenice Ayala, Sarahi Elizabeth Alvarez Morales, Sharon Anton, Vicente de Paul Barriento Palafox, Rebeca Beeman, Jackie Bonado, Regina Bustamante, Bernardo Calzada, Dr. Octavio Centeno, Perla Esmeralda Cortez Badillo, Dr. Rolando Cristóbal, Marlene Davis, Maribel Felix, Jolene Gailey, Gigio Gallardo, Valeria González Pérez, Dr. Marsha Heinke, Patricia E. Hernández Pacheco, Jaime Herrera Salazar, Dr. Maru Herrera, Frank Jasco, Kelly Karger, Jonny Mares, Verónica Mares, Norma Delia Morales Moya, Dr. Miguel Ochoa, Dr. Juan Ortiz, Dr. Lupita Padilla Zavala, Laura Andrea Pérez Ortiz, Juan Benjamin Pérez Pérez, Dr. Jazmín Perryra Mubarqui, Abby Possinger, James Pyle, Mariela del Carmen Ramírez, Andrea Elizabeth Rangel Morales, Berenice Rangel, Victoria Rangel, Terri Rasmussen, Tom Reavley, Dr. Moisés Rivera, Martha Roberts, Rubi Rocha, Eduardo Rodríguez, Jared Rodolfo Rodríguez, Raymond Roman, Fernanda Serafin Escobar, Julia Salido, Max Sampson, Dan Scholl, Kathy Snelling, Cynthia Stadler, Elizabeth Stone, Latara Sydnor, Marina Aurora Vallajo, Sandra Ward, Lori Wilson

AMIGOS DE LOS ANIMALES de Guanajuato, A.C.

amigosanimalgto@yahoo.com
www.amigosanimalesgto.org

Apdo. Postal 6
Guanajuato 3, Gto. 36082, México
Tel. 52-473-731-1955 (English)
(473) 734-2307 (español)

Our affiliate In the United States:

AMIGOS DE LOS ANIMALES de Guanajuato, Inc.

256 West 10th Street, No. 4D
New York, NY 10014
Tel. (240) 252-1229

Our affiliate in Canada:

MEX-CAN PET PARTNERS

marlene@mex-can.org
<http://www.mex-can.org/>
1362 Pembroke Street
Victoria, BC, Canada V8R 1V5
Tel. 011-52-473-732-0815