

AMIGOS DE LOS ANIMALES de Guanajuato, A.C.

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Going North?

Occasionally we are able to transport a rescued dog with a passenger who is flying to Seattle, Vancouver, or Victoria, B.C. Each dog is met by a member of our affiliate, ***Mex-Can Pet Partners***, based in Victoria, and taken to a foster home, where it stays until a good home is found for it. Mex-Can Pet Partners members review the two-page adoption application, meet the applicants, check their homes, and call their references. You see, we go through a lot of trouble to get these dogs north, and we want to be sure they become a valued and loved member of a family. Most of the dogs receive at least six applications. At times it is hard to make a decision, but ultimately we choose in the best interest of the animal.

The adoption fee is \$200, and no one bats an eye at the fee. Many adopting families give an extra donation. The animals receive the best possible treatment while in transit and upon their arrival. Many Canadians are aware of the tragedy of Mexico's suffering animals and want to care for one that has escaped a miserable life on the streets. Over the last six years twenty-three dogs have gone to loving homes in Canada. One lives in Toronto and the others in British Columbia.

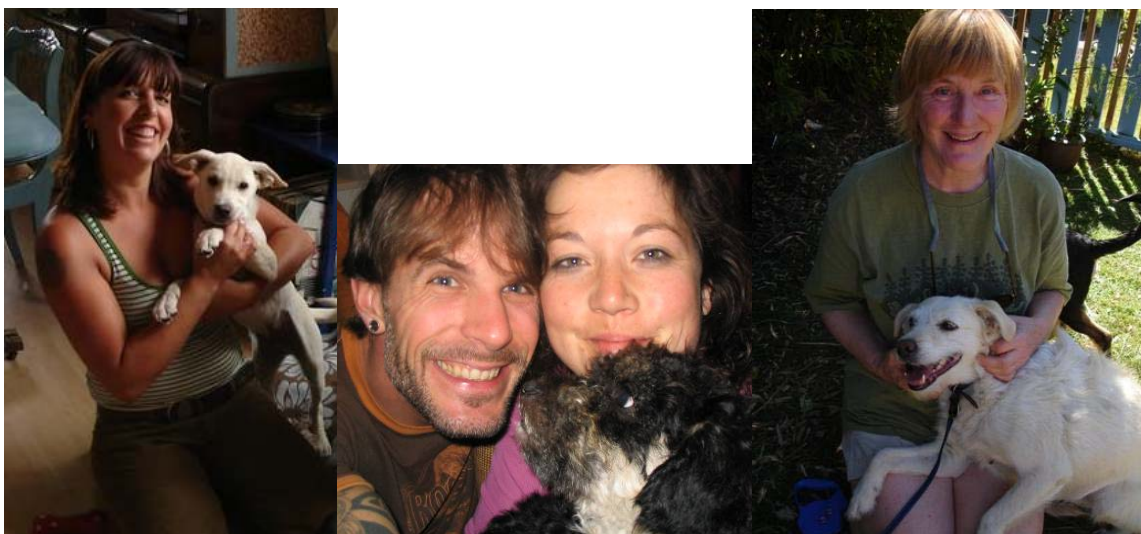
Here are just a few of the lucky pups that recently landed on northern soil.



From left to right: Shafira, Frida, Diego ...



... Mickey, Phil, Bobo ...



...Lou (see Lou's story below), Susy, and Mama

How to get these dogs north? IT'S EASY! If you are traveling from the Guanajuato area to the Northwest (Seattle, Vancouver, or Victoria) PLEASE contact us if you are traveling on a pet-friendly airline. Those airlines include American, Aero Mexico and Mexicana. We'll have the dog ready to fly, with all the necessary paperwork and transport fees, and deliver you both to the León/Guanajuato/Bajío Airport. We want to make both the animal and the new guardians happy and get the dog to its home as soon as we can.

How Is a Sick Dog Like Lou Saved?



We see them everywhere and don't know what to do. We feel helpless, sad, angry and frustrated. Strays in this condition are everywhere wandering helplessly while people appear oblivious to their existence. The enormity of the problem seems overwhelming. Take heart, there is something you can do.

The dog you see here was suffering from mange and malnutrition. He was picked up by a concerned tourist and taken to the home of an Amigos member. The tourist made a donation of 200 pesos, a small amount of money (less than US \$20) that can make a world of difference for a suffering creature like this.

The puppy was taken to a local veterinarian clinic where he was bathed and treated for mange and intestinal parasites. With ongoing treatments he grew healthy and ready for adoption in a few weeks. His name is Lou, and he is extremely grateful for that tourist's concern and the action she took.

Turning off the Spigot: Our Recent Spay/Neuter Campaigns

We held our second and third campaigns of the year in the village of El Téjaban on August 16 and in the city of Guanajuato on November 10 and 11. Altogether 133 dogs and cats were sterilized during the two campaigns, which were organized to help families unable to afford the procedure avoid unwanted reproduction among their pets.

August campaign en El Téjaban

The community of El Téjaban has been participating in a year-long program to improve its general health status, and as part of that program Amigos agreed to hold the campaign there in return for the community's support by letting us use two classrooms of their primary school, preparing the classrooms to be used for surgery and recovery, serving the Amigos volunteers a hot lunch, and helping us clean up after the campaign. The dogs' and cats' owners also contributed cash donations to help defray our costs.

The community and Amigos volunteers worked closely together and formed a warm friendship during the campaign. Fifty animals were sterilized during the campaign, our sixteenth since forming Amigos in 2002. All the animals were treated for parasites while under our care. The volunteers included the veterinarians María-Eugenia Herrera, Miguel Ochoa, Christine Fontaine, and Moisés Rivera and veterinarian technicians Ricardo Mejía and Lori Wilson.

November campaign in the city

The November campaign took place in another primary school, called "El Insurgente Pípila," in the barrio Pueblito de Rocha, a neighborhood in the city of Guanajuato. Eighty-three animals, mostly female dogs and cats, were sterilized over the weekend. All were treated for parasites, and some were also treated for tumors and bad teeth. The medical team included three veterinarians from the U.S.—Lori Bierbrie, Mary Brown, and Marsha Heinke; a veterinarian from Mérida, Antonio Ríos; and three veterinarians from Guanajuato—Maru Herrera, Oscar Montoya, and Miguel Ochoa. They had excellent help from medical technicians Angel Dettenreider and Kelly Karger from San Miguel de Allende, and from Susi Seidel, Hans Weisshaauer, and Lori Wilson from Guanajuato. During the campaign, pet owners could view videos and take copies of educational materials about the humane treatment of animals. They helped us defray the cost of the campaign by making cash donations.

As sometimes happens during a campaign, a dog named Cookies began bleeding heavily during her surgery, perhaps because she had intestinal parasites. The attending doctors worked on her for more than an hour, and after the dog was sutured her principal physician decided that it would be wise to keep her under observation that night. So the dog was taken to the visiting vet's temporary residence and watched throughout the night to be sure she was not in trouble. By morning the dog was up and walking, and at noon she was well enough to go home, much to everyone's relief.

This campaign was one of our best in the sense that everyone had fun working together, and even the stress that any campaign entails produced a high degree of energy and synergy. We are grateful to all the volunteers, particularly those who came to Guanajuato expressly to participate in the campaign; to Guanajuato's Urban Health Center, the travel agency Viajes Escala S.A. de C.V., the B&B Casa de Espritus Alegres, and the copy center Todo Copia for their support; and to the school's staff for their cooperation.



Registering their pets



Working on Cookies

Rusty Finds a Perfect Home

Remember Rusty? He was the guy we rescued from a horrible situation a few months ago (*see our July newsletter*). Tethered to a short chain in an abandoned yard, starving, mistreated, and terrified, he was not sure how to behave when he was rescued by Amigos volunteers. In practically no time at all, under the patient care of veterinarian Miguel Ochoa, he became an affectionate, self-confident fellow. He was adopted by Victor and Marcia Ramírez and their daughter Cristina, a Guanajuato family, who have given Rusty a loving home and a large yard in which he can run and play. Victor and Rusty (now called Rosti) enjoy taking walks together and meeting their many friends.



Rusty (Rosti) with Victor and Marcia

In memoriam

In this issue we both mourn the victim of an act of sadistic cruelty and remember fondly a beloved pet belonging to friends of one of our readers. The victim was a Guanajuato street dog, apparently homeless, that an art student at the University of Guanajuato lured to his lodgings and whose mutilated corpse he later displayed as an object of “ephemeral art” at the School of Plastic Arts. According to press reports and the accounts of horrified classmates, the student admitted that he first bathed the dog and caressed it, then proceeded to kill it slowly, while recording his actions on video, which then became part of his “art” exhibition. There have been public expressions of outrage about the incident, but as far as we know no official action has been taken against the student by the university or state authorities, despite a state law prohibiting cruelty to domestic animals.



On an altogether different note, in August Katy Szekely of Seattle, Washington, sent us a donation in memory of Cassiopeia (Cassie), a dear feline friend, about whom she wrote: “Although she was not our kitty, she was the longtime beloved pet of very good friends of ours. Cassie, who was a star in her long list of lives, gently left this last one just shortly after her 20th birthday. She was the beloved pet of Patty and Peter Benjamin of Waldport, Oregon. She was a renowned world traveler and explorer. In her memory it is hoped that efforts will continue to help other cats and dogs through donations to Amigos de los Animales.

How Your Pesos and Dollars Are Used

- ♥ Your donation of 250 pesos or 25 dollars will bathe, de-worm, and board a dog or cat for two days while it awaits adoption.
- ♥ Your donation of 600 pesos or 60 dollars will bathe, de-worm, spay or neuter a dog or cat, and board it for two days while it awaits adoption.
- ♥ Your donation of 1000 pesos or 100 dollars will bathe, de-worm, spay or neuter, treat for mange, and board a dog or cat for two weeks while it awaits adoption.
- ♥ Your donation of 2250 pesos or 225 dollars will pay for transporting a dog from Guanajuato to an adoptive home in Victoria, B.C.



It is much easier for us to place puppies and kittens than adult dogs and cats. Adults therefore remain in foster care longer and are more expensive for us to save—but they are definitely worth the effort because they are less trouble to care for and more grateful.

Street Dogs Is Now Available

A book of magnificent portraits of street dogs in Mexico and Puerto Rico by photographer Traer Scott is now available from the publisher, Merrell, and major book dealers. It includes pictures of dogs Traer found on the streets of Guanajuato during her visit here last spring, among them the sweet dog now known as Mama who has found a home in Canada (see page 2). Retailing at US \$22.95, the book makes a perfect holiday gift for dog lovers, and a portion of the proceeds from sales goes to the World Society for the Protection of Animals.

Recent Donations, Memberships, and Volunteer 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 Friend: Marlene Davis

Benefactors: Janet Fitzgerald, Doris Hoffman, Ron Mann, Victor and Marcia Ramírez, Jason Riley, Martha Roberts, Martha Rosner, Judy Schilling, Sandra Ward

Individual memberships: Doug Bower, Burt Dragin and Nadine Payne, Carol Lang, Patricia Mould

Family memberships: Guillermo Bower, Karen Kirby, Mary Lewis, Stephanie Pearson, Pearish Smith, Maghon Thomas

Business memberships and support: Bayer Health Care, Casa de Espíritus Alegres, Copia Todo, Kindred Spirits Veterinary Hospital of Victoria, B.C., OK Seriografía, Viajes Escala S.A. de C.V.

Government support: Bajío/León International Airport, Centro de Salud Urbano de Guanajuato, Secretariía de Salud del Estado de Guanajuato

Donors of carriers, leashes, muzzles, and other items: Diane Carter, Jeanne Dregalla, Judy and Jim Farris, Janet Fitzgerald, Laura Marmolejo, Jim and Ruthie Wornall

Other donors: Deborah Ebersold, Michelle Goosse, Johnny and Nancy, Katy Szeleky

Volunteers not already mentioned in the newsletter: Paty Almanza, Juan Bariantos, Doug Bower, Bernardo Calzada, Diane Carter, Maria Chan, María Clamantina, Maribel Félix, Christine Fontaine, Gabrielle Gardner, Rachel Gardner, Nancy Hager, Alison Hall, Alcocar Lugua, Molly MacIntosh, Juan Mares, Verónica Mares, Ricardo Mata Mondragón, Laurine Maxwell, Ricardo Mejía, Lauren Mueller, Jason Pettit, James Pyle, Monica Quin, Amanda Ruiz, Don Roberts, Martha Roberts, Ruby Rocha, Eduardo Rodríguez, Julia Salido, Ed Schiff, Dan Scholl, Janice Shewey, Kathy Snelling, Anna Starr, Leonel Suárez, John and Vicky Turner, Sandra Ward, Cullen White, Sherry Wolff

If we have neglected to mention anyone, please accept our sincere apologies.

Please consider making a donation to Amigos during the holidays. It's easy: you can use your credit card and go to our website, www.amigosanimalesgto.org. Because Amigos is designated by the IRS as a 501(c)3 charitable organization, donations are deductible from U.S. federal taxes.

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