



# Amigos de los animales de Guanajuato Newsletter



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[www.amigosanimalesgto.org](http://www.amigosanimalesgto.org)

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## Best ever! Our 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary fundraiser

On February 27 we celebrated our 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a blowout party at the city's elegant Foro Cultural 81. Some 200 people attended, generously supporting our cause. The event netted 104,063 pesos (US \$5,850), which we are using to support our sterilization, rescue, and education activities.

Thanks to everyone who helped us with the party. Special thanks are due to Juan Jesús Vargas and our board members, who donated food, sold tickets, and obtained raffle prizes from more than 30 restaurants and individual donors; to



*Bach Bums Mark Sander, Michael Severens, Dylan Williams, and Geoff Brown played cool jazz*



*Ruth Windsor as Princess Princessa and Geoff Brown as Luke Dog Walker in our production of "Paw Wars"*

Susan Castelazo, Dyan Amirault, and Dena Chen, who organized the auction of more than 100 items donated by generous community members; to the fantastic jazz group called the Bach Bums – Geoff Brown, Mark Sander, Michael Severens, and Dylan Williams – who had everyone dancing to the music of the 60's; to the intrepid Amigos Follies for their performance of "Paw Wars," created by our resident playwright (and VP) Tom Reavley; and to Sal DiLirio and Ed O'Connor, owners of the Foro Cultural 81, for the use of their beautifully restored building.

Several of the auction prizes were unusually creative and generated a frenzy of bidding. Charles Huckaby offered “A bike, a burger, and a beer” – that is, a ride on his Harley around the Panorámica, followed by (you guessed it) a burger and a beer. Another favorite was a dinner for eight women prepared by three guys (Colin Hall, Charles Huckaby, and Chuck Windsor) who falsely claimed they could not cook. The whopper was a week’s stay at a beautiful condo in Puerto Vallarta, donated by Katya Ford.

We are grateful to everyone who made the party a success, including the volunteers who sold tickets at the door, served botanas and drinks, oversaw the auction, and cleaned up afterward. Most of all, we thank all those who bought tickets and came with their wallets open.

## Animal Fest

Over the weekend of April 1-3, Amigos de los Animales and numerous other animal-friendly groups celebrated Animal Fest, a major event that took place in several venues of the city. The festival combined the fourth anniversary of AdoptaGuanajuato and the annual SuperMestizo dog competition with a Forum for the Wellbeing and Rights of Animals and a Vegan Festival of the City of Guanajuato.

Featured during the weekend were workshops, lectures, and demonstrations by veterinarians and other professionals, exhibitions, yoga and vegan cooking classes, music, performances, a parade of adoptable pets, and many other activities and displays – all promoting the protection of animals through education, culture, the arts, sports, and entertainment.



*Jimena Obieda of El Muro speaking at Animal Fest*



*Collin Hall, Chuck Windsor, and Charles Huckaby preparing to cook dinner for eight women*



*Darwing Angulo of Bravo Perro Fitness demonstrating the technique of training a dog with a clicker*

Among the other animal-rights organizations that took part in the festival were Corazón Animal, Pro-vida Felina, Adopciones y Apoyo de Rescates Animal (SEA), and Lego Pets – groups with whom Amigos cooperates on a regular basis.

Our president, Lalo Rodríguez, was the main sponsor and organizer of the festival. He recruited well-known Mexican animal-rights advocates Paty Ruíz from Milagros Caninos, Jimena Obieta from El Muro, and Darwin Angulo from Bravo Perro Fitness as guest speakers; and he personally paid for the rental of tents, tables, chairs, audiovisual equipment, and the sound truck that announced the festival, plus part of the cost of bringing the guest speakers to the event. Amigos and ProVida Felina also helped defray the costs.

## Highlights of 2015

At our annual meeting of Amigos members on April 4, Vice President Tom Reavley presented a summary of our accomplishments in 2015.

### 45 sterilization campaigns

With veterinarians from the Secretariat of Health, we conducted 45 campaigns in 17 locations, sterilizing a total of 1,301 animals and averaging 28.9 cases per campaign. Each month at least two campaigns took place at the headquarters of Secretariat of Health in the city of Guanajuato. The others were held in the city's suburbs and nearby communities. By the end of the year, Amigos had sponsored or co-sponsored 155 sterilization campaigns since December of 2001, totaling 6,728 cases. The total number of cases (in campaigns and clinics) from 2001 was 12,106.



*People waiting for their dogs and cats to be sterilized at the Secretariat of Health, October 2015*

In July we purchased a 2000 Ford Windstar van for transporting equipment and supplies to the campaigns. The van was needed because we could not always rely on volunteers to lend us their vehicles. An appeal for donations for this purpose resulted in enough designated funds to cover the cost of the van's purchase and some needed repairs. The van has proved to be very useful. Most of our equipment can be stored in it between campaigns.

### Clinic sterilizations and treatments

We paid for 87 rescued dogs and cats to be sterilized by private veterinarians in two clinics, and for the follow-up treatment of 21 animals sterilized during the campaigns. We paid for 55 rescued animals (mostly dogs) to be vaccinated against common

infectious diseases, treated 7 animals rescued by our volunteers for injuries or illness, and paid for 3 gravely injured or ill dogs to be euthanized.

### Public education

With a US grant that we received in December of 2014, we renewed a contract with the firm Publimovil to produce 12 vinyl public-service messages on the backs of three city buses and inside 30 city buses for 12 months. The messages described our vision, encouraged the adoption of homeless dogs and cats, and promoted responsible and humane treatment of pets. Each was displayed for three months and seen by an estimated 10,000 people a day.



*This bus message states, "Our vision: a community that respects all animals, and that treats homeless animals with compassion."*

In March 2015 we and the city's other animal-welfare organizations celebrated the third anniversary of AdoptaGuanajuato, an internet site that facilitates the adoption of homeless dogs and cats. The celebration took place in Pastitos, a popular city park, and drew a huge crowd. For the SuperMestizo dog completion, we created impressive-sounding names for mixed breeds. For example, a dog that resembled a terrier but behaved like a Rottweiler was identified as a Terweiler. The dogs' owners received certificates describing these "pure" breeds.

During the year several of our volunteers gave talks to primary school children in the village of Campuzano, where we conducted two sterilization

campaigns, and to children of the miners at the Mina de Cata and children at Colegio Lolek in Marfil. We planned to develop a more extensive education program school at the primary school level, but fell short of our goal. We are making a more concerted effort this year.



*Children of miners received copies of the story "Two Lucky Puppies" at Mina de Cata*

As of last August, our Facebook page had 2,180 followers. We responded to numerous emailed requests and telephone calls each month, mostly from people seeking help for animals in distress that they had seen or rescued. We helped many of those people post descriptions of the animals on the virtual adoption site, AdoptaGuanajuato, and put them in touch with rescue groups here or in the cities where they lived.

## Other developments

Beginning in 2015, reporting requirements to Hacienda, Mexico's equivalent of the US Internal Revenue Service, became more complicated. We worked with our Mexican accountant to set up a procedure for filing our monthly reports on income and expenditures with Hacienda.

Because some vendors, such as pharmacies, will not accept checks in payment for their products, we needed to have a debit card. Our Mexican bank, Banorte, would not issue us a debit card unless we maintained a minimum monthly balance of 100,000 pesos. Moreover, early in 2015 Banorte had begun charging a monthly commission in addition to a charge for each check written. We therefore decided to change banks. Bancomer offered us better terms, but it took us six months to open an account there. In

December we were finally able to close our account with Banorte and open one with Bancomer.

Through our accountant and with support from the Secretariat of Health, in February we applied to Hacienda to be approved as an organization that can give tax-deductible receipts in Mexico. Such a status is extremely difficult for nonprofits to achieve in Mexico. Making this application required amending our constitution to meet certain Hacienda requirements. To date we have not received a decision on our application.

In March 2015 the State Congress modified the state law protecting domestic animals from abuse and neglect. Although the changes this time were minor, we hope we have taken one more step toward a functioning and effective animal protection law. Whether this is the case or not depends on changes in the city regulations. The city has until September 30 of 2016 to revise them, and then it will depend on the commitment and determination of the city's administration to enforce them. The Congress thanked Amigos for working with them on the changes in the law.

**Whether the city takes one more step toward a functioning and effective animal protection law depends on the administration's commitment to make changes in the regulations and its determination to enforce them.**

In August, board member Rocío Anguiano, a veterinarian from Irapuato, informed us that she must resign because she was teaching a course at the National Autonomous University of Mexico in Mexico City twice a week. Her advice to the board and her participation in our activities, especially the sterilization campaigns, had been invaluable. Also in August we hosted a party to thank our volunteers.

President Eduardo Rodríguez accepted a new position, as program manager at the Hispanic Alliance Leadership Development Initiative in Cleveland, Ohio. Fortunately, Lalo, who has been residing in the US for the past two years, was willing to continue as Amigos president and stays in daily contact with the board through email and other media. He participates in our board meetings via Skype.

Photographer Donovan Bravo Fonseca donated the pictures for our 2015 wall calendar, and Amigos

President Eduardo Rodríguez paid for the printing. We donated 100 calendars to other animal-welfare associations. In December we produced 100 calendars for 2016 and launched their sale with a party at El Viejo Zaguán Café. The photographs for this edition of the calendar were donated by Tanya González Frausto.

### **Income, expenses, and fundraising**

Our total income in 2015 was the equivalent of 630,593 pesos (approximately US \$39,412), 81% of which came from donors in the US. A grant of US \$2,000 and a bequest of US \$12,500 represented a significant portion of our income. Most of the other donations came from a few US individuals who each contributed at least US \$1,000.

Our expenses totaled 292,296 pesos (approximately US \$18,268, based on an estimated average conversion rate of 16 pesos to the dollar), 98.4% of which occurred in Mexico. Our US expenses (US \$285) were for maintaining our email account and

website, bank charges for transferring funds to our Mexican account, and PayPal commissions. Our Mexican expenses (287,736 pesos) were allocated as follows: campaign costs, 26.7%; the purchase and repair of the van, 20.1%; bus messages, 14.6%; clinic sterilizations, 11.9%; Mexican accountant's fees, lawyer's fee for amending our constitution to qualify for tax-deductible donations in Mexico, and bank commissions, 11.8%; fundraising (printing the 2016 calendars and renting equipment for our February 2015 party), 7.1%; treatment of rescued animals, 6.9%; office supplies and cell phone service, 0.7%.

Our major fundraising activity in Mexico was our 14<sup>th</sup> anniversary party, held on February 14, 2015, at the Ex-Hacienda La Escalera. The party netted 49,730 pesos (approximately US \$3,108). Two rummage sales in the village of La Saucedá raised modest sums.

All in all, it was another very successful year for Amigos, thanks to all of you who supported us.

### **Plans for 2016**

At our annual meeting of Amigos members on April 4, 2016, the board presented its plans for the current year. Members present approved the proposed activities, several of which have already taken place.

### **Sterilization campaigns**

As in the past, our main activity will be sterilization campaigns. In partnership with the Secretariat of Health, we are planning 41 campaigns for 2016, with a goal of 1,830 cases. The majority of the campaigns will take place in the city of Guanajuato.

In February we sponsored the participation of four Secretariat veterinarians at a sterilization workshop in Manzanillo, Mexico. An article about the workshop appears on page 9.

Over the past 15 years, the only people we have paid for their services have been the private veterinarians who perform professional services for us and our Mexican accountant. All other work performed by our organization has been done by volunteers. Since 2013, however, when we entered into an agreement with the Secretariat of Health to co-sponsor free sterilization campaigns, the number of campaigns has increased from three per year to an average of four or five a month. A typical campaign



*Campaign coordinator Angeles Leyva (on right) at a campaign in Cuevas, April 2016*

lasts from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. The burden on our campaign volunteers has correspondingly multiplied.

It has become clear that we need to have one person in charge of the volunteers, someone who can devote essentially four or five days a month to this activity. At our April meeting of Amigos members, our board therefore recommended that we pay our campaign coordinator, Angeles Leyva, 300 pesos (about US \$18) per campaign day, and this proposal was approved. Angeles recruits the volunteers, trains them, oversees their work during the campaigns,

and reports to the board on the outcome of each campaign.

Recently we have been asking pet owners at our campaigns to evaluate their experience, using a questionnaire we designed for this purpose. Their evaluations, which are unsigned and therefore confidential, have been very positive. For example, we received the following comments (originals in Spanish) from three people who brought their pets to a campaign on April 10:

“I think these campaigns are excellent and especially now that they are in different places in the city, there’s no reason for not spay/neutering. Now it’s our responsibility to spread the word, to make people urgently aware and give a better life to the creatures who have no voice. Please never stop doing this work.”

“Thank you for having the campaign. We hope that you continue this labor because it is for the benefit of the community.”

“Thanks to all who work for this [population] control, keep it up.”

And this from one of our visiting volunteers, Dyan Amirault, from Toronto:

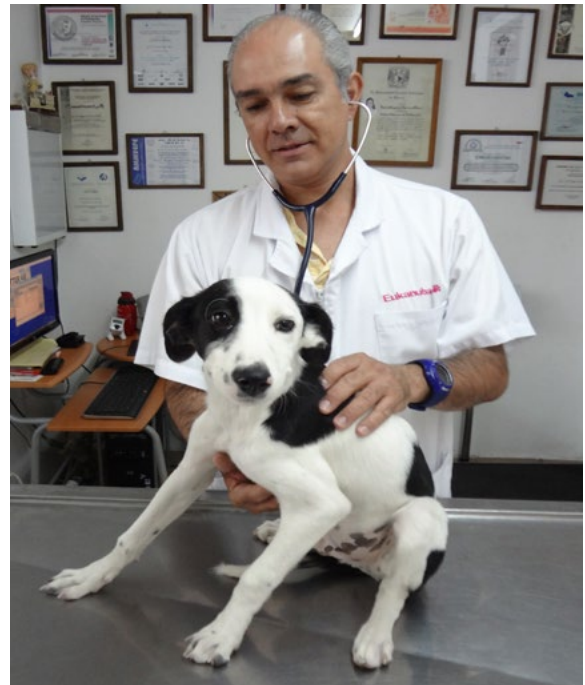
“I don’t often get up at 6 am but I did today. The experience that I’m having is beyond belief. I am utterly amazed at the work Amigos de los Animales is doing in Guanajuato. The organization, the camaraderie, the owners, the pets, the vets, the volunteers... what a pleasure to be a witness to such enthusiasm and commitment to animal welfare. ... Kudos to all of you. I look forward to working with your organization again next winter.”

### **Clinic-based sterilizations**

We will continue to offer free sterilization and their first vaccinations for rescued dogs and cats, as well as free treatment for post-operative complications of campaign cases. This care is provided at two private clinics, Can-Cat on Calle Alhóndiga and Dainzu in Las Teresas. The rescuer pays for a rescued animal’s treatment for parasites, injury or illness, and boarding until the animal is adopted.

### **Public education and publicity**

We produced a 2016 wall calendar featuring photographs of rescued dogs and cats in the city. One hundred calendars were printed and sold



*Dr. Miguel Ochoa at Clínica Can-Cat examining a rescued puppy*

through several local bookstores and museums.

As reported on page 2, in April Amigos and numerous other voluntary organizations participated in Animal Fest, a three-day festival aimed at improving the treatment of animals in Guanajuato. The festival took place at several venues in the city and attracted numerous participants and spectators. The festival organizer and main sponsor was our president, Lalo Rodríguez.

Several of our volunteers are working with University of Guanajuato students on a project called Lego Pets, to introduce educational materials and training for teachers into the city’s primary schools. The project is designed to encourage children to respect animals and treat them humanely. We plan to reprint several of our booklets for use in this program.

We have renewed a contract with the firm Publímovil to produce and display 12 more public-service messages on three city buses and inside 30 city buses for another 12 months, at a cost of 41,760 pesos (US \$2,456). As in the past, a new message will appear on the back of each bus every three months. The buses have different routes within the metropolitan area.

Our website is in need of attention. We are looking for a website-savvy volunteer to help us update and maintain the site. If you or anyone you know is interested, please contact us.

## Rescues

We will continue to rely on volunteers and their networks to foster rescued animals. The website [AdoptaGuanajuato.weebly.com](http://AdoptaGuanajuato.weebly.com) and our Facebook page enable people who have rescued animals to post descriptions and photos of them. People who have lost their pets can also report them to the Amigos Facebook page.

## Fundraising

As reported on page 1, we held our 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary fundraising party on February 27 at Foro Cultural 81. The 104,000 pesos raised that evening represents about a third of our annual budget. We have already begun planning for next year's fundraising party and

encourage anyone who is interested in helping us to get involved.

We held a rummage sale during Animal Fest and plan one or two more during the year. Donations of clothing and household items in good condition are always welcome. A special event is planned for later in the year to sell some beautiful Thai silk clothing that was donated to us by Bill and Miao Byrnes.

As requested by the manager of the Guanajuato International Airport, we are upgrading our two wooden donation boxes with modern ones made of acrylic. We are also designing a new t-shirt for Amigos as a fundraising project.

Most important, we need the public to support our work with your donations and memberships.

## All one family!

*By Sharon Anton*

In my last article for the [December 2012 Newsletter](#), I recounted my efforts to help two female dogs in my Guanajuato neighborhood, a mother and daughter, who gave birth to new litters every six months. Though I originally had no intention of keeping them, I ended up adopting the mother, Canela, and her brother, Casey.



*Canela and Casey*

I never forgot about Canela's daughter Vainilla (both named by the neighbor kids), and continued to try to catch her over the next three years. While Canela and Casey were docile, and absolutely loved having a home, Vainilla was fiercely independent. She was friendly and wagged her tail like crazy whenever she saw me; but she never let me pet her, and no matter how much food I gave her, she definitely had no plans to come home with me. Besides, she had a

mate, Dos Ojos, named for his one blue eye and one brown, and the two of them seemed quite happy living together on the hillside behind me.

Vainilla gave birth to her last litter in December 2014. When I went up to see her, a little white puppy resembling Dos Ojos came running down to greet me. I scooped her up, took her home, and named her Blanca. The next time I went to see Vainilla with my friend and fellow animal rescuer Julia Salido, a second puppy came running down the hill, a little girl who had her mother's coat and her father's unmatched eyes. Julia named her Daphne.



*Vanilla and her puppy Daphne*

Marlene Davis, founder of of Mex-Can Pet Partners, fostered Daphne with the intention of taking her to Canada. But before she could, Daphne was diagnosed with distemper.

By this time, Vainilla had gone into heat again. Male dogs came from a neighboring barrio to mate

with her, and while trying to protect her, Dos Ojos was killed. It broke Vainilla's heart and mine, too.

It was also the last straw. There had been too many dead puppies over the years, and now Dos Ojos. All of Vainilla's remaining puppies, four females and one male, died of distemper. Without her mate or her babies, Vainilla began sitting outside my gate every day to be near what was left of her family, and I renewed my efforts to catch her.



*Vanilla outside my gate*

In the meantime, I retrieved Daphne from the vet Marlene had taken her to. I wanted her to stay in the neighborhood, especially now that her father was gone and she was the only surviving pup with his unusual eyes. She was terribly sick with distemper, however, and it didn't seem likely that she would live.

I was lucky to find an anti-distemper serum online at [www.kindheartsinaction.com](http://www.kindheartsinaction.com), developed years ago by a California vet, Dr. Alson Sears. I contacted the site and was told about a vet in Puebla, Dr. Rubén López Hidalgo, who makes the serum. He speaks English and kindly coached me through Daphne's recovery. I ordered the serum at <http://www.hidalgohospitaldemascotas.com> and received it the next day. I rushed Daphne to my vet, who administered the serum. After three days, Daphne was free of distemper symptoms, but she

still had pneumonia. She had had all the antibiotics one poor little dog could tolerate, so I took the chance of putting her in my infrared sauna for 15 minutes a day for five days. To my great relief, she recovered.

Back to Vainilla. In 2012, Julia and I had tried catching Vainilla the same way we caught her mother, by baiting a trap with her puppies. It had worked with Canela, who went inside to nurse her babies, but Vainilla refused to be trapped. I next tried sedatives, putting them into the food I gave her. One pill had no effect at all. Two slowed her down but did not put her to sleep. I decided to try three.

After feeding Vainilla her favorite food laced with three sedatives, I sat down and waited for her to fall asleep. She didn't. She never even closed her eyes. But as I crept closer over the next couple of hours, I could see that her body seemed to be asleep even if her head wasn't.

I picked her up. She was heavy, about 40 pounds, and with difficulty I carried her down the street to my garage. I opened the door, lifted the back hatch of my minivan and put her inside. I almost had the hatch closed when it sprang open again, and Vainilla shot out, knocking me down, and took off up the street. Two young guys walking by gave chase, but they quit when she disappeared into the brush on the hillside.

Running after her, I grabbed onto a branch to help me up the hill. It turned out to belong to a cactus, instead a tree, and it seemed like one insult too many in my long career of chasing after Vainilla. I was about to give up.

**I'm not kidding when I say I heard voices speaking to me from above.  
The family who always say hello  
were at the top of the hill.**

I'm not kidding when I say I heard voices speaking to me from above. There are only four households facing Vainilla's hillside. The nicest of the four, the family who walk their dog every day and always say hello, were at the top of the hill. I scrambled up, told them my problem, and asked for help. The father told his sons to spread out and start searching. In no time at all, they had located Vainilla. The father grabbed her and carried her to my car and put her inside. I made a beeline for the vet's without bothering to tell him I was on the way.

Whereas poor Canela had prostrated herself

with fear before the vet, Vainilla sat upright and boldly stared him in the face. So, you got me, she seemed to be saying, but don't think you're keeping me. I had thought she might want to join the rest of her family -- her mother, Canela; her uncle, Casey; and her two little girls, Blanca and Daphne. But now I saw that a dog like Vainilla would never be content to live behind a gate and I resolved to let her go as soon as she recovered from her sterilization.

On that day, I opened the front gate and let Vainilla out. She raced back to her old neighborhood, apparently just to say hi, because in no time at all she was outside the gate again, waiting to be let in. So now all three generations live together at my house; and every time the neighbors pass by, they slow down to check on them, to wave and call them by name. "Una familia," they say to anyone else passing by. All one family.



*Lucy, Blanca, Vanilla, Canela, Daphne, and Casey*

*Sharon Anton has been active in animal rescue since moving to Guanajuato from California in 2008. Recently she purchased a parcel of land for the rescue group Corazón Animal de Guanajuato and is helping the organization to raise funds for a no-kill shelter. For more information about this project and to offer your support, contact "Evicted! 100 dogs must move!" at <https://igg.me/at/2VNHZ2DGS7Y>.*

## Supporting continuing education for our vets

In mid-February, Amigos sent four veterinarians from the Guanajuato Secretariat of Health at a sterilization workshop in Manzanillo, Mexico. The continuing-education course was organized by US veterinarian Susan Monger, director of International Veterinary Consultants, and Stanley Burnett, president of Friends of Mexican Animal Welfare, a voluntary association in Manzanillo. Several other US veterinarians, as well as veterinarians from other areas of Mexico, participated in the four-day workshop, the purpose of which was to share techniques used in sterilization campaigns in Mexico and other countries with the goal of promoting the best practices. The course focused on anesthesia, surgical techniques, pain control, and prevention of infection.



*Veterinarians at the sterilization workshop in Manzanillo*

The workshop was free, but we paid the four veterinarians' bus fares, hotel rooms, and modest per diems because the Secretariat of Health had no funds in its budget for this purpose. Total cost to Amigos was 19,872 pesos (approximately US \$1,169).

The Secretariat vets spoke with enthusiasm about the workshop upon their return. As a result of their training, the Secretariat of Health has revised its drug, suture, and post-operative care protocols used at the sterilization campaigns. Although it is too early to assess the effect of these changes, we are hopeful that the already-low number of cases requiring follow-up treatment will decline even further.

Dr. Monger wrote to us after the workshop that, although she could not speak directly for the participants, from her own perspective and that of her American colleagues, "it was a truly successful week of continuing education and collaboration between Mexican veterinary professionals. All of us, including the IVC/FOMAW crew, continue to learn and improve our approaches to spay/neuter work. We plan to remain in contact with all the participants and provide a communication link providing information and support as we move forward with our respective programs and work. ... Thank all of you for your support of these wonderful veterinarians."

As this edition of the Newsletter is being

prepared, we have received an extremely generous donation of Monosorb (absorbable) sutures for our sterilization campaigns. These superior sutures are manufactured CP Medical and distributed in the US by Henry Schein Animal Health. They are precisely the kind of sutures recommended by Dr. Monger

during the workshop but are not available in Mexico. We are very grateful to all the people who made the donation possible, especially Kim Allen and Dawn Burdette of Henry Schein Animal Health and Mike Tanner of CP Medical.

## How private vets and governments benefit from free sterilization programs

Often, when a city begins to offer free sterilizations of dogs and cats, private veterinarians object because they regard them as a loss of potential revenue. Paradoxically, free campaigns actually lead to *increased* income for private practitioners. And while free sterilization programs require government expenditures, they save governments money too.

### The advantages to private veterinarians

In a speech to Latin American veterinarians in Costa Rica in 2001, Merritt Clifton of the US charitable organization Animal People explained how this happens:

“All the data from the United States, Europe, and Japan demonstrate that reducing the number of dogs and cats results in substantially augmented veterinary incomes — because the quantity of veterinary service invested in each animal grows rapidly when the animals are more scarce, more difficult to replace, more accepted in owners’ homes, more attached emotionally to families, and live longer lives. The discounts and subsidies invested in the sterilization and vaccination of dogs and cats having owners often multiply the income from veterinary services needed when an animal reaches nine or ten years of age. ...

“When street dogs and cats are abundant, lost or dead dogs and cats are easily replaced. The investment in their care is correspondingly minor. As the animals come and go rapidly, few people develop an intense emotional attachment to their dogs and cats that leads them to spend money on veterinary services necessary to enable the animals to live through their elder years. [In contrast] in the US, Europe, and Japan, more than one half of what is spent on the veterinary care of a domestic animal occurs during the last two years of the animal’s life if the animal lives at least 10 years. ...

**Veterinarians benefit in two ways: the reduction in the number of street dogs and cats reduces the source of animals that are easily acquired and replaced, which are never converted into their clients, and the vets acquire a potential clientele.**

“The reduction in the number of street dogs and cats reduces the factor of easy replacement, and even more, each street dog and cat that is sterilized and vaccinated has a greater probability of becoming an adopted domestic animal. Thus veterinarians benefit in two ways: [the reduction in the number of street dogs and cats] reduces the source of animals that are easily acquired and replaced, which are never converted into their clients, and at the same time the veterinarians acquire a potential clientele.”

### The savings to governments

During Guanajuato’s recent Animal Fest weekend in early April, Dr. Miguel Chavira Guerrero, State Coordinator of Zoonosis in the Secretariat of Health, gave an illustrated talk on the benefits of sterilizing dogs and cats, not just to pet owners, but to the state and city of Guanajuato as well. He presented statistics on how free campaigns in the state of Guanajuato have reduced the numbers of dogs posing a threat to public safety.

Early each year the Mexican government at all levels—federal, state, and municipal—conducts an anti-rabies campaign, offering free rabies vaccinations to dog owners. The program has been so successful that there have been no documented cases of rabies in the human population of Guanajuato state in the past 23 years or among domestic dogs in 17 years.

The Secretariat estimates that the sterilization campaigns being conducted throughout the state of

Guanajuato have saved the state millions of pesos in rabies vaccinations. Moreover, by reducing the number of aggressive dogs roaming the streets, the sterilization campaigns are estimated to have prevented 900 people, most of them children, from being bitten.

**Sterilization campaigns have saved the state of Guanajuato millions of pesos in rabies vaccinations and prevented hundreds of dog bites.**

By partnering with the Secretariat in conducting its sterilization campaigns throughout the Guanajuato municipality, Amigos de los Animales has helped the state save money on equipment and supplies used in those campaigns and indirectly helped reduce the cost of the annual anti-rabies campaigns.

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*We thank Stanley Burnett of Friends of Mexican Animal Welfare for bringing the speech by Merritt Clifton to our attention. The full speech (in Spanish) can be read by clicking [here](#). And we thank Dr. Miguel Chavira Guerrero for his presentation at Animal Fest.*

## Recent memberships, donations, and support

We depend upon the donations we receive to provide services to the community. The average cost of a clinic sterilization is US \$25, the average campaign sterilization costs US \$5, a typical rescue costs US \$70, and a bus message costs US \$75 per month. Rates for annual memberships are (in US dollars): Individual, \$25; Family, \$40; Benefactor, \$100; Best Friend, \$500 or more.

### We sincerely thank the following donors and volunteers for their recent support:

**Best Friends:** CP Medical, Carolyn Crowder, Fern's Fund, Nancy Hager, Henry Schein Animal Health, Eduardo Rodríguez

**Benefactors:** Saul Helfenbein, Mariana Gómez, Grobet, Tom and Leticia Kearcher, Kay and Mark Noguchi, Victor and Marcia Ramírez, Hank and Marilyn Reimann, Ronald Mann, Sharon Schaap, Barbara Standing

**Families:** Jolene Gailey, Marvelle Manga, Jeanne Parrent, Martha Roberts, Diane Treat

**Other cash donors:** Anonymous donors through Truest, Nancy and Stephen Watt

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