



174 dogs and cats neutered during three days in November

We held a “mega-campaign” on the weekend of November 9-11, during which an international team of veterinarians and assistants sterilized 91 dogs and 83 cats. The surgeries took place in the basketball court at Guanajuato’s former train station on Friday and in an underground boxing court at the Torres Landa Sports Center on Saturday and Sunday.



People and their pets at the Torres Landa center on Sunday



Waiting their turn

Girl and her dog going home

Couple arriving with puppy

Volunteer Sara Hannes in registration

Vero Mares and Dr. Verónica Almaguer

Ten veterinarians - Teresa Díaz Ruíz and Sandra Rivera from the Guanajuato Animal Control Center; Octavio Capitán of San Miguel de Allende; Verónica Almaguer Olvera, Arturo Rocha, and Cristián Orozco from León; Diana Morales of Manzanillo; Lori Bierbrier and Dionne Burnett of New York City; and Marsha Heinke of Grafton, Ohio - anesthetized the animals and performed the surgeries. A group of other volunteers kept the cases moving along smoothly by registering the animals and

preparing them for surgery. A second group assisted the surgeons, and a third group 10attended the animals in the recovery unit, discharging them when they awoke.

Campaign coordinator Julia Salido prepared the inventory for the campaign and recruited, trained, and supervised the volunteers (identified on page 9), who performed what one of the veterinarians described as a “well-coordinated dance.” As though they agreed with this description, pet owners who observed the campaign on Saturday from a window above the boxing court expressed their approval by applauding the team at the end of the day.



Dr. Arturo Rocha



Dr. Diana Morales and a patient almost twice her size



Drs. Dionne Burnett and Lori Bierbrier during break



Dr. Marsha Heinke

Our only disappointment was the low turnout. We were prepared to handle 100 cases each day, but only about half that many were registered.

Although several cases presented challenges such as pregnancy or an undescended testicle, all the patients were fine when they left the campaign. One female dog had an infected ovary and would probably have died if the ovary had not been removed. Another dog, a sweet English bull terrier named Frida, was in estrus when she arrived on Friday. As this condition often leads to heavy bleeding during and immediately after surgery, Dr. Marsha Heinke offered to care for her that night in case she required first aid. Frida made herself comfortable on the spare bed in the hosts’ guest room and by the next morning was palling around with the hosts’ dog. Had her owner not reclaimed her that day, Marsha would have been tempted to take Luna home with her.



Frida preparing for a good night's rest



Martha Peña comforts Luna after her surgery

Besides the health benefits to dogs and cats, and the prevention of unwanted litters that all too often are abandoned, sterilization offers another advantage: avoiding the nuisance associated with pets’ sexual drives. On Saturday Martha Peña Pedraza, who brought her dog Luna to the campaign, told us that Luna had had a litter of nine puppies. Martha found homes for all of the pups. Recently,

however, when Luna went into heat again, eight male dogs fought outside Martha's gate to try to get access to her, ultimately breaking the gate! That was enough for Martha to decide it was time for spay her.



Luis Osorio welcoming patient



Pat Heinke checking patient in recovery



Julia Salido giving post-operative care instructions to dog's owner

As of this writing, we have supported the sterilization of 1,509 dogs and cats this year and of 18,372 animals since 2001. We are very grateful to the dedicated volunteers who have contributed to this effort and to our donors for making our provision of equipment and supplies for the campaigns possible.

A tragic loss to our community and a frantic rescue effort

On September 5, Sharon Anton, an American resident of Guanajuato, was struck and gravely injured by a motorist while walking through one of the city's tunnels. She died two hours later. Her death was a terrible shock to everyone who knew her.

Active dog and cat rescuer, Sharon was a founding member of the rescue group Fundación Corazón Animal. She had purchased and donated a parcel of land in the village of Cajones so that Corazón Animal could build a no-kill shelter there. The association has been raising the funds to build the shelter, which is under construction. Sharon also supported Amigos de los Animales, participating in some of our sterilization campaigns and offering us the use of her SUV to transport equipment to the campaigns before we acquired our van.



When Sharon died, she had six dogs and two cats, all of them rescued from her neighborhood. Shortly before her death she had told her landlord that if something happened to her she hoped that new homes could be found for all her pets, as she did not want them to be placed in a shelter, regardless of how humane it was.

Her many friends swung into action and alerted the wider community to the urgent need for homes for Sharon's pets. Many people contributed money for the animals' care until homes could be found. Two of the dogs require medication, and Sharon's landlord, Landino Marcocchio, generously agreed to adopt those two. Other people took the cats and two more dogs, leaving the very shy Vanilla and her daughter Blanquita still awaiting adoption.

*Vanilla**Blanquita*

Then, to our immense relief, the couple who were about to move into Sharon's house agreed to adopt them. So Vanilla and Blanquita have been able to stay at their home, where Sharon had made a tremendous effort to make them feel welcome. As evidence of how much Sharon loved her dogs, we recommend two humorous articles she wrote about them for this Newsletter, which appeared in the [12/12](#) and [5/16](#) issues.

This case is a sober reminder that all of us who have pets need to plan for their care in the event that we predecease them.

Our recent education activities

The latest bus messages hit the streets

Three city buses began displaying our latest public-service messages the beginning of October. The messages will remain on the buses until the end of the year. They all have a similar theme, the essential needs of humans and our pets.

One bus, which travels the southern zone of the city from Plaza Lucio Marmolejo to Colonia Campanario, shows an emaciated street dog and the message, "You need clean water and nutritious food every day. So does your pet."

Another bus covers the area from the city's bus station to the village of Santa Rosa, passing through the neighborhood of San Javier along the way. It displays a photo of two people walking with their dogs in the woods below the Bufo. Its message is, "You need exercise every day. So does your pet."



You need clean water and nutritious food every day. So does your pet.



You need exercise every day. So does your pet.



You need protection from the weather. So does your pet.

On the back of the third bus is a photo of a dog hunkered down in a heavy rain. The message states, "You need protection from the elements. So does your pet." This bus travels in the city between the Presa de la Olla and Pueblito de Rocha.

Educational materials for teachers and children

We have just printed 2,000 copies of a two-page leaflet entitled "Breaking the cycle of violence," which describes the connection between violence toward animals and domestic violence. The leaflet (see next article) raises awareness of this dangerous link and recommends steps to be taken if a child or family is suspected of abusing an animal. We have announced its publication in the weekly newspaper *Chopper*. Copies are being disseminated to school teachers and administrators, health workers, and community organizers, and may be requested from the Animal Control Center (ccontrolanimalgto@hotmail.com, tel. 473-733-4839).



We have also reprinted a children's coloring book entitled "Da una mano a los animales" (Give a hand to the animals) for dissemination to preschoolers in the Guanajuato area. Originally published by the U.S. National Association for Humane and Environmental Education under the title "Échales una mano a los animales," this children's booklet has been excellent teaching tool and is very popular among young children, many of whom own no books. A page at the end emphasizes the importance of sterilizing pets to prevent unwanted litters of puppies and kittens. Our volunteers donate copies of this booklet to children

who attend public events promoting respect for animals, as well as to kindergartens when visiting villages to announce our sterilization campaigns.

The connection between violence toward animals and violence within families

Numerous studies in recent years document the link between violence toward animals and violence within families. One such study, entitled *Understanding the Link between Violence Towards Animals and People: A guidebook for Criminal Justice Professionals*, by J. D. Allie Phillips, provides a great deal of evidence that animal abuse is frequently connected to child abuse, the abuse of elders, and domestic violence. According to Phillips, “animal cruelty is no longer seen as occurring in a vacuum but rather as part of individual or familial dysfunction, psychopathy, and emotional abuse.”

Phillips defines “animal abuse” as all forms of crimes toward animals. The term “animal cruelty” is used to describe intentional criminal conduct toward animals, and “animal neglect” describes negligent acts or failure to provide adequate care for animals.

Various studies have reported harmful and long-term effects on children of exposure to violence, including violence toward animals. Programs to reduce domestic violence are beginning to ask victims about their pets and to provide shelter for at-risk families *and their pets*. Law enforcement officers are being educated about the often extensive histories of crimes committed by persons who also abuse animals.

When someone harms an animal, the important question to ask is, “Who will be next?” Cruelty to animals often occurs during abusive relationships. It presents a risk of child or spousal abuse and is used to threaten human victims. It is used to prevent family members from leaving an abusive home. Moreover, harm to animals destabilizes communities and contributes to overall lack of safety.

When someone harms an animal, the important question to ask is, “Who will be next?”



Many people do not realize that neglect is abuse. The neighbor who leaves his dog chained all day, every day, or isolates his dog on his roof without companionship or protection from the sun, rain, or cold weather, is an abuser.

Amigos de los Animales recently reprinted a two-page leaflet entitled “Breaking the cycle of abuse,” which describes the connection between cruelty toward animals and domestic violence. Intended for school teachers and administrators, health workers, and community organizers, this leaflet raises awareness of this dangerous link and recommends steps to be taken if a child is suspected of abusing an animal. To request a free copy, write to amigos@amigosanimalesgto.org. Copies are also available upon request from the Centro de Control Animal, Calle Arboledas s/n, Colonia Arroyo Verde, next to the Yerbabuena sports field in the city of Guanajuato.

It is the responsibility of each of us, as citizens, to report cases of animal abuse in all its forms. The place to report it in Guanajuato is the Centro de Control Animal, telephone (473) 733 4839, controlanimalgto@hotmail.com. Your report will be confidential.

Our 18th anniversary is approaching!

We'll celebrate our 18th anniversary on Sunday afternoon, February 24, with another fantastic party at La Toscana (now called La Casa Grande) in San Javier. The party will feature

- Live music performed by the Beagles (wear your dancing shoes!)
- A silent auction of exceptional items and services
- Dozens of terrific items for sale
- A raffle of 20 great prizes
- Delicious Mediterranean food, plus
- Wine, beer, and nonalcoholic beverages

Tickets will go on sale on January 13 at eight locations in the city and will also be available from the following individuals: Ron Chapel, Sandra García, Sara Hannes, Joan Hicks Romero, Vanessa Kelly, Angeles Leyva, Vero Mares, Marion Pritchard, Tom Reavley, and Sandra Ward. Tickets for adults purchased before February 21 will be 300 pesos, those purchased at the event will be 350 pesos, and tickets for children under age 12 will be 150 pesos.



Currently we are soliciting auction and raffle prizes and items for the sale. If you have items of value and in good condition that you do not need, please consider donating them to Amigos. Appropriate items include art, handicrafts, tableware, kitchenware, clothing and accessories, textiles, jewelry, small electronics, portable furniture, toys, and pet supplies and equipment.

**Do you have a talent or service that
you can offer as an auction prize?
Here's your chance to shine!**

Are you a good cook, a musician, an expert in some field, a teacher? Do you have an apartment or cabin that you can offer to an auction winner for a week or a weekend? The more creative, amusing, or unusual the prize, the more likely it is to attract bids.

Email us a description or photograph of your donation and your phone or cell number, so that one of our volunteers can contact you to discuss the details. Please let us hear from you by the middle of January. **We must receive all auction donations by february 2.**

Proceeds from the party will support our sterilization, education, and rescue activities. With the support from people like you, we have sterilized more than 18,000 dogs and cats, raised the public's awareness of companion animals' needs and pet owners' responsibilities through our numerous education activities, and helped more than 3,500 homeless and neglected dogs and cats find homes. The streets of Guanajuato and neighboring villages are safer and cleaner, thanks to the work we have done with your support.

Happy holidays and best wishes for the New Year!

We wish you a very happy holiday season and a New Year in which we humans are kind to one another and to other species. Our New Year's resolution for 2019 is to continue offering free spay/neuter services of dogs and cats in the city of Guanajuato and its neighboring villages, and to expand our educational efforts in the schools. As we receive no government funding, we rely on donations from the public to pay for these activities. If you are already a member of Amigos, please renew your membership; and if you are not, we hope you will become one.



Recent donations and support from members and friends of Amigos

We depend upon the donations we receive to provide services to the community. The average clinic sterilization costs US \$40, the average campaign sterilization costs US \$15, a typical rescue costs US \$75, and a bus message costs US \$85 per month. Rates for annual memberships are (in US dollars): Individual, \$25; Family, \$40; Benefactor, \$100; Best Friend, \$500 or more.

To make a donation through PayPal, using Visa or Mastercard, [click here](#).

To make a deposit to our Mexican bank account, please contact us at amigos@amigosanimalesgto.org for instructions.

To make a donation to our 501(c)3 U.S. affiliate, please send a check to:
Amigos de los Animales de Guanajuato, Inc.
Dr. Nancy Hager, Secretary
256 West 10th Street, No. 4D
New York, NY 10014, USA

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

Best Friends: Sandra Ward in memory of Sharon Anton

Benefactors: Anonymous donor, Alexandra Avery and Vern Hinsvark, Mariana Gómez Grobet, William McLachlan, Sue Parry Glass, Sharon Schaap, Richard Thurston and Marianne Pulfer

Donations in kind: Lori Bierbrier, Dionne Burnett, Ron Chapel and Vanessa Kelly, Sara Hannes, Pat Heinke, Charles and Terri Rasmussen, Austin Starr, Sandra Ward and Ron Mann

Other donors (general): Robert Broughton in memory of Sharon Anton, pet owners at the sterilization campaigns

Governmental support: Centro de Control Animal of the city of Guanajuato, International Airport of Guanajuato

Professional services, veterinarians: Verónica Almaguer Olvera, Lori Bierbrier, Dionne Burnett, Octavio Capitán Tovar, Tere Díaz Ruíz, María Eugenia Herrera, Ricardo Montes de Oca Macías, Miguel Ochoa, Cristián Orozco, Sandra Rivera Navarro, Arturo Rocha; **Technicians:** Paloma Jaramillo, Karen López

Campaign volunteers: Verónica Almaguer Olvera, Pat Barovetto, Jolene Gailey, Diego Gaitan, Sandy García, Sara Hannes, Pat Heinke, Alan Hernández, Vero Mares, Lalo Martínez, Cecy Montiel, Ángeles Olmedo, Martha Ortega, Marta Ortiz, Luis Osorio, Janis Pope, Marion Pritchard, Marianne Pulfer, Julia Salido, Laura Uvalle, Sandra Ward,

Other volunteers: Amaranta Caballero, Ron Chapel, Mariana García Salido, Vanessa Kelly, Ángeles Leyva, Vero Mares, Agota Page, Marion Pritchard, Victor Ramírez, Tom Reavley, Eduardo Rodríguez, Joan Hicks Romero, Julia Salido, Sandra Ward

www.amigosanimalesgto.org

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make a donation in any amount via PayPal: [Donate](#)**

**To make a donation in dollars by check or money order:
Amigos de los Animales de Guanajuato, Inc.
c/o Nancy Hager
256 West 10th Street, No. 4D
New York, NY 10014**

**To make a donation in pesos,
Contact us at: amigos@amigosanimalesgto.org**

To adopt a pet through our website: www.adoptaguanajuato.weebly.com

To report a lost pet: [Click here](#)