



Newsletter No. 64 • September 2022 • www.amigosanimalesgto.org

International Homeless Animals Day

August 20 was International Homeless Animals Day. Amigos and Fundación Corazón Animal decided to commemorate it by organizing an event for children that would celebrate dogs and cats. We chose as our location the commercial plaza Alaia, sure it would be bustling with shoppers on a Saturday afternoon.

We were wrong. The only people who showed up on purpose were our volunteers. So, we invited the few families strolling through the plaza to join our activities. Nearly all of them did, and the time passed quickly.



Martha Ortiz, Beth Lozano, and Joslyn Lewis posing with two children



Julia Salido held a poster board while a "blind" girl assembled an animal face

One game the children enjoyed was putting eyes, ears, and a nose on a featureless face representing a dog or cat, doing so from behind a tall poster board and guessing where each part of the animal's face belonged. They, and we, were amused by the results.

Also popular were making animal-face masks from paper plates and construction paper and drawing pictures of family pets. (Most Mexican families have a dog or a cat.) The children took their masks and drawings home with them.



Everyone had a good time, but the occasion we were commemorating is a sad one. When a reporter from the daily newspaper a.m. showed up to interview Paulina Abascal of Fundación Corazón Animal and Julia Salido of Amigos, they described the homeless animal situation in Guanajuato. Pet abandonment here remains a problem, which the Covid epidemic seems to have made worse.

September is Will Month!

In the U.S., any month is a good time to revisit your will. In Mexico, during September you can have a testamentary will prepared at a discount. If you own property in Mexico and do not have a Mexican will, upon your death the government will liquidate your estate and distribute your assets according to state inheritance laws.



If you are preparing or updating your will, please consider including a bequest to Amigos. Our need will go on, and your vital support can too. A bequest can be a part of your Mexican will, your U.S. will, or both.

Several of our supporters have taken the smart and thoughtful step of including Amigos in their wills. Three of them give their reasons here.



Constance LaLena

In the 15 years I've been in Guanajuato I've seen firsthand the many positive changes Amigos de los Animales has effected in the welfare of animals. By sticking to their mission of sterilization and education, the organization has made a profound difference. I am very happy to help further this worthy effort by including the organization in my will. Kudos!

~Constance LaLena

Because I believe all the beings we share the planet with are worthy of respect and kindness, I am very glad Amigos exists to help so many dogs and cats be happier and treated with more care. I'm very glad I could put my money where my mouth is and include Amigos as a beneficiary of my estate. If you do the same, I bet you'll be glad you did.

~Austin Starr



Austin Starr



John Denissen

As I've gotten older, I've realized that my lifelong planning and saving has served me well. It's very satisfying to think that when I go, there will probably be enough money left for me to make a generous contribution to continue the work of Amigos. It's a way I can continue to show my love for Guanajuato and all animals. ~John Denissen

Speaking of legacies, why not become one of our Queridos Amigos?

We're planning our own legacy, with the creation of our new donor category "Querido Amigo" (Dear Friend). Whether you decide to include Amigos in your will or not, we hope you'll consider helping to assure our sustainability by becoming a major annual or monthly donor.

Queridos Amigos pledge USD \$1200 per year, or \$100 per month, over a three-year period and receive recognition on our website as well as special benefits, such an invitation to an annual reception. To become a Querido Amigo, visit our new [Donate](#) page and choose the Monthly or Annually Queridos Amigos option.

Other recent and planned activities

Join us for a meet and greet!

We invite you to an evening of fun, music, and no-host food and drinks at 5 p.m. on Sunday, September 11, at Hotel Embajadoras. This will be a perfect opportunity to become acquainted or reacquainted with Amigos and what we do. You'll meet some of our board members and other volunteers, and Gaby García and Mario Nieves will perform some cool jazz. We look forward to seeing old friends and making new ones.

Animal Fest celebrated the city's pets in July

Local animal-welfare groups celebrated Animal Fest in Los Pastitos park on the July 2-3 weekend, reviving an annual event suspended when Covid-19 shut down most gatherings in 2020. Numerous groups offered talks, demonstrations, adoptable pets, vegan food, the sale of pet-themed



2nd Place, Lola



Princesa, winner in the noisiest dog category

products, and the opportunity to connect with other people who love animals.

We sponsored El Super Mestizo, a contest of mixed-breed dogs.

Besides prizes for the first, second, and third place consisting of treats, toys, and other canine paraphernalia, our judges presented certificates to all the contestants for excelling in one characteristic or another: performing the most tricks, having the liveliest tail or longest ears, wearing the best costume, being the noisiest or the calmest, being the most huggable or adoptable. You get the idea.

Naturally, the winner in the noisiest category—the dog that barked most ferociously—was one of the smallest. And she was one of the lucky dogs adopted during the event!



1st Place, Missy



3rd Place, Sky

Despite an afternoon shower on Saturday, the event was a big success. We thank Tom Reavley and Guille Amézquita for providing the Super Mestizo prizes, Joslyn Lewis and Jim Sullivan for preparing our display materials, and the other Amigos volunteers who helped at the event. Special thanks to Terri and Charles Rasmussen for creating a temporary Tiny Tiendita and selling their charming dog- and cat-themed articles to benefit Amigos.



Mary Beth Canavan, Joslyn Lewis, and Tom Reavley at our table



Dr. Jessica Aviña at the Manantial campaign

Our recent sterilization campaigns

In June Drs. Ricardo Montes de Oca and Arturo Rocha conducted two training sessions for our veterinary students, during which the students sterilized 17 animals under the vets' supervision. Then, on **June 11**, we held a regular campaign in the Guanajuato suburb of **Manantial**, where five surgeons sterilized 85 animals with help from nine volunteers, including six Scouts.



Volunteers posed for a group photo after the campaign



Kathya Amaya and a patient

In July we held two campaigns. At the first one, on **July 3**, we sterilized 67 animals at the home of Elena Díaz in the village of **Nueva España**. The hosts not only provided a tent and chairs for the people who



Dogs in the recovery area

brought their pets to the campaign, but also served a delicious breakfast to our team. Our sincere thanks to them for their generous support.



Polar bear? No, dog! Vero Mares prepped her for surgery



Rosemarie Conde and Julia Salido

At our second campaign, in **Valle de San José** on **July 16**, our team sterilized 51 animals.



Daniel Palafox operating on a large dog, assisted by Karla Ahumada, in Valle de San José



One of 15 cats that day



One of 36 dogs with her owner



Thirteen dogs were males



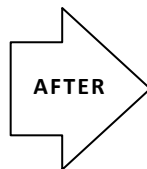
Volunteer Mayra Pérez García and patient in Campuzano

In **August** we sterilized 81 animals, five at a training session for our veterinary students, seven in the village of **Campuzano**, and 69 in **Villas de Guanajuato**.

The Campuzano campaign was disappointing because of the low turnout. But our team discovered a badly neglected dog (sterilized at a previous campaign there) and gave him a haircut with his owner's permission.



Dog in need of attention in Campuzano



Well done, team!



Waiting their turn, Villas de Guanajuato



Waiting to register, Villas de Guanajuato



Triplets?



Dr. Ricardo Montes de Oca

More people are volunteering to work our campaigns, reducing some of the pressures on our campaign coordinator, Julia Salido. Whenever possible, volunteers take advantage of our captive audiences to entertain parents and children with stories about animals and advice on caring for their pets.

Our latest bus messages

In July two new messages appeared two city buses. As summer is the rainy season in Guanajuato, one message urges people to bring their dogs indoors when it rains. The other asserts that dogs are extremely loyal and deserve to be treated well. The messages, which will remain on the buses through September, are seen by thousands of people each day.



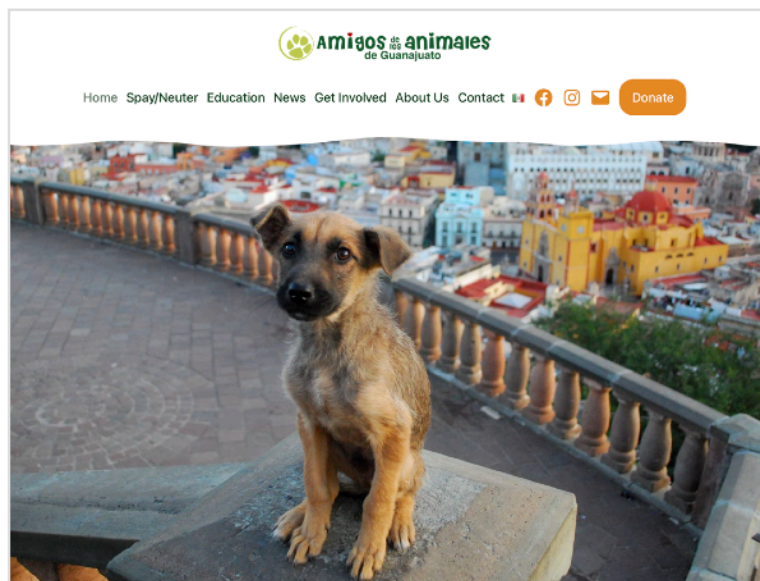
“Your dog would give his life for you. The least you can do for him is to take care of him.”



“When it rains, bring your dogs inside your house.”

Check out our new website

Jim Sullivan, one of our new board members, has redesigned and updated our Website, www.amigosanimalesgto.org. We think you’ll really like its fresh look and ease of use.





Amigos greeting cards are now available

We have four festive greeting card designs for sale. They were created especially for us by the artist Teresa Miller, who was a member of the Amigos board before she moved to San Miguel de Allende six years ago.



All the cards feature whimsical cats and dogs. Three cards are appropriate for celebrating any occasion; only one is obviously a Christmas card. They measure 7-3/4 X 5 inches, are blank inside, and include an envelope.



We are selling them for 50 pesos (US \$2.50) apiece and in variety packs of 4 for 180 pesos (US \$9). You can buy them at Terri's Tiny Tiendita or order them from us by [email](#). The proceeds support our sterilization and education activities.

Another dedicated Amigos volunteer

Our volunteers are the heart and soul of Amigos. In this issue we profile our president.



Tom at a recent board meeting

Tom Reavley

Tom has served in the roles of treasurer, secretary, vice president, and president of Amigos since our inception in 2002. He has been president and secretary since 2020. A U.S. attorney specializing in arbitration, a Mexican resident who speaks fluent Spanish, and a teacher of tai chi and meditation, he provides a steady helm for the organization.

As a board member Tom has given thoughtful counsel to other board members, represented us in dealings with city and state officials, and negotiated the sale of a parcel of land that had been donated to Amigos.

Tom attended Stanford as an undergraduate and Harvard for his law degree. He served as law clerk to former U.S. Supreme Court Justice Tom C. Clark. He has arbitrated a broad range of commercial disputes involving oil, gas, and energy matters. Now semi-retired, he still serves as an arbitrator in the U.S. on occasion.

He moved to Guanajuato in 2000. Here he opened a studio where he teaches tai chi and Being Energy, conducting weekly online meditation classes. He is the author of Mario's Folly: Living a Path with Heart, a book reflecting Carlos Castaneda's influence on his own philosophy, and he occasionally unwinds on fishing and camping trips or meditation retreats in the U.S and Mexico.

Standing 6 feet, 3 inches tall, Tom is always visible in a crowd. Though normally self-effacing, he has been willing to perform in drag in clever skits he's written for our fundraisers.

Tom's wife, Guillermina Amézquita López, is an artist who paints expert pet portraits; she also founded and leads the animal-welfare group Pro-Vida Felina. Together, the two have rescued many dogs and cats.

Why don't we offer rescue and adoption services?

We are often asked why we don't have a shelter for homeless animals or provide vaccinations for dogs and cats against common transmissible diseases, such as parvo and distemper. The answer is quite simple: we cannot afford to.

Although a shelter is a direct and humane response to the tragic problem of pet overpopulation created by people's neglect, it does not affect irresponsible behavior. Irresponsible people will continue to abandon their pets, expecting others to rescue and take care of them. We therefore decided when we started Amigos 20 years ago to focus on



Our autoclave, used to sterilize surgical instruments and drapes

preventing the problem of unwanted litters by offering sterilization services and educating pet owners about their responsibilities toward pets.

But sterilization campaigns are not cheap either. They require veterinarians, whom we pay for their services, and trained volunteers. The campaigns also require specialized equipment and expensive medications.

We offer sterilization services twice a month at very low cost. We charge just \$150 pesos (about US \$7.50) per animal, but each case costs us an average of \$475 pesos (US \$24). In 2021, we sterilized 1,152 dogs and cats. So far this year we have sterilized 836 animals.

Our focus on education also requires resources. This year we are working with Fundación Corazón Animal on developing a program for teaching young children to treat

their pets with compassion and to respect all animals, including homeless dogs and cats, farm and working animals, and wildlife. We are continuing to raise public awareness of pets' needs through our public-service messages on city buses, the distribution of children's primers on pet care, radio and TV interviews, and public events such as Animal Fest and International Homeless Animals Day.

We receive no financial support from the Mexican government. On the contrary, we must pay the government's usual value-added tax of 16% on equipment, most medications, and all our other supplies. We depend entirely upon donations from the public to continue our work.



Aurora Verver operating at a recent campaign

This article was suggested by Jacqui Spiegl, a devoted rescuer and friend of Amigos.

We invite your comments—and your help

We want your feedback! Please let us know what you think of our Newsletter. You may have noticed that lately we've been including more photos. Are there other changes you would like to see or topics you'd like us to cover?

We also invite you to participate in our work if you want to volunteer your talents or time. Some of the work requires physical exertion.

At sterilization campaigns

For example, if we had more volunteers for our sterilization campaigns, we could have two shifts so that no volunteer would have to work more than four hours a day. We will provide the training and supervision. Let us know if you are interested by contacting us at amigos@amigosanimalesgto.org.



Stretcher-bearers Juan Jesús Vargas and Gilberto Salazar carrying a dog from surgery



Volunteers checking on animals in the recovery unit

In our education program

If you have teaching experience, we can use your help with a community education program for children. Fluency in Spanish is desirable but not necessary. To learn more, contact us at amigos@amigosanimalesgto.org.



Reading a story to children



Marion Pritchard showing off our homemade marmalade

With fundraising

We are organizing two fundraising events. The first is a **holiday fair** to be held on **December 11** in the *centro*. The other is our **22nd anniversary celebration**, planned for **February 19, 2023**. We need volunteers for both. If you like to cook, you can help us make orange marmalade or holiday cookies for the fair.

For the February party, we need volunteers for the following: event chair or co-chairs, food preparation and serving, our auction, a *tienda* (the collection and sale of other donated items), the raffle, publicity, ticket sales, set-up and cleanup.



Sandy García, Alison Hall, and Vanessa Kelly serving extravagant desserts at our last anniversary bash

Again, contact us at amigos@amigosanimalesgto.org if you want to help.



Sue Parry decorating gingerbread cookies



Terri Rasmussen selling homemade goodies

Your support enables us to continue our important work

We depend upon the donations we receive to provide services to the community. **Our average costs** (in U.S. dollars): campaign sterilization, \$24; bus message, \$85 per month; 500 copies of our coloring book "Darles la mano" (Give them a hand), \$88. **Donations in any amount are gratefully accepted and acknowledged.**

Donate

We have a new Donate page on our website! Now, you can donate quickly & securely using PayPal, Apple Pay, Google Pay, Mercado Pago, bank transfer, or credit/debit cards, all in one place. You can even leave us a comment and have it displayed on our Donor Wall, so that others can appreciate your generosity. Maybe your comment will inspire others to give! Check out our new donate page [here](#).

Using Zelle, you can make transfer to our account at Chase Bank at no cost. To do so, go into your bank account online, click on Zelle, and enter our name (Amigos de los Animales de Guanajuato, Inc.) and our email address (amigos@amigosanimalesgto.org) as the charity you wish to support. Chase will notify us of the transfer so that we can thank you.

BBVA

You can make a donation to our Mexican bank account at Bancomer, No. 0116390749, CLABE 012210001163907490.

You can make a cash deposit to our Bancomer account of up to 1000 pesos at any OXXO store for just 10 pesos. Our Bancomer card number is 4555 1130 0801 2017. Again, please tell us when you make the donation so that we can send you our thanks.



If you have an Amazon.com account in the U.S., you can shop at Amazon's charity website and support us with your purchases. At no additional cost to you, 0.5% of the price of your eligible purchases will be donated to Amigos. To set up your charitable giving through Amazon, go to Amazon's charity website, www.smile.amazon.com, and select Amigos de los Animales as your preferred charity. Two charities with this name will appear. Choose the second one, Amigos de los Animales de Guanajuato. Amazon will do the rest.

Questions about making a donation? Contact us at amigos@amigosanimalesgto.org.

We appreciate our recent donors

Queridos Amigos (Dear Friends),
who have pledged to contribute \$1200 a year for three years



Ron Mann and Sandra Ward



Steve Murdock and John Denissen



Bill Merrell



Charles and Terri Rasmussen



Joslyn Lewis and Jim Sullivan



Tom Reavley and Guille Amézquita

Sustaining Friends, who contribute monthly: Pat Barovetto, Mariana Gómez Grobet, Ann Lewis, Victor Márquez, Isabel Nuñez Ortiz, Karla Peyton, Charles and Terri Rasmussen, Dianne Romain, Richard Thurston

Other good friends: Geoff Brown, who gave us donations from his birthday concert; Hannah Dixon and Kim Gorchs; Angela Gentry; Endre and Susan Pataky, who gave us donations from their 10th wedding anniversary party; Enaid Savage



Geoff Brown (on guitar) performing at his birthday concert



Susan and Endre Pataky celebrated their 10th wedding anniversary

Donors in kind: Sam and Joe Kay, Ginger and Barney Barnhill, Peggy Fisher, Sue Meyers, Tom Reavley and Guille Amézquita, Sandra Ward



Change purses made for us by Sue Meyers



Leashes, collars, and halters donated by Sam and Joe Kay and by Ginger and Barney Barnhill

And many thanks to our recent volunteers

Board members: Rosemarie Conde, John Denissen, Nancy Hager, Saul Helfenbein, Joan Hicks de Romero, Sarah Anne Kulla, Joslyn Lewis, Bill Merrell, Tom Reavley, Julia Salido, Jim Sullivan, Suzy Thompson, Sandra Ward

Sterilization campaigns: veterinarians: Verónica Almaguer, Jessica Aviña, Ricardo Montes de Oca, Pamela Moreno Sánchez, Arturo Rocha; campaign coordinator: Julia Salido; advanced veterinary students: Abril Herrera, Daniel Palafox, Laura Uvalle, Aurora Verver; other volunteers: Karla Ahumada, Diego Aguilera Méndez, Juan Enrique Álvarez Gonzalez, Juan Manuel Alvarez Ramírez, Kathya Amaya, Pat Barovetto, Carolyn Black, Tina Bonini, Alún Francisco Bustamante Vásquez, Mary Beth Canavan, Rosemarie Conde, José Luis Cortés González, Elena Díaz and family, Carlos Donato Sandoval, María Francesca Espinosa, Jeff Gimprich, Héctor Freddy Gómez Mendoza, Grupo Scouts de México, Viviana Gutierrez Vertiz, Joslyn Lewis, Antonia López Palacias, Emmanuel López Reyes, Beth Lozano, Vero Mares, Lalo Martínez Murillo, Juana Mondragón Quiñenes, Ceci Montiel, Derek Nahom Villafaña, Joyce Neikirk, Mayra Paola Perez García, Joel Gaytán Espinosa, Jéssica Serai Pérez García, Mayra Paola Pérez García, Dulce Sandoval, Vicky Sandoval Anguiano, Jim Sullivan

Animal Fest: Mary Beth Canavan, Rosemarie Conde, Joslyn Lewis, Charles and Terri Rasmussen, Tom Reavley, Jim Sullivan, Suzy Thompson, Sandra Ward

International Homeless Animals Day: Paulina Abascal, Julieta Barrón López, Elena Hernández, Joslyn Lewis, Daniel López Segoviano, Beth Lozano, Martha Ortiz, Alan Enrique Pérez Ochoa, Eduardo Rodríguez, Julia Salido, Isaac de Jesús Sánchez Ponce, Suzy Thompson, Sandra Ward

Newsletter: Sandra Ward (editor), Martín Lozano (translations), Jim Sullivan (formatting and mailing)

Website redesign: Jim Sullivan

Social media: Joslyn Lewis

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