

A place for everything about animals and their friends

Scoop



SCOOP ONLINE
Georgette is a beautiful dog who would do almost anything to find a forever home — including dressing up in funny outfits. This sweet girl recently lost her foster home so

is desperate for a family that can shower her with love. Find more photos of Georgette on your social-networking site, or post photos of your own beloved companion at www.santafescoop.com.

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Dressing up, getting down to curb pet overpopulation

Howl-O-Ween event benefits Santa Fe shelter spay and neuter fund

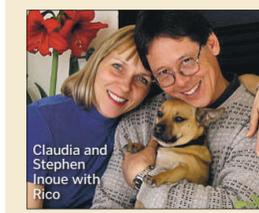
By Ben Swan
The New Mexican

The homeless Chihuahua mix wandering the streets of Puerto Rico during Claudia and Stephen Inoue's 2002 honeymoon easily found a way into the couple's hearts.

For Claudia, who had never had a dog before, it was love at first sight. She moved mountains to rescue the tiny tyke and bring him home to Santa Fe. Stephen took a bit more convincing, but Rico eventually became a pampered member of the family, despite chronic illnesses that included epilepsy.

So when Rico suddenly died on Aug. 29, the Inoues' world collapsed. But a friend, Cindy Roper, knew that Rico's death shouldn't be in vain. She contacted Mary Martin, executive director of the Santa Fe Shelter & Humane Society, in an effort to turn the loss into something proactive.

Thus was born the Rico Fund for Little Brown Dogs, a fund to help others with the cost of spaying and



Claudia and Stephen Inoue with Rico

HOWL-O-WEEN

What: Halloween party and fundraiser for Rico's Little Brown Dog Fund
When: 1-3 p.m., Saturday
Where: Zoe & Guido's Pet Boutique, 1441-C Paseo de Peralta, 988-2500
Details: Prizes for creative costumes; raffles; performances by the Santa Fe Dog Dance Club; a pet psychic; refreshments

neutering.

Rico's Fund, an offshoot of a shelter program called "Big Brown Dog Bonanza," aims to get more dogs altered so fewer will end up in shelters. The fund's already raised more than \$2,000 and has helped several families with their pets.

"I have long worked to raise funds for spaying and neutering," Claudia Inoue said, "through the book sale at our business and my Japanese origami paper cranes. The fact that this money goes to a fund named specifically for my little boy Rico, makes me work even harder for that. It's bittersweet, but I believe spaying and neutering" is the key to curbing animal overpopulation.

On Saturday, the Santa Fe Dog Dancing Club will hold a benefit for the fund at Zoe & Guido's Pet Bou-

tique, 1441-C Paseo de Peralta. The club is co-sponsoring the event with Zoe & Guido's, which will coincide with the store's annual Howl-O-Ween party.

The 1 to 3 p.m. event will include door prizes, a raffle for cool dog products, hot-dog bobbing, prizes for best costume, refreshments and even a "just for fun" pet psychic. The club has also printed bumper stickers that people can buy in support of Rico's Fund.

And naturally, the dog club has a few tricks up its sleeve.

"We'll be performing, including the debut of our group disco number to 'Night Fever,'" said the club's leader, Mary Leatherberry. "It's not to be missed."

The club is committed to doing community service, Leatherberry

said, both through demonstrations and sponsoring fundraisers. Previous fundraisers have included a "Dogs as Artists" event to benefit the Alice Lee Fund at Assistance Dogs of the West, and an old-fashioned Ice Cream Social to benefit Marguerite Woods' Small Dog Rescue Group.

"We like to plan events that dogs and their owners can enjoy," she said.

Pam Hagan, owner of Zoe & Guido's, said she's always happy to support animal-related causes. Having the fundraiser at the same time as the popular Halloween party seemed a natural fit.

"Last year it was a huge hit, so this year we're hoping it will be even bigger," she said. "People just love Halloween. I think it takes us all back to our childhood. It's a joyous occasion."

While nothing will replace Rico, Claudia Inoue said working directly for animal welfare puts the "spring in my step and the smile on my face." Customers at the Inoue's business, Toy Auto Man, support her cause through the purchase of used books and the origami cranes, with all the proceeds going to the shelter. They refer to her as the "spay and neuter queen."

"It's my dream that if an owner makes an effort to bring an animal in to be altered, it gets done regardless

of whether the person can afford to or not," she said.

The fund is steadily growing and on Friday had a balance of \$2,315, said Bill Hutchison, the shelter's director of communications. While that may not seem like much, it could still provide up to 15 surgeries at private practices. But the money goes a lot further at the shelter's clinic, which provides subsidies depending on income to make the surgeries more affordable.

"Just \$2,300 and some change, we can help more than 50 animals," he said. "As long as that money keeps coming in to honor Rico, we can still help quite a bit with not a whole lot of dollars."

The fund itself is a powerful symbol for a little dog that not only continues to live on for the Inoues, but can now help other animals in the community, Hutchison said, adding that on a cosmic level, "that's huge."

He added, "As long as those dollars keep coming in, he continues to help. He's still out there, wagging his little tail."

To learn more about the fund, stop by Saturday's event and meet Claudia. Donations to Rico's Fund can be made at sfhumane.org or mailed to 100 Caja del Rio Road, Santa Fe, NM 87507.

All Creatures Memorials dedicates a new wall for departed animals

Embracing life's cycles



Photos by Ben Swan/The New Mexican

Ulla Pedersen, founder and director of Kindred Spirits Animal Sanctuary, a hospice and elder care for dogs, horses and poultry, speaks on the cycle of life during the dedication of a new wall at Tesuque's All Creatures Memorials.

By Ben Swan
The New Mexican

Golden leaves slowly dropped from sun-dappled trees in a little corner of the Tesuque Valley. Several people standing in a circle watched the leaves as they gently made their descent, sometimes landing on a speaker's head or joining their fallen brethren on the floor of the tenderly landscaped park.

It seemed the perfect counterpoint for the dedication of a new wall at All Creatures Memorials, an enchanted ground set aside to honor and memorialize deceased animals.

"There is a sense of sadness for those that have passed on," said Ulla Pedersen, founder and director of Kindred Spirits Animal Sanctuary, one of several guests invited to speak at the Oct. 17 dedication. "But there is also a sense of joy, bringing them all in this cycle, which I call the cycle of life. We can be on any place on that cycle; we're in the presence of that cycle of life here."

The dedication offered a chance for Tesuque neighbors and park supporters alike to share stories of incredible animals, some of those honored on the park's tiles and others who simply live on through memories. The story of Salvador, an ambassador at Kindred Spirits, brought tears to the eyes of many of those attending, while tales of Pico, a stray dog adopted by many in Tesuque Valley, were cause for laughter and celebration.

The dog, also known as Shadow, Foxy and The Tesuque Traveler, is memorialized on the park's newest wall.

"Of all the creatures I've met in life, Pico had an effect on me," said Cathie Sullivan, who often went out of her way to help the wayward pooch. "And I mean psychological; my attitude toward life. He was a dog, and I don't mean to demean him, but can you say that about an animal? Love and bonding, of course, but did it affect the way you saw life?"

Pico, who eventually was offered a soft spot to ease his bones by Leslie Upsper, was a longtime fixture of Tesuque Valley, said Helen v. B. Larsen, who, along with Mary S.



Barbara Selnick welcomes a canine visitor in front of the park's new wall, which features Pico, a well-known dog in Tesuque who died in March. The park, 1406 Bishops Lodge Road, is open to the public.

Ness, created the park years ago as a way of dealing with the emotional desolation that accompanied the loss of their companion animals.

Pico, who lived to be 17 years old, died in March. Many remembered the dog as a "reserved, self-sufficient, little gentleman," who would come in and out of people's lives. He often accompanied hikers on their walks in the area and was often spotted trotting along Bishops Lodge Road.

Sullivan, who read a piece on Pico from his perspective about the "eight principles for building lasting bonds between dog people and human people," said she marveled at the dog's equanimity. Residents were loathe to put a collar on him, she said, not wanting to tether his great spirit. Once she sent Pico on his way with a red collar, she said, and later, when someone called her to come retrieve him, he was wearing a green collar.

"We still don't know how that happened," she said.

Now Pico is immortalized with dozens of other dogs in the park's walls. As the park grows, a new wall is being planned. Larsen said she hopes the fourth wall, which is dependent on donations, will be up in time for next year's celebration.

The wall might not just be for departed animals, she said.

"Many have asked why they can't buy a tile for an animal that is still alive, one that

is so much a part of their lives," she said. "So that may be part of the next wall; it is a memorial, but it is also a celebration."

As the park gains more exposure, more animal-welfare groups are becoming involved, Van Ness said. "That's the best thing we could ask for."

Randi Gerzofsky-Bildner, who along with Barbara Selnick helped organize the day's celebration that included dog adoptions, raffles, gift items and a hot dog vendor, said the park holds a special place in her heart.

"We are blessed to have a place to commemorate these wonderful beings who have brought immeasurable joy into our lives," Gerzofsky-Bildner said during the dedication. "Here we can be with others of like mind. Here we can cry, we can share, we can even laugh."

The park, 1406 Bishops Lodge Road, is open to the public. The park is supported through the purchase of customized tiles by Arius Tile of Santa Fe. The memorial tiles can be installed at the park or kept for personal use. Oak-framed plaques are also available. They are individualized with the park's motif of St. Francis with the name of the animal and its birth and death year. The park also supports Isaac's Fund, which assists with the veterinary care of animals in need.

To learn more about the park, call 992-6141 or visit the Web site at www.allcreaturesmemorialpark.org.

OFF LEASH

Changing hearts and minds — with a little push

By Ben Swan
The New Mexican

Those who work to improve the lives of animals know that it's an often frustrating effort, marked more by setbacks than anything else.

So it's great when a group of like-minded animal lovers can come together to simply celebrate and acknowledge that there have been successes along the way, despite what sometimes seems like insurmountable odds.

Last Sunday, Animal Protection of New Mexico celebrated 30 years of working toward the humane treatment of all animals at The Chalk Farm Gallery on Canyon Road. Owner Suhanna Gibson, a well-known animal advocate — or as some would put it, a soft touch — opened up her gallery for the group, which was originally founded in Santa Fe as Sangre de Cristo Animal Protection.

Close to 200 people turned up to show their support for the group, which is known for forming coalitions to help strengthen laws to protect animals and working with communities on education and awareness. Lisa Jennings, the executive director, was naturally giddy about the turnout and the joyous occasion — so much so that she spilled her drink on her dress while chatting with Mayor David Coss.

Aside from Coss, other dignitaries included Attorney General Gary King, actor Ali MacGraw and Ray Powell, a former land commissioner who now works with the Jane Goodall Institute for Wildlife Research Education and Conservation. Powell

announced that he's also making another run for state land commissioner.

While acknowledging the good work of APNM, many speakers made it clear that humane treatment of animals benefits humans as much as critters. If you can love and take care of domestic or wild animals, you're much more likely to do a better job taking care of your fellow human, or so it seems.

We'll be taking a more in-depth look at the views of some of our public officials in the next few weeks. Stay tuned; it should be interesting food for thought.



Here's proof that canine lovers walk the talk. Last Sunday's fall cleanup at the Frank Ortiz Park was a woofing success, according to organizers. About 170 people showed up during three hours of the bi-annual event, and scooped up more than 500 grocery-sized bags of garbage and dog doo.

There were many more people who cleaned up before and after the event, and several who helped out were visitors from out of town who come to Santa Fe in part because of the off-leash park, said Pam Geyer, one of the Friends of the Dog Park.

"We hope that," Geyer said, "in addition to cleaning up the park, the event will raise consciousness of all who walk there daily that we need to pick up poop and garbage on a daily basis."

The cleanup was a joint effort between the dog park group, City of Santa Fe Parks, Open Space and Watershed and Keep Santa Fe Beautiful.

TRACKS

The pet connection

Santa Fe Animal Shelter & Humane Society: Joey, a 2-year-old blue merle Australian cattle dog, is a darling boy. Somewhat sensitive, he prefers to stick close to his person and prefers a home with no small children. He loves to play and adores the dog park. Calina, an 18-month-old calico, loves attention. She has a lovely, loud purr and soft fur. She's at the shelter's PetSmart location, so visit her there.

These and other animals are available for adoption from the shelter at 100 Caja del Rio Road. The shelter's hours are 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Thursday and from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Friday through Sunday. Visit the Web site at www.sfhumane.org or call the adoption supervisor, 983-4309, ext. 106.



Joey



Calina



Shorty



Speck

Felines & Friends: Shorty and Speck, sweet black-and-white tuxedo boys, are about 5 months old. They are looking for a home together or with another cat.

Cats of all ages are available for adoption from Felines & Friends at Petco from 1 to 4 p.m. every Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Visit the Web site at www.petfinder.com/shelters/NM38.html or call 316-CAT1.