



International Aid for Korean Animals



Spring 2011 Newsletter

IN THIS ISSUE

*Letter from Kyenan Kum,
IAKA Director, p. 1*

*Kolleen Park Hosts
Fundraiser for KAPES, p. 2*

*KAPES Saves Eleven Dogs
from Subpar Animal
Control Center in Daejeon,
p. 3*

*KAPES Holds Educational
Seminars in Gyeonggi-do
and Jungang-gu, p. 4*

Cat awaiting adoption at the KAPES
Adoption and Education Center.



Dear IAKA Members,


We've had another busy and productive season at IAKA/KAPES! Our Adoption and Education Center in Seoul is now home to dozens of strays. The Center is staffed with trained veterinarians and educators, who provide quality care for rescues and connect them to caring owners. In fact, the Center doesn't just connect strays with responsible owners; it cultivates them, educating new pet "parents" and community members about the commitment animals require from us.

This idea of commitment has been the theme of our last several months of work. In December, KAPES' director, Haesun Park, presented at several government-sponsored educational seminars on the commitment owners must make to their pets and Korean society must make to all of its cats and dogs.

At the beginning of the year, KAPES took action to renew the commitment of government-contracted animal control centers by reporting a dismally substandard center in Daejeon City. By exposing this mishandled rescue shelter, KAPES brought to light the brokenness of a government-subsidized stray animal management system that doesn't budget enough for the suitable care of rescues.

And in late January, KAPES was honored by Kolleen Park, a well-known Korean-American musical director, for our efforts to deepen pet owners' commitment to their animal friends. Through an online campaign and a benefit event, Kolleen raised funds in support of KAPES and the Adoption and Education Center.

We're deeply appreciative of her support and yours. Without your ongoing commitment to support IAKA/KAPES, none of the activities I mentioned above would've taken place. You help us give cats and dogs in South Korea a voice. We hope you enjoy our spring 2011 newsletter!

Kyenan Kum, IAKA & KAPES Founder 

P.S.: Please mail the enclosed postcard protesting Korea's live burial of livestock with foot and mouth disease. Check with your postal service for the correct mailing rate. Also, IAKA's new brochure is hot off the press. Let us know if you're interested in distributing them.

Kolleen Park Hosts Fundraiser for KAPES



Kolleen Park, a well-known musical theater director in South Korea, organized a lively, performance-packed fundraiser for KAPES at the end of January this year. The 43-year-old, Korean-American used her talent and passion for music to rally support around her second passion: pet adoption.



Left to right: Haesun, Kolleen, Suhyoung (AEC vet), and Sun-Woon (KAPES Co-director) at the benefit for KAPES.

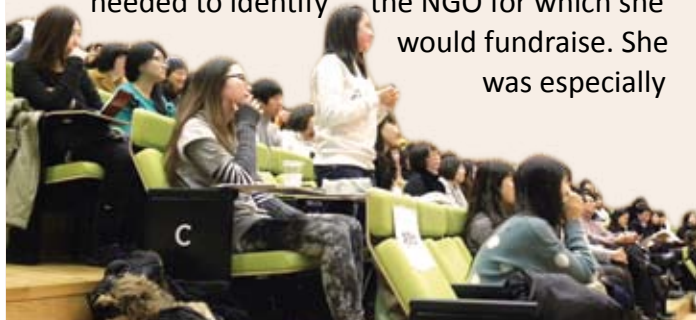
interested in supporting an organization that not only offered animal shelter, adoption and care services, but also educational outreach to the public.

To her surprise, she found it difficult to identify just such an animal organization. She

Part Korean and part Lithuanian-American, Kolleen spent her life traveling back and forth between the States and South Korea. Over the years, she noticed a stark contrast between the pet care and animal welfare cultures of the two countries. During her stays in South Korea, she was particularly alarmed by the number of stray dogs on the streets—dogs who'd obviously been abandoned by owners unwilling to fulfill the responsibilities of caring for a pet.

After completing a bachelor's at the California College of the Arts and a master's in classical Korean composition at Seoul National University, Kolleen made a name for herself in Korean classical music and musical theater, and secured a professorship in music at Dong-a University. All that time, her passion for animals never wavered; she was determined to use her gifts and her growing network to promote animal adoption to her fanbase and beyond.

And that's just what she did. She decided she would lead a fundraising campaign for animal welfare, protection and care NGOs in South Korea through her website. But before she launched this campaign, she needed to identify the NGO for which she would fundraise. She was especially



An attentive audience listens to Kolleen Park.

discovered a slew of shelters and rescue agencies, but none that offered a public education component. When she finally came upon KAPES, she found what she'd been looking for, and she set her campaign into motion immediately.

The January 31st fundraiser was the capstone event for the online campaign. Kolleen invited 300 plus online donors and friends to attend the benefit, raising additional funds through ticket sales. A colorful line-up of musical performers entertained the guests; and KAPES director, Haesun Park, presented Kolleen with an award for her outstanding contribution to the animal protection movement.

As part of the program, Kolleen delivered a powerful speech about the responsibilities of pet ownership. She explained that all too often new pet owners abandon their pets as soon as they realize the time, money and energy required for their care. She urged owners to take a pledge to care for their pets until the very end—a commitment of up to fifteen years.

On her part, Kolleen has made a lifelong commitment to all strays. KAPES is incredibly honored to work with such a dedicated animal lover.



Kolleen Park

This January, several KAPES members visited a government-contracted animal control center in Daejeon to adopt animals and negotiate the transfer of rescues to the KAPES Adoption and Education Center (AEC). Strangely, after the KAPES members introduced themselves, the managing veterinarian refused to allow them to adopt.

Shoe, a mixed Maltese rescued from Daejeon.



After an inspection of the center, the KAPES members understood his hesitation: he was afraid KAPES would blow the whistle on his substandard facilities, using his poorly treated rescues as proof. As the KAPES members walked the grounds, they saw unhealthy rescues packed like sardines in cages.

Meeting clear resistance from the head vet, the KAPES staff contacted the local government offices to protest the conditions of the shelter and the refusal of the head vet to allow them to adopt. The negative attention persuaded the Daejeon animal control center to transfer eleven dogs near their euthanization date into KAPES' care.

Sadly, the scene KAPES staff witnessed in Daejeon is a common one. Since the concept of animal welfare is relatively new in South Korea, there hasn't been sufficient groundswell to influence the government to budget for appropriate animal welfare services. As a result, they don't parcel out enough for province-run facilities. Instead, the government contracts private and non-profit agencies on a shoestring budget, paying contractees a measly sum per head. Since government subsidies are minimal, many contracted agencies can't pay for the animals' proper care. Contractees also aren't motivated to invest in the care of the rescues, because they think they're destined for euthanization. And



Suhyoung cares for Goma (transl. "Little One"), a mixed chihuahua.

without necessary care, the likelihood of these rescues' adoption plummets—fewer potential adopters are interested in unhealthy, unkempt animals.

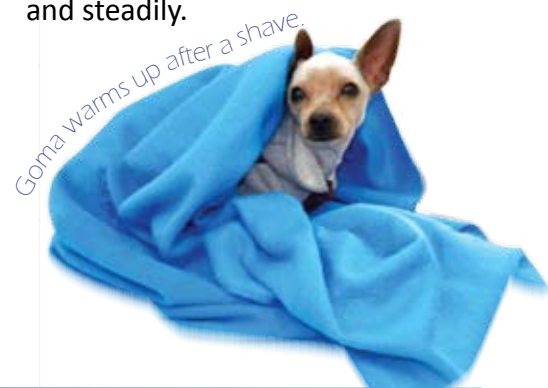
Ironically, some of these agencies even sell their rescues to the dog meat market in order to save themselves the expense of euthanization. Without public pressure, this grim stray animal management system continues.

Thankfully, KAPES intervened with this Daejeon-based center, and saved eleven dogs from euthanization. Sunhee Lee of the Daejeon Animal Rescue Shelter assisted in the transfer of the animals to the KAPES AEC in Seoul. At the AEC, the animals were groomed, spayed/neutered, and treated for various ailments, including heart worm disease. As soon as these dogs regain their health, AEC will put them up for adoption.



Pie, a Cocker Spaniel, receives medical treatment at AEC after a long journey from Daejeon.

These eleven dogs have a second chance at life, but this is just a minor accomplishment in a larger process. KAPES and IACA hope to work with local governments to create stronger regulations for contracted animal control centers, and revise their budgets to offer a greater sum to control centers per animal. It's a long and winding road, but we're walking it slowly and steadily.



Goma warms up after a shave.

KAPES Holds Educational Seminars in Gyeonggi-do and Jungang-gu



Local government offices are showing an ever-increasing commitment to collaborating with KAPES on animal welfare issues. In December of 2010 alone, KAPES was invited by two regional governments—Gyeonggi-do and Jungang-gu—to hold educational seminars for public officials and community members. Both events were sponsored by their respective regional hosts, and drew a wide range of interested parties.

Gyeonggi-do officials hosted KAPES seminars in two of its cities, Anyang and Suwon. The province—which surrounds Seoul—is the most active of the eleven provinces in animal welfare and protection. One of KAPES' strongest partners over the years, Gyeonggi-do has demonstrated a deep investment in rooting out the dog meat industry. The region's officials are making a concerted effort to close the largest dog meat market within the province and the whole of South Korea: Moran Market. They also actively distribute KAPES materials through their regional offices.

Similarly, Jungang-gu—home to KAPES' Adoption and Education Center—has been KAPES' strongest district-level partner. Haesun Park works closely with the Seoul district's animal welfare appointee, Hyun-Jeong Jung. A former veterinarian, Ms. Jung understands on a personal and professional level the great need for public education around pet ownership, so she was eager to co-organize a symposium with KAPES and the Veterinarian Association of Jungang-gu.



A mother and her child study a KAPES pamphlet at an animal education seminar.



Haesun leads a talk at a regionally-sponsored education seminar.

In each of her presentations at these regional seminars, Haesun Park emphasized the need for widespread spaying and neutering, and discussed ways to minimize pet abandonment and neglect. She also urged government officials to study the causes of pet abandonment, in order to better equip animal protection agencies. Her presentations met warm applause and interested questions from regional officials and the public, a clear indication of the changing climate for animal welfare in South Korea.

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