

International Aid for Korean Animals

Winter 2008 Newsletter

Towards Our Goal

Happy holidays! As the year draws to a close, I would like to say thank you to everyone who has supported our cause in some way. Your contributions have helped sustain our very small organization, and in turn have helped us effect momentous changes in Korean society.

This year has been a tremendous one for animals in Korea. Things started off on January 1st with the enactment of the revamped Animal Protection Law, which we had lobbied arduously for. A mere 20 days later, we saw our most important project to date, KAPES, receive an official seal of approval from the Korean government. Throughout the year, we have fought hard against a few dog meat legalization attempts, all of which have been defeated.

The biggest development of this year, however, has been the rapid growth of KAPES, and the enormous efforts put in by its director, Haesun Park. Haesun has worked non-stop to enforce, educate, and inform on behalf of dogs and cats in Korea. She has represented KAPES at countless festivals, fairs, and events, and even put on a few of her own. She has created and distributed innumerable pamphlets and other educational materials, and has amassed a loyal volunteer base in Seoul. Perhaps most significant is her work behind the scenes; Haesun has been instrumental in helping defeat the Seoul City legalization attempts and in working with the Ministry of Agriculture. On top of all this, Haesun still finds the time to help orchestrate adoptions and rescue individual animals. Her work is priceless and I am proud to have her as director of KAPES.

However, as 2008 ends, it is hard to ignore that our biggest ambition of the year will have to be a New Year's resolution. Our Seoul-based Adoption and Education Center, which we have been fundraising for throughout 2008, is still our primary goal for 2009. From our Adoption Center, Haesun and KAPES will have a platform to do so much more in Korea—showcase adoptable dogs and cats, devise educational campaigns, and fundamentally change the way the youngest generation in Korea thinks about animal welfare. For the holiday season, I ask you to please keep our organization in mind for your gift-giving. IAKA and KAPES are still very small organizations, and every donation brings us one step closer to realizing the dream of one of Seoul's first adoption centers.

Thank you again for all your support, and have a joyous holiday season!

Kyenan Kum, IAKA Founder

P.S., I would like to inform you that my companion, inspiration, and family member for 17 years, Dooboo, passed away on February 25, 2008. Before Dooboo, I was not a "cat person," but he changed all that. He was the first cat I ever adopted, not to mention the first I ever rescued; his presence in my life galvanized me to work even harder at my animal protection work. I rescued him in 1991 from a corner store in Seoul, where he was tied up in the sun, dehydrated, and neglected. He was fed only scrap foods like rice and miso soup with tofu. I discovered how much he liked tofu (hence the name: Dooboo is Korean for "tofu") when I cooked it around him for the first time. After tasting real cat food Dooboo never looked back, and I tried renaming him "Youngdori," or, "Smart Boy." However, the name seemed to have stuck. Dooboo would answer to no other name. My connection with Dooboo was unlike any other I have had with any other cat. It was strong and immediate, and lasted for 17 years. As any pet owner knows, such a connection is difficult to

part with. Perhaps there is no need to. Dooboo's memory will stay with me forever.



Self-portrait with my Animal Family by Kyenan Kum.

Dooboo is pictured on the far right. Sooni, who passed away in February, is on the left. Titi, middle, is three years old, alive, and very active, as is Bully the rescued pigeon, top right.

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“You Are Eating Your Own Pet!”

Korean network TV Station broadcasts exposé on pet dogs in the markets

For many it came as a shock. “You are eating your own pet!” the anchorman announced on Korean network television July 11, 2008. However, to those following IAKA’s newsletters (see “A Commodity of Cruelty,” in our Summer 2008 issue), it should come as no surprise that innocent pet dogs are ending up in the dog meat markets, captured and slaughtered inhumanely by cruel profiteers.

The exposé began with a brief background on the dog meat business—the lucrative industry that slaughters 2 million dogs each year and supplies them to restaurants that serve “boshintang,” or, dog meat stew. Recently, however, reports had been flooding in to the station that many pet dogs had been spotted at the markets. When a disgruntled employee at a street market finally contacted the station, investigative reporters were sent to the scene. A plethora



Top: A screen capture of a pet dog being captured for the dog markets. Bottom: Pet dogs in cages awaiting their fate.

of dog species were found in cages at the markets: Shiitsu, Maltese, Cocker-Spaniel, and mixed-breed small dogs, among others, were mentioned in the report.

The smaller dogs were only sometimes preferred over the larger “yellow” dogs, according to the report, and were cooked in pressure cookers, much like cats are prepared in Korea. Shots of the cookers and of the incredible cruelty that occurs at the markets were montaged over the report. The report ended with a clear warning: many of these dogs are sick, on antibiotics, and are a very real public health risk, even for those who do not consume dog meat.

IAKA and KAPES are pleased to see issues we have been publicizing finally gain traction in the mainstream Korean media. However, publicity is not enough. KAPES has been working overtime to implement an educational campaign to reinforce the ideas of compassion and animal protection in the minds of Korean youth. With a strong educational campaign, a culture of adoption, and an Adoption center as a tangible link to these ideas, we will soon see far fewer pet dogs in the markets.

‡

In the Business of Illness

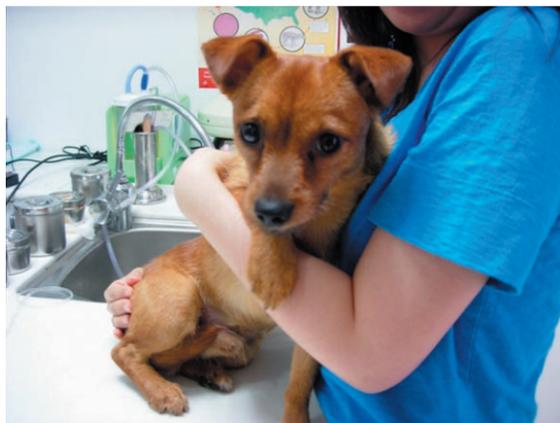
Pet stores in Korea are in dismal shape—action, education, and enforcement are essential.

In the West, pet stores sometimes receive a bad rap. Corporate chains such as Petco have been criticized for their treatment of birds and mice, while smaller pet stores occasionally run into legal trouble for sanitation issues and animal cruelty. However, as one animal lover found out, in Korea some pet shops are an entirely different story.

“I am shocked to see that there are no laws being enforced at these pet shops,” said Korean resident Dorothy Cruz in an email sent to IAKA. “These shops can sell sick animals at high prices to people who want to love their pet, with no remorse or penalty for their actions. People unaware of this take their pet home just to lose them in a matter of a week.” Mrs. Cruz was a victim of one of these pet shops, as she detailed in her letter (available at <http://www.koreananimals.org/info/news/businessillness.htm>).

Unfortunately, this case is not an isolated one. Pet stores in Korea often profit off the sale of sick animals, and a strong adoption alternative does not exist. Under Korea’s new Animal Protection law, pet stores are now under stricter animal cruelty guidelines, but enforcement is still slim.

IAKA is working to change situations like these. Representatives of KAPES are currently involved in an educational campaign in Seoul to help raise awareness of the new Animal Protection Law among law enforcement officers. When local authorities are aware of the new laws, crackdowns on pet stores like this one are much more effective. The long-term goal of IAKA and KAPES, the construction of a new Adoption and Education Center in Seoul, will be



the biggest boon to pet owners. With a robust animal adoption and education community in Seoul and a whole new generation of animal lovers throughout Korea, we hope to see the end of pet shops (and other industries) that traffic in cruelty. ‡

KAPES Pet Education Class



Clockwise from upper left: KAPES director Haesun Park with a friendly dog at the KAPES Pet Education class (co-sponsored by the Korea Pet Business Association), animal lovers learn how to take care of their pets, and an announcer expounds upon the finer points of dog walking. ‡



Scenes From the KAPES Booth
From top to bottom: Young Korean animal lovers fill out a pet care questionnaire; a Ministry of Agriculture spokesperson elaborates on dog and cat adoption, and teenage animal lovers sign up to volunteer for KAPES.



KAPES Animal Protection Festival

KAPES director Haesun Park’s busy schedule promoting the new law

Just when it seems Haesun Park and her KAPES staff should be slowing down, in comes a barrage of news from our Korea branch. While it would be very difficult to report on all that KAPES does, their presence at



Young Korean animal lovers receive KAPES pet care guides

festivals such as the October Animal Protection festival in Yangjaedong Park (“People’s Park”) is an example of some of their most high-profile educational work. The emphasis of this festival was on animal protection and public participation, which fits quite well with

KAPES’ organizational aims. Funded and produced by the Ministry of Agriculture, KAPES ended up playing a major role in organizing the festivities.

Around 300 children participated in the festival, which included a large KAPES booth and display. Pets were encouraged and veterinarians and other animal professionals were on hand to deliver speeches and meet animals and their owners. KAPES sponsored a postcard contest, which challenged children to design an animal protection-themed card—each had educational materials on the back side. A great deal of effort went into making the festival enjoyable for kids. “I did a lot of research for the festival, and I think everyone ended up having fun,” said Haesun. “The contest in particular was very successful with the kids.” ‡



KAPES Success Stories: Bori and Seba

While our representatives in KAPES are mostly busy setting up their educational campaigns, running booths at animal protection events, and planning for our Adoption and Education center, they can't help being big-hearted animal protectionists first and foremost. Here at IAKA we often receive adoption success stories from our KAPES representatives—here are the two most recent.

Bori the cat was once a neglected stray kitten, one of the many on the streets of Seoul. Since many cats in Korea are not spayed or neutered, many young kittens end up this way. Roaming the streets dehydrated and hungry, Bori was fortunate to be discovered by two sisters, who took them in to their small apartment and tried to care for him.

Unsure of how to care for Bori (who was suffering from liver illnesses brought on by dehydration) and unable to pay for treatment and neutering, the sisters called KAPES, who directed them to our offices in Seoul. There, KAPES helped nurse Bori back to health. "It wasn't easy because he was a very sick cat," said Haesun Park, director of KAPES. "But with all the attention, and thanks to our supporters, we were able to save him."

The sisters, of course, were overjoyed. One signed up with KAPES and is now a volunteer. When Bori was lost one day, KAPES helped to construct an enclosure at his house in order to keep him off Seoul's busy streets. KAPES hopes to orchestrate many more happy endings just like this one.

Seba's story, while perhaps not as dramatic, is just as important. Seba, a mixed-breed stray dog, was a prime target for dog meat dealers. Born on an army base, Seba watched as her family was caught by these profit-seekers one by one. Seba,

however, escaped. Rescued by a compassionate schoolteacher (who happened to be a KAPES volunteer and an owner of three dogs) and her daughter, Seba now lives without fear of the butcher's block.

While the compassion of our KAPES volunteers seems limitless, the reality is that our resources in Korea are not, and there are only so many volunteers. With a proper adoption center, IAKA and KAPES will be able to showcase dogs for adoption. Among other things, this will increase numbers of pet owners, decrease the number of strays, and help more dogs and cats end up with compassionate owners, like Bori and Seba. †



Our latest rescue, Seba, with her happy human companion.

The Return of the IAKA E-Newsletter

Up until recently, IAKA had discontinued our e-newsletter due to some changes in staffing. However, we're pleased to announce that our e-newsletter is set to be released bi-monthly from here on out.

Help us save paper and sign up for the e-newsletter online! Visit <http://www.koreananimals.org/> and enter your email address in the lower left hand corner. Thanks for all your support, and happy holidays!

Help Support IAKA/KAPES - Make a Donation Today!

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