

CARA Philippines Newsletter

January 2009

2008 was a year for animal welfare

Animal lovers made history in 2008 as numerous laws and programs were implemented in the name of animal welfare. Here are just some of the past year's most memorable moments:



factories. Meanwhile, animal skin irritation testing and the trade of cat and dog fur were banned in Europe.

In the United States, California passed Proposition 2. Effective in 2015, the law regulates the welfare of farm animals, creating provisions for better housing in farms and

Globally, the Humane Society launched Spay Day International, held on the last Tuesday of

February, to promote spaying and neutering.

In the Philippines, the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) provided training in shelter management and animal care and handling for animal workers and volunteers in a three-day workshop sponsored by the Animal Welfare Coalition (AWC). Similar programs were held in China and Central America.

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The recession's hidden victims: Owners cut back on pet care, others give up pets

As world markets tumble and foreclosure and unemployment are at a high, pets and their owners in America are feeling the heat.

According to a poll by the Associated Press and Petside.com, 1 in 7 pet owners say they have reduced their spending during the past year. More than a quarter of this number have seriously considered giving up their pets. In the US, the average annual cost of pet care is \$1,000 for a cat and \$1,400 for a dog.

One young woman in New York learned that her 15-year-old cat needed expensive treatment and \$65 worth of medication monthly within days of losing her job. Burdened by financial constraints, she made the heart-wrenching decision to have him euthanized. Her story is one of the many of pet owners being hit hard by the recession.

MSNBC reports that pet owners are skipping check-ups and preventative medication to ease up on strained finances. *(continued on page 2)*

IN 2008 CARA...

Altered 1,097 cats and 50 dogs

Adopted out 26 cats and 3 dogs

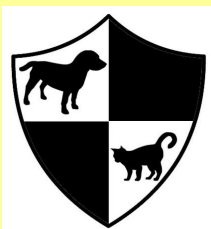
Americans want a mixed breed for the Obamas

According to a poll by the Associated Press and Petside.com, 33% of American pet owners prefer a mutt for the Obamas. Only 23% preferred a purebred, while majority (38%) did not care about the breed. In addition, more than half of pet owners felt it was important for the dog to come from a shelter.

However, the Obamas have narrowed their choices to a Portuguese water dog (left) and a "labradoodle" (right), a cross between a Labrador Retriever and a Standard Poodle. (Labradoodles have been controversial due to their popularity as a "designer dog".) Although President-elect Barack Obama expressed interest in a shelter dog, he admitted that his daughter Malia's allergies would make getting one difficult as, according to him, most rescues are "mutts like me". He also joked that



finding a dog has been tougher than finding a new Commerce Secretary.



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The recession's hidden victims (continued from p. 1)

Veterinarians fear owners who do this raise their pets' risks for diseases like heartworm and degenerative ailments in older animals.

Other owners are switching to cheaper brands of pet food and are resorting to grooming at home or digging through discount bins for new toys.

Worst of all, shelters are reporting an influx of animals as many can no longer afford to care for their pets. One reported as many as 275 animals surrendered in the month of November last year simply due to financial constraints.

But others who are struggling have decided to cut back on spending on themselves instead of on their pets. A dog breeder in New Jersey, for example, gave up manicures and has been using only one vehicle to get around so that she wouldn't have to cut back on her pet care budget. She admits, "The dogs are better cared for than I am."

References:

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/27665004/>

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/28337845/>

Candy and Sophie

by Nikki Lim

Many of our native dogs are far from being born with silver spoons. Unlike their purebred cousins, most native dogs, or “askals” as they are more commonly known, live a life of desperate means. Dodging curses and kicks from heartless, ignorant humans, they make their way through car-filled streets, rummaging through filth and garbage for a little sustenance (if you could call it that).

Candy and Sophie were two such puppies rescued by CARA. They had a rough start. But thanks to a growing awareness of kindness and compassion to animals, they and other lucky native dogs are getting a new lease on life.

Actually, native dogs make amazing pets. They’re bright, sturdy, and some are possibly even better



adapted to coexistence with humans than a lot of purebreds bought from a pet store. Michael Tan, who wrote a piece for the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, suggests that native dogs may be brighter and stronger than some pedigree dogs. As the name implies, “purebred” simply means that dogs were inbred to obtain certain desired characteristics,

increasing chances of many genetically related problems. Mixed breeds, on the other hand, are sturdier, possessing greater genetic diversity and a higher



“Choosing to adopt not only saves lives, but it also gives other stray animals the opportunity to be rescued.”

resistance to certain diseases. He recounts: “I’ve lost count of the number of slum dogs I see with a distinctive twitching that tells me they’re survivors of distemper, a disease that almost always kills a purebred pup.” Askals were even said to be better adapted to human populations. It is suggested that the trait to decipher the entire range of their human neighbors may have perpetuated in these dogs’ genes, thus making them well-attuned to read human emotions.

All dogs, however, make wonderful companions, and whatever the type, it is best that you are prepared to share a considerable part of your life (8-18 years) and remain committed to the well-being of your pet. In return, a friend for life.

Adoption is the loving option. Those who consider themselves animal lovers know that no matter

how “reputable” your local pet store appears, chances are those adorable puppies and kittens staring at you through their cages have come from backyard breeders who pay no mind to genetics and breeding, sacrificing temperament and health. Even worse, they may have come from puppy mills.

Choosing to adopt not only saves lives, but it also gives other stray animals the opportunity to be rescued. The story of

Candy and Sophie has a happy ending. Each possessing unique personalities, they

have been re-homed through a



selection process that resembles “match-making” to ensure that the puppy and the new owner are a good match. Candy is having the time of her life with a nice family that loves her immensely in Alabang. Sophie, on the other hand, has found her forever parents in a childless couple in Cainta, Rizal.

Unfortunately, many other animals remain homeless and live on the streets, so if you’re looking for a companion, please consider adopting.