



INTERNATIONAL AID *for* KOREAN ANIMALS



WINTER 2023 NEWSLETTER

Dear IAKA Supporters,

2023 has continued to be another year full of changes and challenges for many of us - and I'd like to thank each of you for your continued support of our mission.

Dog farming in Korea still exists in a legal "gray area" but we continue to see an increasing social push from many Koreans to explicitly ban dog slaughter and consumption. The rate of consumption continues to decline, especially among the younger generations. Additionally, the First Lady Kim Keon Hee, reportedly condemned the practice in a closed-door luncheon with animal activists. Unfortunately Korea is still the only country with industrial-scale farming of dogs.

Social and bureaucratic changes are most often slow and incremental, but it is important to take measure of them as they occur. Seven government offices released a statement declaring the launch of a task force comprised of government officials, civilian experts, and representatives from related organizations to explore the possibility of banning dog meat altogether. Although their mission statement did not explicitly include a path toward total elimination of the practice (which was met with pushback from dog farmers and animal activists alike) it is important to note this change in the government's attitude. Even a few years ago this task force would have seemed unimaginable.

As for IAKA, we have continued our support of animal rescue organizations operating in Korea, specifically Hug Me Shelter and Rebel Rescue whom you'll remember from our last newsletter. We will dedicate the rest of this newsletter to providing you with updates on their operations, struggles, and successes so you can see the lives (both animal and human) that your support and generosity has affected for the better. We continue to believe that we can be of the most use supporting these on-the-ground organizations operating in Korea.

Thank you all for your support, generosity, and dedication to the lives of Korean animals.

With gratitude and warmest holiday wishes for you and your loved ones,

Kyenan Kum
IAKA Founder

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IAKA has been supporting the work of Mr. Sungguen Rha and his wife Shizuka Nakahira, and Hug Me Shelter for a few years now. This last year Hug Me attempted to register as a non-profit organization with the Korean government. They were denied because they were considered too small of an operation - they could only house 12 dogs at a time.

After several months of searching, Hug Me Shelter secured a new location with more space and a large lot. They were able to make the security deposit thanks to an incredibly generous \$30,000 Loan from a supporter. The renovations and monthly operational expenses will be very costly and they have begun fundraising to support those efforts. The new space will allow them to house many more animals and facilitate more adoptions and vet operations than before.

Shelter statistics for 2022-2023

34

Dogs
Rescued

21

Dogs Spay/
Neutered

20

Dogs
Adopted

Thanks to your generosity, IAKA has been providing financial support for spay/neuter operations and other medical expenses. With the new location secured and under renovation, they have reapplied for non-profit status and their application is currently pending.

In the meantime, Hug Me Shelter continues to rescue dogs from farms, local government shelters, and animal hoarders in order to facilitate their rehabilitation and adoption.



In front: Hug Me Shelter Directors,
Rha Sungguen and his wife Shizuka Nakahira.



Meeting room at the new shelter



The new, larger shelter



The shelter lot, under construction

Lotte in Netherlands

Robert, an expatriate of the Netherlands, and his Korean-born wife, Boram, visited Hug Me Shelter two years ago. They adopted Saburo, a white-colored dog rescued from a junkyard hoarder. They moved back to the Netherlands and Saburo went with them.

In April of this year, while visiting Mrs. Boram's family, they went with Mr. Rha Sungguen to visit the same junkyard where Saburo was rescued from. There were two dogs there, now named Lotte and Candy, tied to rusted oil drums. They looked very similar to Saburo and, despite their condition, the dogs were incredibly playful and friendly.

They had to return home to the Netherlands the next day but they expressed interest in adopting Lotte to Mr. Rha. It took a few months but Hug Me Shelter was able to secure both Lotte and Candy from the junkyard. They got the proper food, care, and training. In June of this year Lotte went to his forever home with Robert, Boram, and Saburo. Candy is currently in a foster home awaiting her adoption as well.



Lotte in the junk yard



Candy in the junk yard



Robert & Boram playing with Lotte & Candy



Robert with Lotte & Candy



Lotte getting ready for his flight



Lotte with Robert in Netherland



Lotte and Saburo in Netherland



Lotte and Saburo resting together

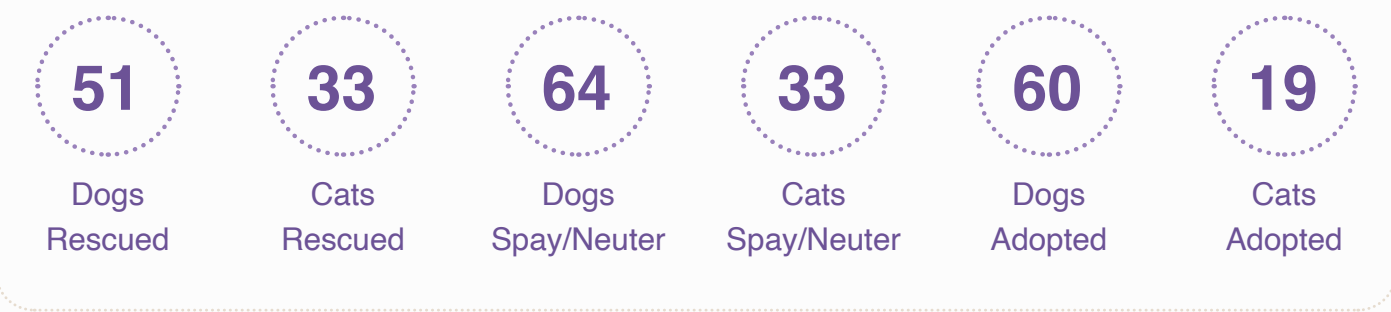
Rebel Rescue South Korea

This year, Rebel Rescue saw a large increase in animal rescue intakes. The winter of 2022-2023 was particularly cold and harsh in Korea. Volunteers there have been hard at work every day ensuring all the animals are clean, warm, fed, and have fresh water that isn't frozen. Another hard winter is expected this year and they've already begun preparing.

This coming year, Rebel Rescue intends to move to a new location (like Hug Me Shelter) with more facilities and more space. That way they can increase the number of dogs and cats that they are able to take in and care for. These moves are always massive endeavors, and require a lot of work from volunteers and financing from supporters.

Rebel Rescue has also partnered with Dan from Trusted Companion Dog Training and Alisha from Arc K-9 Training to provide increased socialization and training for the dogs at the shelter. They are not only working with the dogs but are also training the Rebel Rescue staff and volunteers to learn better handling and recognizing dog body language. This socialization, training, and group play will greatly increase the chances for more of the dogs to get adopted, as many of them come to shelters unsocialized or having suffered serious trauma and abuse.

Shelter statistics for 2022-2023



Alisha in particular has been a blessing to Rebel Rescue this year. She has worked with dogs at the shelter, boarded and trained some of the dogs in her own home, and has even begun taking some of the dogs for special training at the American Red Cross on the US Military base.

Attached are some photos and videos of the dogs’ training and socialization. Alisha, the trainer from Arc K9 Training in the videos, has been a blessing to us this year. She has been able to work with the dogs at the shelter, board and train some of the dogs at her home, and start training them at the American Red Cross on the military post.



Dan from Trusted Companion Dog Training is also in a couple of the pictures and has been working with us to get things more organized, cleaned up, and assisting with group play time, enrichment, grooming some of the more nervous dogs, and proper socialization. He also will start providing training for our volunteer team to learn about dog body language and proper handling.



Dan from Trusted Companion
Dog Training

River

River was found by a team of Rebel Rescue volunteers who were out walking some of the dogs in the shelter. He had a bad case of mites and his fur and skin were a mess. He also tested positive for heartworms and needs constant treatment for them. It took several months but his health and skin improved greatly. He stayed with a foster home during his recovery and, once he was able, was quickly adopted by one of Rebel Rescue's volunteers that had recently lost her senior dog. River has helped her deal with the grief of losing her long-time companion and together they've found a new lease on life.



River, shortly after rescue, malnourished
and with mites



River in recovery



River getting weighed at the vet



After the recovery

Tofu

Tofu was brought to Rebel Rescue by a long-time supporter and donor. She found Tofu stuck in a muddy drainage tunnel near her home in Pyeongtaek and both her and her husband climbed into the muck to rescue him. They cleaned Tofu up as best as they could and brought him to Rebel Rescue a few days later. Despite the conditions he was found in, he was never anything but a wonderful, happy pup. After some time in the shelter, Rebel Rescue was contacted by a family in the United states that wanted to adopt him. Tofu was flown to Texas for a brief foster and some additional care before moving in with his new family and forever home in Nashville, where he is happily living his best life.



the muddy storm drain Tofu was rescued from (you can see him way in the back right)



A happy Tofu



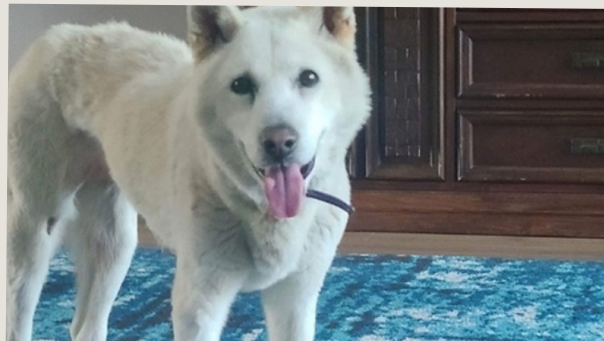
Tofu in his new home in Nashville

Jinsoon

Jinsoon is a senior Jindo Dog estimated to be 11-12 years old. Her rescue was arranged by an independent animal rescuer in Korea. Jinsoon had to have surgery for an enormous mass removed from her abdomen and the rescuer contacted Rebel Rescue to help find her a foster home to recover in after surgery. One of Rebel Rescue's volunteers decided to foster Jinsoon in her own home. The hope was that she would be given the chance to recover before being adopted out, but unfortunately Jinsoon was recently diagnosed with advanced lung cancer. She will remain with the volunteer and under Rebel Rescue's care as a hospice foster. Everyone at Rebel Rescue has fallen in love with Jinsoon's pleasant demeanor and quiet strength. They are committed to ensuring that her final days are filled to the brim with love and comfort.



Jinsoon with tumor



Jinsoon at the foster home after surgery

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