

International Aid for Korean Animals

Summer 2008 Newsletter



A New Day for Dogs and Cats

IAKA and KAPES work to enforce the new Korean Animal Protection Law

For Korea and for IAKA, this is a time of immense change. On January 1, 2008, the new Animal Protection Law which we had worked so hard to pass went into effect, right around the time of the hard-won registration of our sister organization, KAPES. The law will ultimately have an enormous impact on the lives of dogs and cats in Korea, but currently we are seeing only the beginnings of a very complex process of cultural transformation. Making sure the law is understood and enforced has become a major priority for IAKA and KAPES.

Enforcement of the new Animal Protection Law is primarily a matter of education. Recently the Minister of Forests and Agriculture in Korea published 150,000 brochures detailing the provisions of the law, and distributed them to governmental agencies and various animal-related organizations around the country. However, while these initial steps are useful, the concept of legal enforcement of the humane treatment of animals is still very much in an embryonic stage in Korea. The first-ever Animal Protection Law (a skeletal, incomplete document, and un-enforced) was passed less than two decades ago, in 1991. Haesun Park, co-founder and director of KAPES, has been delivering public lectures and presentations to police departments and local officials in her hometown of Seoul. Although the law does not clearly define the legality of dog and cat meat consumption, if enforced properly it will quickly lead to a reduction in the size and popularity of dog and cat meat

markets.

Meanwhile, we are continuing to plan for our Seoul Adoption and Education Center. The Center will help alleviate the problems Korea currently faces in regards to stray animals, particularly dogs and cats. Many strays face a tragic end: cramped into the horrific wire cages of the meat markets, doomed to a painful life and a brutal death. Individual animal lovers in Korea



Haesun Park (L) meets with SAA (Save Abandoned Animals) Director in Hong Kong, Tori Chan (C)

have long been aware of this and have worked their hardest to shelter strays. Unfortunately, these makeshift shelters often end up in deplorable conditions because of a lack of experience, no knowledge of good animal shelter policies, and insufficient funds. Meanwhile, the new Animal Protection Law requires the government to take on the responsibility of sheltering animals. The Gyeonggi province is the first to comply with the new

requirements, allocating \$3 million to the construction of their very first shelter. However, this is just the first of Korea's fifteen provinces and "special cities" to comply. Many other provincial governments have been attempting to contract the work to registered shelters and licensed veterinarians, whose conditions are also often inadequate. It is an important part of our work to help guide, assist, and improve these shelters. Without them, many dogs and cats would end up in the meat markets.

Animal shelters alone are not enough, of course. As the pet population of Korea booms, the pet owner population must be informed on how to properly care for their animals. A reduction in strays will also occur when pet owners learn to adopt animals rather than buy them from pet stores (many of which are also in poor conditions). The problem of pet abandonment must also be addressed.

Though change is often a complex, difficult, and time-consuming process, we are starting to see the very tangible results of our work in Korea. With your help, our efforts will continue until all animals in Korea face a bright, humane future.

Thank you again for your support!

Sincerely,

Kyenan Kum, Founder, IAKA



IAKA ♦ PO Box 20600 ♦ Oakland, CA 94620 ♦ USA
IAKA@KOREANANIMALS.ORG ♦ WWW.KOREANANIMALS.ORG
Tel/Fax: 510-271-6795

A Commodity of Cruelty

Pet dog populations are on the rise in the dog markets

DURING THE YEARS OF 1988-2005, I visited the dog markets many times, to investigate, raise awareness, and to expose the cruelties of the markets to the worldwide media. When I first arrived in the 80s, I would always see what were usually sold for slaughter: the gentle, large yellow mixed-breed dogs preferred by dog-eaters in Korea. However, as the years went by, I was shocked to discover ever-increasing numbers of small purebred and mixed breed dogs locked up there, dogs that would normally be marketed as pets! The fact that these pet dogs, usually cherished and treated with kindness, should end up in the meat markets is just another reminder of the cruelty and sadness the dog meat industry traffics in.

About 20% of all dogs in the meat markets these days are not farm-raised: how they respond to humans is indicative of their upbringing. The farm-raised dogs have been brought up in atrocious conditions and great suffering, often already infected with various transmittable diseases by the time they would arrive at market. They would

not bark when I would draw near, and would barely express themselves in any way. The pet dogs, by contrast, are quite



that we have seen the evidence that their abandoned pets end up here. We must also continue our work to ultimately shut down the Korean dog and cat meat markets, through legislation and education, so that no dog need suffer these abuses. †

LEFT: Increasing numbers of smaller pet breeds are being trapped by dog meat dealers and sold at the markets.

BELOW: Large yellow dogs typical of the Korean meat markets

animated. They are generally smaller dogs because of the state of Korean cities, which are dense, compact, and filled with high-rise apartments. City-dwellers do not generally adopt the larger dogs, which require more exercise and space.

The disturbing trend of pet dogs in the meat markets has been on the rise in tragic parallel with the increase in popularity of pet dogs. It is our goal to imbue pet owners with a greater sense of responsibility, now



Nurungi’s Story

CHANGE IS DIFFICULT TO come by. As anyone who has tried to break a bad habit can tell you, it is tough to change your life, your attitudes, or even the way you eat. Societal change comes even more slowly. This is why IAKA and KAPES have chosen to focus on educating Korea’s youngest citizens, who have been raised in a more animal-friendly environment than the war-torn early 20th Century of their parents’ generation. Dog and cat meat consumption in particular is a remnant of this era, as the actions of young animal lovers like Sunhee Cho will suggest.

Sunhee Cho (whose name has been changed) is a young married woman from Gongju City, Choongchung Province. Like many her age, she is interested in the welfare of dogs and cats. Sunhee first met Nurungi (which



means “yellow dog” in Korean) when she was a puppy. Nurungi was being raised at her father in law’s to be eaten when she grew to be one year in age. According to myths in some parts of Korea, raising the dog for one year and then consuming it is good luck—the plan was to throw a party to celebrate the slaughtering and eating of Nurungi.

After many sleepless nights, Sunhee decided that something had to be done to protect the dog she had loved since puppyhood. On the eve of her father in law’s party, Sunhee quietly took Nurungi to an

IAKA/KAPES supported shelter in Daejeon (also mentioned in this newsletter) run by Ms. Park.

At the shelter, Ms. Park planned to try to adopt Nurungi after ensuring her health and rehabilitating her if necessary. Unfortunately, Nurungi was diagnosed with the late stages of a heartworm infection (another issue IAKA and KAPES are working to educate pet owners about). Though she would later fall victim to her disease, Nurungi remains special to us as a reminder of one young person’s love for animals—and the future of dogs and cats in Korea under the stewardship of people like her. †



Nurungi at home after her dramatic rescue.

KAPES on the Move

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

IF A POPULACE REMAINS unaware of and indifferent to a law that is only nominally enforced, even the strictest measures become useless. One of the many challenging tasks facing IAKA/KAPES is creating awareness about the new Animal Protection Law and making sure it is enforced. For this reason KAPES director Haesun Park has been extremely busy publicizing the legislation, educating the Seoul populace, and making sure the laws are obeyed and understood. It is KAPES’ goal to tap into the governmental resources available for such activities, but this time-consuming work is still largely dependent upon foreign support and a growing network of donors and volunteers.

Park’s first stop was at the Sungdong-Gu Police Department in Seoul, on May 21, 2008. Park delivered a lecture based around the Animal Protection Law, outlining the responsibilities the Seoul police have under the law, and suggesting ways the law would best be enforced. Five different brochures were distributed in quantities of 200 each: one on cat care, dog care, stray management, the benefits on spaying/neutering, and a KAPES introductory brochure. These brochures will be circulated around the department and distributed throughout the district. The Sungdong-Gu Police Department also is host to a community center for young persons, which sponsors children’s activities, field trips, classes, etc. KAPES will be working with centers of this kind to help promote the new law as well.

Park traveled the same day to Choongnam University, where she participated in a fundraiser for a shelter in Daejeon (which



The KAPES exhibit at Choongnam University educates young animal lovers.

she had visited a week before). The “Pet Love Festival,” sponsored by the veterinary department of the university, was a success. The event attracted the attention of many young adult animal lovers and drew attention to issues like adoption, spay/neuter, and shelters in need. The following day, Park visited the Ministry of Agriculture, which had invited KAPES and other Korean animal protection organizations to participate in the preparation of TV advertisements and programs on the revised Animal Protection Law.

Park’s busy schedule, hectic though it may seem, is just the beginning. She has been making international visits as well, to learn from the example of other rescue centers (such as the SAA center, pictured on our front page), and she shows no signs of slowing down her KAPES publicity drive. †

The 2008 Seoul Legalization Attempt

The legal status of dog and cat consumption in Korea, and what you can do to help.

By Kyenan Kum

Although Seoul’s city government recently attempted to lobby the federal government to legalize it within the city, the consumption of dog and cats still has not been legalized in Korea (or in Seoul itself). The legalization of dog meat can only happen if such a proposal is prepared by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF), which is responsible for enforcing laws regarding livestock animals, and approved by the National Assembly. As far as we know, MAF and the present government have no intention to legalize dog meat. In 2001, a congressman tried very hard to classify dog as a legal livestock meat but failed, due to strong protests from both inside Korea and worldwide. In 2004, the President (Roh at the time), and the dog meat dealers (through the Ministry of the Office for Government Policy Coordination) sought legalization. Again they failed because of worldwide protest and a reluctant MAF. In the meantime, IAKA and other animal groups in Korea worked with MAF drafting the new revised and improved Animal Protection law, updating the original one passed in 1991. This new law was passed by the National Assembly in January 2007 and went into effect in January, 2008. For this occasion, MAF published 150,000 printed information brochures on the new and improved Animal Protection law, with guidelines to inform the many related government department and agencies and non government agencies. I am happy about this, but it will be very difficult to enforce the law in a way that will stop the eating of dog meat. Eating dog meat is a very complex issue in Korea because it is a multi-billion dollar industry and many poor farmers are involved. It will take time and we are trying very hard to educate young people. Ultimately, if there is no demand, there will be no supply.

What you can do to help is to directly contact the Seoul City Hall and voice your concern. Enclosed is a postcard addressed to the Seoul mayor. Please use the international postcard rate (example: US to Korea is currently \$.94) and send your postcard to:

Seoul City Hall
Attn: Seoul City Mayor, Oh, See-hoon
31 Taepyungro-1-GA
Jung-Gu
Seoul 100-101, KOREA

KAPES at the Second Seoul International Pet Expo

AFTER THE PUBLIC UNVEILING OF KAPES AT Seoul's first International Pet Expo on December 15th and 16th, it seemed the exposure there couldn't be topped: over 8,000 brochures were distributed, and tens of thousands of people visited the KAPES exhibit. It was a successful day for IAKA's sister organization, and the decision was easy to return for Seoul's second-ever International Pet Expo (held April 25-27). However, KAPES' first showing was easily outdone by its second (which was sponsored by IAKA, KOPA, Pet Love, Nutra Choice, and Siji Animal Hospital): over 10,500 brochures were distributed this time around, and the positive response confirms KAPES as an important animal protection organization in Korea.

That KAPES is beginning to catch on is no surprise. Our Korea-based organization's message of education, adoption, and prevention of animal cruelty comes just as the South Korean government has begun their first steps towards enforcing the 2008 Animal Protection law. At the International Pet Expo, KAPES helped to distribute the Ministry of Agriculture's new brochure detailing the most important parts of the new law.



This brochure, colorfully decorated with cartoon animals and containing helpful pet owning tips, represents the first



time the Korean government has acted directly on behalf of animal protection. 150,000 of these brochures were printed, in all. KAPES has also been active in other ways recently, from university visits to promotional activities to seeking out a new building for the new Adoption and Education center. The task of instilling good pet-owning habits, compassion, and respect for the rights of animals into a populace is daunting, but we believe it is necessary. A vicious cycle is currently occurring in Korea: a lack of knowledge of and compassion for dogs and cats leads to more abandoned animals, which then end up in the meat markets. When dogs and cats are treated as livestock, meaningful connections with humans become even rarer, which leads to poor treatment of animals of all species. Together, IAKA and KAPES are working to reverse this process. ‡



Clockwise from the top: the text of Korea's new Animal Protection Law as distributed by KAPES, the Ministry of Agriculture's new brochure, and Korean pet expo attendees viewing the KAPES exhibit.

Help us spread the word!

Enclosed in this newsletter is IAKA's newest brochure, detailing our mission with KAPES and our goals for Korea. Please feel free to distribute this to a friend or family member who might be interested in our work—IAKA is a very small organization and direct mail campaigns are not financially feasible for us. Thank you!

Help Support IAKA/KAPES - Make a Donation Today!

I would like to make a tax-deductible contribution:

- ☐ 25 ☐ 50 ☐ 100
☐ 500 ☐ 1000 ☐ Other amount _____
☐ US\$ ☐ UK£ ☐ Other currency * _____

* All currencies accepted.

Mailing Information:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State/Zip _____

☐ I do not require a receipt or acknowledgement

IAKA is a registered 501(c)(3) foundation in the U.S.
 IAKA UK is a registered charity in the UK #1115187

Pay By Credit Card:

Please charge my gift to my:

☐ VISA ☐ Mastercard ☐ American Express

Card # _____

Exp (MM/YY) _____ Signature _____

Please mail to:

IAKA, PO Box 20600
 Oakland, CA 94620

Please make your donation payable to

International Aid for
 Korean Animals
 (IAKA)

