



# AZIL Dog shelter news MAY 2014

[www.azilkotor.org](http://www.azilkotor.org)

GIVE A DOG A CHANCE – FIND A FRIEND FOR LIFE

## Socialising Dogs/Losing a Friend

What can I say? Michelle and David and I had just established a productive routine of regular visits when it was so tragically interrupted by David's sudden and unexpected death in March. David was one of our most stalwart, generous, and kindest benefactors, who really saw into the hearts and minds of the dogs at the shelter and gave freely of his time and energy to walk and socialize with the dogs. His favorite boy FLASH misses him dearly, as do we all. I cannot imagine the grief that Michelle is dealing with, and am sure that you all join me and all the shelter staff in sending Michelle our love and support in this most difficult of times.

I know that David would want us all to carry on with the work that he helped to start, so if any of you are able to give up a few hours a week to walk, wash, and just socialise with dogs then please get in touch. I am still going mainly on Tuesdays and Fridays 11 until 2, but since the busy summer period is coming up for most people and midday is not the best time to walk dogs I will probably change this. If anyone wants to suggest other times that would suit better, please let me know.

## Fundraising

Well – we all missed the deadlines to organise a fund raising event at Easter, but we did manage to get a large donation to construct a new area for small dogs, and are committed to developing an ongoing plan for fund raising. Mary has volunteered to help with this aspect, and is going to work on a plan, looking at different things we can do to improve fundraising. If anyone else wants to help, please contact Mary at [maryfromthedairy@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:maryfromthedairy@hotmail.co.uk). The most urgent needs at the moment are for food, fencing, and a new puppy quarantine area.

**I am looking for 20 PEOPLE TO VOLUNTEER TO FIND 20 PEOPLE, EACH TO DONATE 10 EUROS. I think it is called crowd-sourcing! It seems to me that it is entirely feasible that in this way we could get to our target of 4000 euros to finish more new fencing, to create a corridor though the shelter free of dogs, and maybe a small puppy quarantine area. If anyone is up to the challenge, please let me know asap.**



## VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES

**Public Relations** – designing new signs, website development and support, photography, translation, community events to promote the shelter.

**Fundraising** – events, letter writing, approaching corporate donors, raffles, individual donors.

**Fostering** – volunteers urgently needed to take on short term care of small puppies.

**Socialising dogs** – walking, playing, washing, grooming individual dogs at the shelter

**Shelter improvements** – fixing fences, cleaning, planting, preparing food.



## Shelter improvements

The second gate has now been installed at the main entrance, which makes it much easier and safer for anyone going in and out of the compound, and also means the washing area for dogs is enclosed so you can wash a dog without needing a lead! We are currently working on new fences and a shelter to create a new separate area for puppies and smaller dogs within the main compound. Unfortunately Porto Montenegro Community Projects Team have had to make other priorities this year, but we are hoping to maintain contact so that they can support us next year. **We urgently need some more reinforcement panels for further fencing so that we can make a corridor through the middle of the shelter. This will help the dogs, staff, volunteers and also prospective adopters as it will mean it is easier to see all the dogs without being jumped on! Please let me know if you have any panels or if you know of a welder who could help.**



**BILL IS JUST ONE OF MANY BEAUTIFUL DOGS LOOKING FOR A NEW HOME – IF YOU KNOW ANYONE WHO WANTS A DOG PLEASE ENCOURAGE THEM TO VISIT THE SHELTER. ALL DOGS HAVE HAD HEALTH CHECKS AND ARE VACCINATED AND STERILISED. TO ADOPT A DOG CALL:**

**Sanja - 032 339220  
Fiona - 069 397 824**

## Prevention

Regardless of how much time you have to be involved directly in the shelter, we all have a role to play in prevention by:

- Raising awareness of the need to sterilise cats and dogs
- Sterilising our own and neighbourhood strays
- Avoiding illegal breeders who may tempt you with the latest designer dog for an inflated fee, when there are lots of free dogs waiting for a home at the shelter. Highly bred dogs can also be more likely to have health and behaviour problems, especially if from un-licensed breeders.

There is an infamous office cat story doing the rounds at the moment – those in the know will have been approached already by people trying to find kitten homes. It is great to feed stay cats and dogs, but don't forget that healthier animals are more likely to get pregnant and if you don't neuter the animals in your neighbourhood they will multiply. We can all help to reduce the stray dog and cat population by taking stray animals in our areas to be neutered.

### *Why Spay or Neuter? Some Myths and Facts About Spaying and Neutering*

**MYTH: My pet will get fat and lazy.**

**FACT:** The truth is that most pets get fat and lazy because their owners feed them too much and don't give them enough exercise. Spayed or neutered pets require less calories. More exercise will benefit both of you.

**MYTH: It's better to have one litter first.**

**FACT:** Medical evidence indicates just the opposite. In fact, the evidence shows that females spayed before their first heat are typically healthier and happier and live longer.

**MYTH: My children should experience the miracle of birth.**

**FACT:** But will they? Even if children are able to see a pet give birth — which is unlikely, since it usually occurs at night and in seclusion — the lesson they will really learn is that animals can be created and discarded as it suits adults. Explain to children that

preventing the birth of some pets can save the lives of others.

**MYTH: But my pet is a purebred.**

**FACT:** A large percentage of pets brought to animal shelters are purebreds. There are just too many dogs and cats — mixed breed and purebred.

**MYTH: I want my dog to be protective.**

**FACT:** Spaying or neutering does not affect a dog's natural tendency to "defend his own turf". Male dogs will also be less likely to wander once they are neutered.

**MYTH: I don't want my male dog or cat to feel like less of a male.**

**FACT:** Don't confuse your emotional needs and relationships with your pet's instinctive hormonal responses. Pets don't have any concept of sexual identity or ego. Neutering will not change a pet's personality. He doesn't suffer any kind of emotional reaction or identity crisis when neutered.

**MYTH: But my dog (or cat) is so special, I want a puppy (or kitten) just like her.**

**FACT:** A dog or cat may be a great pet, but that doesn't mean their offspring will be a carbon copy. Professional animal breeders who follow generations of bloodlines can't guarantee they will get just what they want out of a particular litter. A pet owner's chances are even slimmer. In fact, an entire litter of puppies or kittens might receive all of a pet's (and her mate's) worst characteristics.

**MYTH: Only females need to be fixed.**

**FACT:** But how do those females get pregnant? A male pet can easily father 750 offspring in his lifetime. Just because you don't have to deal with a pregnant dog or cat, it doesn't mean your pet isn't out there creating puppies or kittens!

**MYTH: It's too expensive to have my pet spayed or neutered.**

**FACT:** It is not very expensive in Montenegro, and it is cheaper in the long run than caring for the litters! The one-time cost of surgery is much cheaper than a lifetime of care for extra unwanted pets, or the cost of caring for a litter at the dog shelter.

**MYTH: I'll find good homes for all the puppies and kittens.**

**FACT: You wish!** You may find homes for all of your pet's litter, but even then, each home you find means one less home for the dogs and cats in shelters who are already waiting for good homes. The problem of pet overpopulation is created and perpetuated one litter at a time.

## PUBLIC RELATIONS

We have finalised the design of the new road sign but are waiting for the final go ahead from JKP Kotor – it will be a huge boost to have this sign to give the shelter wider recognition so I am hoping it won't be a long wait. Thanks to Porto Montenegro design team and Community Outreach Team for their design and financial support with this project.

Steve Jennings has helped hugely with the initial thinking and planning for the website and we have now registered the domain name:

[www.azilkotor.org](http://www.azilkotor.org)

The task for the next quarter is to get it up and running, and full of useful information, but we have at least started!  
If anyone wants to be involved, please let me know.



## Photo Day

We haven't had any volunteers to help with photos....and now we want to get going with website and have all dogs pictured on it, this is getting more urgent. If anyone can come and help at any time please let me know.



## Community Events

We have also finished the design of the portable community information display boards (above). Many thanks to Jane Murphy for her help, and to Becca for her excellent design work. The boards will fold into one carry bag and are easy to put up, so if anyone knows of any community events or other suitable display areas please let me know. Ideally we want a schedule of places throughout the year where the boards can be set up - either "staffed" events or just public or commercial spaces (e.g your offices) where the board could be left for a week or so at a time, to spread awareness and information.

**PLEASE CIRCULATE THIS NEWSLETTER TO ANYONE WHO MAY BE INTERESTED IN HOMING A DOG OR GETTING INVOLVED AS A VOLUNTEER.**

## Knightsbridge School Visit

We were lucky to have a visit this month from a group of excited children who visited the shelter as part a project looking at organisations. Big thanks to Jane Murphy for bringing the shelter to their attention, and to Jenny Von Zastrow for organising the visit and encouraging the children to take an interest. We hope that this can be the start of a long involvement, and that the school will make use of our community display board once it is finally in our hands! Apologies to all parents who were hassled to get a dog after the visit!



## Vet Support

Many thanks go to Goca and Relja who have now put in several years of excellent hard work getting the shelter up to a better standard, and putting in place systems to control diseases. The annual round of tendering for the contract for veterinary support at the shelter was won this year by Veterinum, an Ulcinj-based vet practice, so it is goodbye for now to Goca and Relja, although we hope that Goca will continue to be involved as a volunteer!

The vet support should include daily visits for immunisations, quarantine control, spay/neutering, disease and parasite control, and urgent health care for injured or sick animals. Please talk to the shelter staff if you are worried about any animals in the shelter so they can contact the vet as needed. I have met the new vet and explained that there are a number of volunteers involved in the shelter in different ways, and that we look forward to working with him. His details are:

**Khemal Ravja**

Tel: 030 412 763; mob 069 031 537

Email: [veterinum@t-com.me](mailto:veterinum@t-com.me)

### DID YOU KNOW?

Some of you may have seen the AZIL van out and about. They use it for collecting food scraps for the dogs, and also for collecting stray dogs from the street who are causing a nuisance, or who are sick or injured.

You can call 067 311 229 to arrange for collection of stray dogs.

## FAST FACTS

31

DOGS REHOMED MARCH-MAY

110

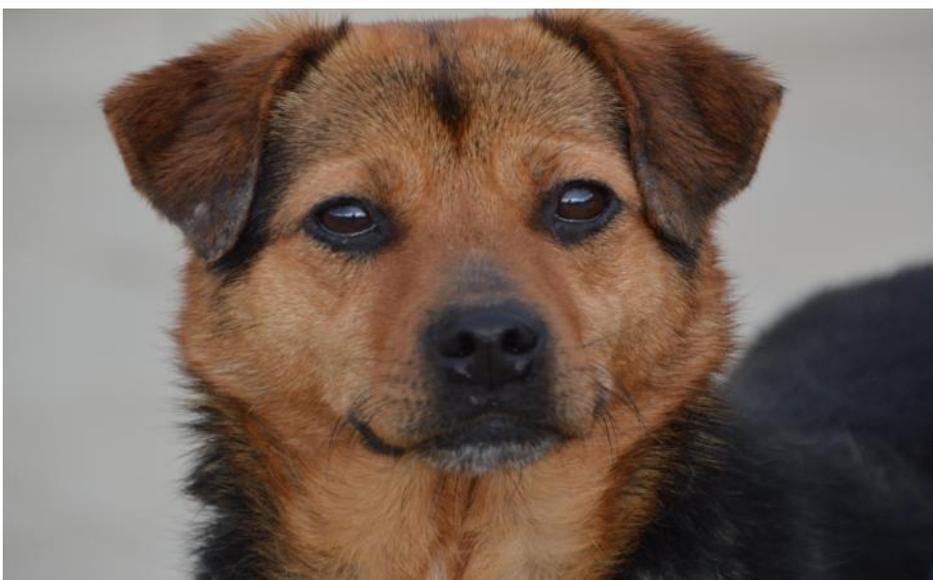
DOGS IN THE SHELTER

24

DOGS COLLECTED FROM THE STREET LAST MONTH

FOR MORE INFORMATION

[aziljkpkotor@t-com.me](mailto:aziljkpkotor@t-com.me)



**PUPPIES** A number of people have asked me recently if the shelter is OK for puppies. The truth is, of course it is better than the street, but not a brilliant place especially for *very young puppies*, who are often already ill, and who are more susceptible to diseases. The longer you can keep them before bringing them to us the better – and *volunteers to "foster" very small puppies for a month or two are urgently needed.* Our new puppy area will make it a much better place for bigger puppies and smaller dogs in the long term.

## NEWS REPORTS

Some of you may have seen a recent newspaper article highlighting poor practice at the shelter. We are aware that the shelter is far from perfect and much work still needs to be done, but there have also been big improvements in recent years – something we should also be telling the press about. The shelter is trying its best to do a good job on a shoestring, and the staff who work there do their best in pretty poor working conditions and on low wages. The dogs at the shelter are really the responsibility of the whole community – please feel free to encourage people to come and see the shelter for themselves before making judgments. The more we can all help to improve things the better they will be for all.