



Animal Connection AC

by Arlette Caenen

My volunteering time at SDC in April 2015.

HOW IT STARTED

In October 2012 I saw a flyer of Street Dog Care at the Fire & Ice Restaurant in Thamel-Kathmandu. Since then dogs follow me all the time during my stays in Nepal.

While being on trek in Mustang (former independent Buddhist Kingdom, now part of Nepal) a dog accompanied me for a while and became very special in my life.

Last year I made a journey in Tibet and you already guessed what happened, exactly, during the trekking to the Samye Monastery a dog followed me for quite a long time.

This was a sign for me and during the night, the SDC flyer came into my mind again.

I decided I wanted to get to know Street Dog Care and arranged a meeting with Jasmine, the program manager.

From that time on my complete life and my sight at the dogs in Nepal and in general changed. I wanted to work at SDC and, as soon as I got back home, I arranged my volunteering.

FIRST DAY ON THE JOB

Together with friends and family I gathered a lot of supplies and with a box full of dog supplies I arrived on April 1st in Bodnath. Right away it feels as coming home.

There were 2 days to acclimatize before starting to work, but the SDC dogs were calling me (what is it with these dogs ☺), so I went to the center immediately.

How nice, great and lovely being there again, there is such a nice atmosphere, I cannot exactly describe what it is, but my feelings tell me that I am at the right place.

My first working day starts with the Saturday Health Camp. That's a big experience, everything is new, so much to learn, so many people and dogs visit us that day. What a great and special day!

The full moon and lunar eclipse make it even more special with its many butterlamps and colors round the stupa.

POSAR

My second day and the following days/weeks are dedicated to Posar, a lovely black and white dog. He came into the center a few days before I arrived. He has tumors on his whole body, a lot of open wounds, he is very weak, but on the other hand also very strong.

My first thought was: "My God, how can he live, how can he survive, he suffers so much."

I talked to him, as I am an animal communicator, and noticed he has a strong will to live, so we made an "arrangement" that we will manage this together.

We went to the vet many, many times and he got better and better, stronger and stronger.

I am so proud of him. I learned a lot from him - *be strong and fight, even though life is not like you wish or not as you would like it to be!*

It was like a ritual for me going with him to the vet, preparing him for the drive, being together.

I am very grateful I had this opportunity.

During my stay he really gets better and better and back home in Munich I learned that he moved from the quarantine area to the isolation area.

I was so happy hearing that, but he still has a long way to go.

Let us pray he will manage this terrible disease, so that he can enjoy life for the time being!

THE EARTHQUAKE

Posar still has a big influence on my life, as well as the earthquake, which hit Nepal on April 25th.

At 11.56 a.m. time stood still, the earth quaked and nothing would be the same anymore ...

We were in the field for the yearly rabies vaccinations. I was really looking forward to it and curious how it would be. The vaccinations were given to the “real” street dogs, till then I was used to the nice street dogs of the center or the stupa, who know you after a while.

As the “dog catcher” I had to approach them with cookies, nice talking and catching them, after that Kamala, the vet technician, gave the vaccination and a color mark on the back.

It was really nice and we had a lot of fun during the camp. We were a really well-attuned team, everybody had his/her task. Vaccinating went very good and in no time we had more empty than full injections ☺

Then the earth quaked ... We didn't exactly know what happened at that time, but after a while, we realized what was going on, but didn't know what damage there was all over the country and how many people died.

The atmosphere was strange, the streets empty, people gathered on the fields and open spaces, shops were closed.

Bodnath was completely different, it changed from a nice and peaceful place, where people do their kora's into a desolate and quite place, without any butterlamps.

AFTER THE QUAKE

During the first night after the quake I slept outside, because there were a lot of aftershocks. It was very strange sleeping outside, but I was accompanied by ... exactly ... a dog. He slept on my bed at my feet for the whole night. It was very nice and calming for me, so I could sleep a little bit.

After a few days I flew back home with very mixed feelings, on the one hand I wanted to go home to my husband, friends and family, but on the other hand I wanted to stay, help the people, animals, dogs in Nepal ...

One thing is for sure, the earthquake, the volunteering time and dogs changed/will change my life!

DANYABAD

Danyabad (thank you) to all the people I got to know at Street Dog Care and who supported me during my stay. I learned a lot from them, they are very special, for me *they are angels to the dogs and the people who work with them.*

And of course last but not least, danyabad to all the streets dogs, they “pushed/pulled” me into this direction, a complete different world has opened to me!

Arlette



This article was written on July 6th, 2015
80th birthday of His Holiness the Dalai
Lama

This article was written for the newsletter distributed by Street Dog Care, Summer 2015
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