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Animal rescue inspires hope

September 26, 2006 : 12:00 AM

Veterinarian Chris Miller is no stranger to working in the trenches. He's volunteered his time and skills to Rural Area Veterinary Services. Chris did serious time at the Reno Rabbit Rescue Ranch for Best Friends. He's strong, enthusiastic and usually has energy to spare.

Lebanon drained him.

Chris spent nearly two weeks with the Best Friends team tending to the needs of the BETA rescue animals in Lebanon. The work challenged him; the hours went well beyond overtime.

He and the others medicated, vaccinated and de-wormed nearly 300 BETA dogs and cats to prepare them for adoption in the states.

He said he wouldn't trade the experience in for anything.

"I was grateful to have the opportunity to go over there and help out," said Chris. "But I will say, I'm glad to be back home."

Chris said his BETA hosts and hostesses couldn't have been nicer or more welcoming. They opened their homes to him and, more importantly, they fed him.

"The food was great!" he exclaimed.

As an American in Lebanon, Chris never felt any tension with the locals. They displayed no hostility or threat. But he was disturbed by the treatment of the local stray and abandoned animals.

"They have the problem of homeless pets, just like we do here," he said. "And a certain part of their population show no concern for strays; there's a lot of neglect.

"But people who had animals as pets seemed to treat them the way we treat them here, with love and kindness."

Chris sees his experience as a portal to inspire new opportunities for partnerships to rescue homeless animals. If Best Friends, a U.S.-based animal rescue organization, can team up with Lebanese rescue group BETA for a common cause, what's to stop other rescue groups from crossing borders and joining together to help animals in need?

"Personally, I see this trip as an opportunity to open a door for international cooperation," said Chris. "I hope it catches on."

Written by Amy Abern

Comments

Wednesday, September 27, 2006 at 09:00 pm

posted by: [utahiszion](#)

This rescue mission was a success in so many ways!

In addition to rescuing the animals from the war zone, it has also opened up a conduit for continued international cooperation and contributed to understanding and good will and hopefully healing between the people of Lebanon, Israel, and the United States.

I hope that the Best Friends and BETA rescue efforts and the airlift will also show the governments of the world that they must give consideration to the animals in war zones and to include them along with their people in evacuation and rescue operations during conflicts. This operation by Best Friends and BETA could truly be a model for all humane organizations to follow!

I pray that the angels watch over the innocent animals, and the people who have stayed to care for them in Lebanon and Israel.

Wednesday, September 27, 2006 at 12:00 pm

posted by: [Kelly Mac](#)

Thank You Dr Miller for helping the animals make their long journey home!

Lets hope that this is the begining of an International Partnership!

Wednesday, September 27, 2006 at 04:24 am

posted by: [ptinico](#)

I can only wish that vets from Beirut were as helpful as you are !!! We need to have vets doing free work and helping us to castrate stray animals... But hey let s be realistic in lebanon it s unfortunately always about money... I just wish we could make a lasting difference in Lebanon and that by the time our children are grown up there would be no more stray dogs or cats on the streets !!!

Thanks again for all the amazing job you ve done.

Wednesday, September 27, 2006 at 02:13 am

posted by: [babes](#)

Thank you Dr. Chris Miller, you are truly a HERO, along with the other Best Friends Rescue Team and also BETA Team. I totally agree with you Dr. Miller as an "opportunity to open a door for international cooperation". We definitely need people like yourself , BF and BETA people, who can make a HUGE difference in the dear animals' lives who are abused, discarded as trash, or starving to death. God bless you all. And thanks again.

Cynthia from Honolulu

Tuesday, September 26, 2006 at 09:44 pm

posted by: [crazyhorsestables](#)

You are definitely a true hero.

Tuesday, September 26, 2006 at 08:29 pm

posted by: [barbe](#)

I too pray that this helps to open the door for international co-operation