

## **Why it makes sense to break new ground**

August, 2017

For years, Robin Hood offers a program with veterinarians to castrate dogs and cats for free. The offer applies to animals brought by their owners, but also for stray animals. More and more vets are taking part, also more and more cities. Especially in Reghin this is also promoted with the help of the city administration, there is a contract between us. But again and again I realized that especially in the villages, where the population often has no car, no one cares about the many stray dogs.

In summer 2016 we started the first castration campaign "in the field". This project seemed expandable for me. A medical tent was bought by the German army. Also a used field operating table from the Austrian army was available as second-hand goods. With this equipment and great vets we have castrated in July 2016 in two villages. In Ideciu de Jos and in Iernut, both in Transylvania. On the first day we were supported by two veterinarians, in the next three days only by one veterinarian. But 89 dogs and cats could be castrated. Many volunteers were there, because we had shared flyers in advance, there was also a spot on TV.

And they came! Animal owners and shepherds came with their animals ... strays were caught; dogs were picked up by gas stations and building companies and so on. The incredible heat was not ideal; we did everything we could to provide shade for the animals, gave them water and cooled them off.

Robin Hood's pet car traveled with two keepers bringing dogs and cats. People came on foot, by car, by bicycle, brought their animals in bags and plastic bags ... others drove with the wheelbarrow in the shade. A farmer came with the tractor on which he had mounted a cage in which he carried two large dogs. Sure, for some, that may be very strange, not exactly pet-friendly, but that has not harmed any animal, everyone was completely calm, relaxed and they got along. Also in the case when two dogs, who were

caught and did not know each other, had to share a transport box. These animals are just fantastic.

And also the veterinarians Flavia Dobos, Ramona Dan from Reghin and Ioana Ocnareescu from Ludus.

They organize a castration marathon that has no equal. The first day in the tent showed that the tent was a good investment. An adjacent animal friend supported us with water, fruit, cooked corn ... we were also in good hands in Iernut. And here lives a veterinarian in retirement, who provided us with his premises.

The local vice mayor showed me the old, unused shelter and we are now thinking about revitalizing it and setting up a castration center in the neighboring building. And he's the only one who agrees that the animals get back to the place where they were caught. He understands how it can work. And he is an example for everyone else. Once again, I was enthusiastic about the cooperation and commitment of the Romanian animal friends, with the skills of the veterinarians, with the help of the volunteers, with our keepers, who could catch the strays with experienced hands. There was also an action with an anesthesia gun of the city of Iernut, so that a trained veterinarian could provide us with more "candidates".

But this action was not unique. The veterinarians will continue. Dr. Ocnareescu wants to organize a castration day once a month. Another veterinarian is already planning a castration in a small town for August. All these vets only charge the castrations for a cheaper price. So we pay about 23 euros for a female animal. Of course, that also adds up, and all in all it will cost thousands of euros. For that we need donations. So that we can castrate even more. The villages are very important. Because also in the animal shelters dogs come from there. And if nothing is done then they will reproduce without end.

All these dogs and cats, all these individual destinies, have moved us all. An emaciated dog, tied up near a restaurant, exposed and unwanted. He found his way to the shelter in Reghin. The cute Papusa, like a doll, was released after the castration in the area, but she was so funny and loving, that she also came to the shelter, because for this dog we will certainly find an owner with the help of our German partner. An old German shepherd dog, mangy, thin and emaciated, lay in a field in the sun. Castrating him

seemed grossly negligent. He was also taken to the shelter, got a bath and is now on the mend.

Many were brought back to their "home" at companies and petrol stations, where people take care of, feed them. We can not bring everyone to the shelter and that would not be good for the animals either. Especially those who are young, strong, healthy. But we did not want to leave a thin mother dog and her 5 puppies on the side of the road. The mother chained, the boys free and close to the busy street ... she is now in the private animal home in Reghin.

But many dog and cat owners came, I could talk to many of them, I could explain and plan. I discussed new school lectures with teachers. All in all, these days were a complete success. And we continue, because that's the only key that prevents further animal suffering. For this we need donations, because without them we cannot finance such actions. And there has to be more, much more.

We must do everything we can to stop the massive reproduction of the puppies for the sake of the animals. This castration center in Iernut is in my mind. This house could really be renovated with simple means. Then we would have a facility, a warehouse, an accommodation. So we would have the opportunity to keep dogs and cats safe for a few days after castration.

Would you like to participate?