



## It's Christmas and, it seems, here too....

Here we are. We end the year in a rush ahead of the holidays, in the land of 'No Stress'. Well yes, before the holidays Laura, our faithful veterinarian, we find ourselves with a mountain of cats to be neutered, a dozen or so long-stay patients, and some facility adaptation work to be done and completed.

So much has happened in the last few months, so much that we don't know where to start. On the other hand, to do so in an emotional manner would distort reality. Let us try to remain dispassionate and report the news in the most unperturbed manner possible.

Happy reading.

## Summer, rain, heat and puppies.

Here in Boa Vista, the hot season is experienced from mid-August to the end of October. They call it the rainy season. How they can call it 'rainy' on a desert island where it has not rained seriously for seven years now, we have never understood. Well, it rained this year, and a lot. We have to say that it did not make a mess, which was the case in previous years. The rain brought green vegetation, to the delight of the island's ruminants. In our small way, we ended up with plants that grew metres.

The rain unfortunately also brings an increase in insects: flies, mosquitoes and cockroaches. If the birds that feed on these insects have been happy, we humans and our four-legged friends have had nothing to rejoice about. If we humans can more or less defend ourselves, for a month and a half, the dogs have not been able to sleep: night for mosquitoes and day for flies. We can assure you that their desperation, especially at night, was clearly perceptible.



Like last year at the same time, litters appear out of nowhere. This year, too, out of the blue we had ten pups. Five with mother and five without. If the former gives us little to do but take up space, the latter take up a lot of our time. They are to be nursed. Five means taking up one person an hour and a half four or five times a day.

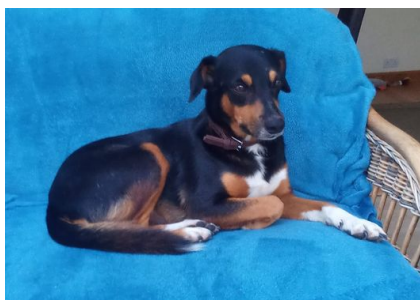
We wonder how to do it and the president starts looking for a solution. The Internet gives us one: silicone breasts. It sounds like a cosmetic surgery deal but it's not: they really exist. A little sceptical, we order two, which arrive a week later. Loaded with 300 ml of specific milk and after ten minutes of teaching, the puppies are 'autonomous'.

Thank you, Madam President, now we can get on with the business as usual. Needless to say, they have become beautiful.





## A season of adoptions



As we often explain, tourists fall in love with the dogs they meet on the magnificent beaches of Boa Vista. In our opinion, these dogs have it in their blood or genetics. They see the tourist and start following him. They don't let go of him. If he doesn't give in, they start the same play with another one. The aim is clearly to get attention. Be it caresses, food or simple water, these phenomena manage to adopt their future masters. Yes, dear even if you think otherwise, they adopt you. So, from



summer to today we find ourselves with one, two, three, four, five dogs and a cat to prepare for departure. To you, our supporters, this may seem little. For us, it means a total rethinking of the division of space and our commitments. But for us it is clear and important: every dog that leaves, is a rescued one. Yes, we who love the dogs and cats of Boa Vista want them out of here. So, to end the year, Scoop, Bello, Dumbo, Mindelo, Suki, Pato and Alex left for Europe to meet their adopters and the snow. That still leaves Max and Valentino.

Our puppies are also successful. Thus, those who adopted Bello want Benji, those who brought the transport crate for Scoop get Cindy and a visitor falls in love with Elly. This year we managed to realise 46 adoptions and we are proud of it. Here, another proof that you who visit us personally, are the ones who carry our image off the island. You are very important. Thank you!

## The despairs and the satisfactions

Living here is not easy. It is not always an idyllic place, especially if you take care of animals. Tragedies are always around the corner. Between more or less random accidents or gratuitous nastiness, there are times when you ask yourself: why? Why do we have to share the island with ignorant and evil people? Why are we forced to put up with the wickedness of humans? Isn't it about time we gave currency to these lowly characters? A dilemma that is even more condensed here on an island than elsewhere. Yes, because we certainly know those who do nastiness personally. Here we all know each other.

But let us come to the facts. 8 October, Mamina goes out of the shelter as usual. She goes out because she doesn't want to get dirty and because she likes to go for runs in the stretch of sand in front of the shelter. She has always done so, without disturbing anyone. It is dark when she returns. She is desperate, running with breathlessness until she spasms on the ground. Laura, alerted by Domingua, does not make it to the hut in time. It is too late. A few minutes and she die.

To our knowledge she is the first. We, in the twenty-four hours that follow, warn of the danger via social networks. We do this repeatedly. Pointless. Even polemical. People commenting with more nastiness or rubbish, or failing to understand, or blaming those or others. Or giving us advice on how to detect poison. Bloody hell! The message is clear: there is poison around! We don't know where it comes from, who puts it there or even what consistency it has. Hard to understand? Apparently so. The deaths continue. Eighty more will follow, perhaps over a hundred. For our part, we attempt toxicological analysis.

Over 2000 poisons are sought in the samples collected by the vet. Nothing! Another type of research is needed. Here, it is unfeasible. By exclusion, we decide to concentrate on one type of poison and obtain the antidote, which costs a fortune. Despair assails us. The first measures are protective. Walks outside the shelter are forbidden. Our dogs are on leashes and can hardly smell the ground. We collect the five street dogs we can afford to take in. Two live around the shelter and three come from a little further away. We do not follow a criterion, we save what can be saved. For our protégés everything is fine. We go to the police and report it. Without evidence, there is little we can do. We give some elements for further investigation but police inertia does not help. Time passes and the dogs continue to die. What frustration







and what a waste of energy. Today, 23 December, is the first 14 days without dead dogs. We cross our fingers that it is really over.

We didn't need it and we are exhausted, all of us.

### Our work continues

Despite this painful episode, we are concentrating on our work and successes. With the rains, problems that we thought we had overcome are reviving.



Demodectic mange in dogs has reappeared after years of respite. Three cases in a few weeks. Mocinho, Ronny and Vincent White. These cases are the most striking and are sure-fire success stories among our Facebook and Instagram followers. They are striking because anyone can see these disasters on the street and because after treatment the dogs are transformed. From bald and depressed beings, they become beautiful and livelier looking. Unbelievable. You make up your own mind with Ronny on his arrival and after three weeks of treatment.



Behind the scenes, on a daily basis, we continue to neuter animals. We have now happily passed 2080 sterilisations. If you want to do the maths, you should know that we have thus prevented an uncontrollably exponential proliferation of our four-legged friends.

Another episode that has marked us in recent weeks was the rescue of King. This pit bull is owned. He is not one of our classic 'viral' street dogs. Tied up for months amidst his faeces and urine, this poor guy found his neck deeply lacerated. Called the police twice, we were authorised to seize him. So, a new shelter boarder. As we predicted months ago in our reports, pit bulls will be Boa Vista's new problem in the years to come. These dogs are not suited to this society, which is totally unprepared in terms of both competence and legislation, and to this environment, which is particularly hostile to this type of dog. Moreover, the interest in this type of dog lies solely in image. They are a fad and like all fads will pass. Unfortunately leaving abandoned and potentially dangerous dogs behind. We observe and continue to report to the political authorities. But it seems to us that little interest and slow reaction characterises the 'no stress' island. Let us watch and see.



### You, our donors

We cannot redeem ourselves from thanking all those who help us. Every form of help is good for the mind and the coffers. Especially because your love, be it in quality, quantity or intensity, beats all the badness. We are happy to have so many friends supporting us from all over Europe. You are English,



Germanic, Dutch, Swiss, Italian, French and Spanish. Many come on holiday and bring us the consumables we need for a clinic like ours.



An almost fortuitous meeting also led us to the acquaintance of Dr Thomas Nonnewitz, the owner and director of WDT (Wirtschaftsgenossenschaft deutscher Tierärzte eG) in Garbsen near Hanover in Germany. This veterinary supply company not



only gave us three suitcases of material and medicines, but also invited our veterinarian Laura to their premises, paying for flights and hotel accommodation. We feel really very lucky.

In October, during our stay in Switzerland, we managed to collect from friends, but also buy second-hand, and send a mountain of material: dog carriers, cat carriers, special food and many blankets and sheets.

Let's honestly say that from when we started in 2018 to now, we have no complaints: we have all the consumables we need to deal with neutering campaigns in the coming months and/or years.

Now all we have to do is find a place to put it all neatly, cleanly and securely. Precisely for this, we set about building a warehouse to put the transport cages and food for cats and dogs. They will stay dry and out of the sun.

So, we continue with the work of improving and adapting the facility to the situation. We take advantage of this now, since Laura is not here and the clinic is practically deserted.

Yes, deserted. For the holidays and the transition to the new year, we have eleven patients to follow anyway. The famous three from mange, three car accidents, an eye infection, King's wounds, Nana, Boa Vista's best-loved street dog, with minor post-operative problems, and two cases of ehrlichiosis, Paolinha and Stancha. Ah, we almost forgot: two puppies arrived. And history repeats itself and there is always something to do. We continue...

A profound thank you to everyone. We love you all. Don't let our work get in trouble, support us!

We wish you a festive season full of joy and tell you that we love you. Thank you



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