

# Barrio Tails

## Newsletter

## Spring



Volume 1, Issue 4, May 2013

### President's Message

It is hard to believe we are almost halfway through 2013. As expected, the past few months have flown by. Recently, much of our time has been spent working with Unity for a Solution, our collaborative effort to make the city of Houston more responsive to its animal overpopulation crisis. We've become convinced that the only solutions are more community education and free and low cost spay neuter for pets belonging to low income residents; we are trying to make that happen.

Unfortunately, despite our best efforts, the problem seems to get worse every day. This spring has brought an influx of homeless and unwanted puppies and kittens. Although our focus is not on rescue but instead on spay, neuter and community education, we end up taking in animals in bad circumstances when we can. Lately, there have been so many animals in need of help! We know other groups are also overwhelmed with unwanted animals in their own communities which is an indicator of the magnitude of the problem we are facing.

Nevertheless, we keep moving forward and trying to make a difference. We are always encouraged to see friends and neighbors who support our work. We had a great turnout for our 3<sup>rd</sup> anniversary celebration in April. We hope everyone who attended had a great time although the event was bittersweet for many of us since it was in memory of our beloved sister and friend, Norma Zenteno, who passed away last February. We think Norma's spirit was with us as we celebrated our accomplishments during the past year.

Our educational work in area schools and community centers continues to be central to our mission. Teaching children to love and respect animals gives us hope for the future and enables us to continue to do our work.

Gloria Medina Zenteno  
May 2013

### Barrio Dogs, Inc. publishes the Barrio Tails newsletter quarterly

We hope you enjoy this electronic edition of Barrio Tails. Please feel free to give the editors your feedback so that we can continue to improve this source of information for our growing Barrio Dogs' community.

### Editors

Lynn Rodriguez, [lynn@barriodogs.org](mailto:lynn@barriodogs.org)  
Gloria Medina Zenteno, [gloria@barriodogs.org](mailto:gloria@barriodogs.org)

### About Barrio Dogs

Barrio Dogs is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit established in 2010 in Houston, Texas for the purpose of educating, empowering and transforming Houston's East End by raising awareness and educating the community about proper animal care, leash and tethering laws, the importance of reporting animal neglect and abuse and promoting and when possible paying for spay and neuter of dogs and cats.



Painting by Armando Castelan



Engaging communities with pet care education & spay neuter solutions

We launched Unity for a Solution in January 2013 as a collaborative effort between Barrio Dogs, Corridor Rescue and Forgotten Dogs of the Fifth Ward to work with the city of Houston to provide more free and low cost spay and neuter services in low income areas. Unity's focus has been to work with city council members, their staff and staff at BARC, the city of Houston's animal control agency, to figure out a more effective solution to the problem. Barrio Dogs has also been meeting with Graci Garces, chief of staff for CM James Rodriguez, who represents District I which contains part of our East End community, to discuss the particular problems in Houston's East End.

CM Rodriguez chairs the city council's Quality of Life committee, which in April 2013 had a hearing focusing on animal overpopulation. Unity was invited to be a part of the hearing and testify about our work. Anna Barbosa from Corridor Rescue and Lynn Rodriguez from Barrio Dogs talked to committee members about overpopulation in our areas and how we are doing our own spay and neuter initiatives. They encouraged committee members to take a more active approach to this problem that affects the entire city of Houston, not just certain neighborhoods. Thank you to CM Rodriguez and Graci Garces for their help with this effort.



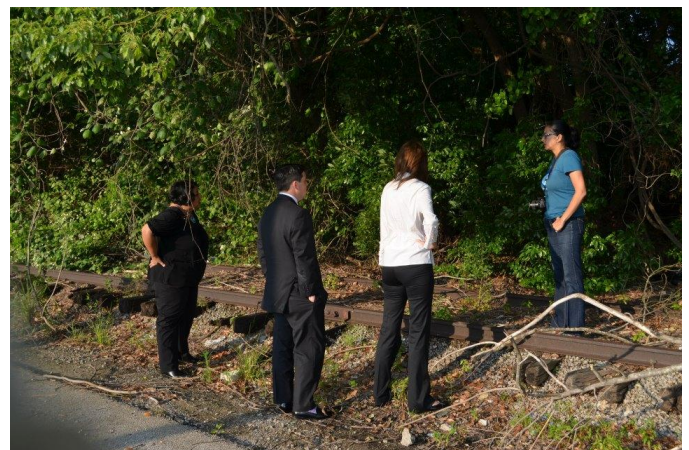
Anna Barbosa from Corridor Rescue and Lynn Rodriguez from Barrio Dogs testify before the city council's Quality of Life committee on April 29, 2013.



Barrio Dogs' outreach work to elected officials included talking with Mayor Annise Parker at an East End event. Pictured are Gloria Medina Zenteno, Lynn Rodriguez and Mayor Parker.



We took city council staff members on a tour of the Hidalgo Park area in May 2013 so they could see first hand what condition are like in this community.



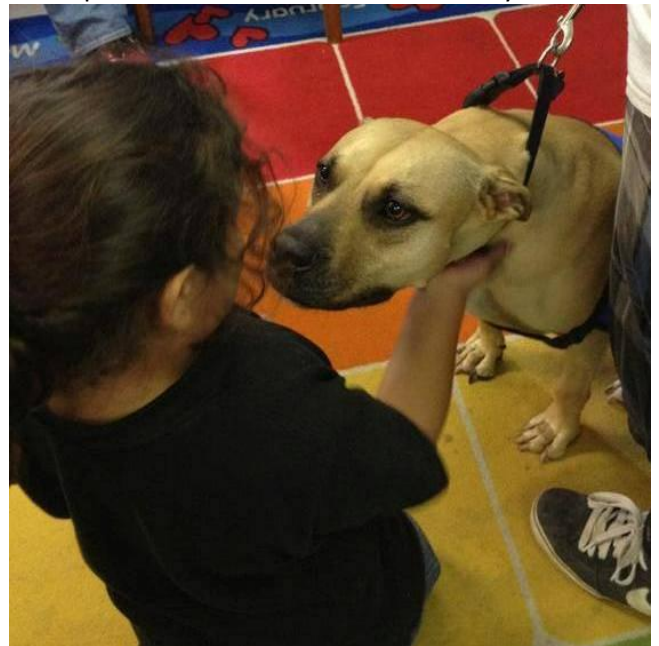
During the city council staff tour, we stopped in an area that is a dumping ground for dead animals. Gina Damian Moreno (right) has been documenting the dumping and we are working with Houston police to identify the people who dumping the dead animals.





Spring brought many end-of-school year activities for our education team. Working with students at area schools is one of the most rewarding and important activities we can do. Kids love our presentations, especially when we bring a rescued therapy dog with us. We know they take the lessons they learn about proper animal care home with them and pass them along to their parents and siblings. We always need more volunteers for our educational work; if you want to become involved in this rewarding and fun activity, please contact [gloria@barriodogs.org](mailto:gloria@barriodogs.org).

As expected, Clara was very popular with the students at our presentation at Whittier Elementary.



Therapy dog Clara keeps a close eye on her owner, Rachel Gonzalez, at Whittier Elementary. Also pictured is volunteer Paulette Kukuk.

We were happy to participate in Lemonade Day at the Community Family Center in Magnolia Park in April. Volunteer Eva Belendez is pictured on the right.







We were at the Rucker Elementary Health Fair in April. As always, the students wanted to learn more about our work. The Rucker students were so smart and knew many of the answers to the animal care-related questions we asked them.

A group picture at Rucker Elementary. Thank you to Principal Bernadette Blanco (left) for inviting us!



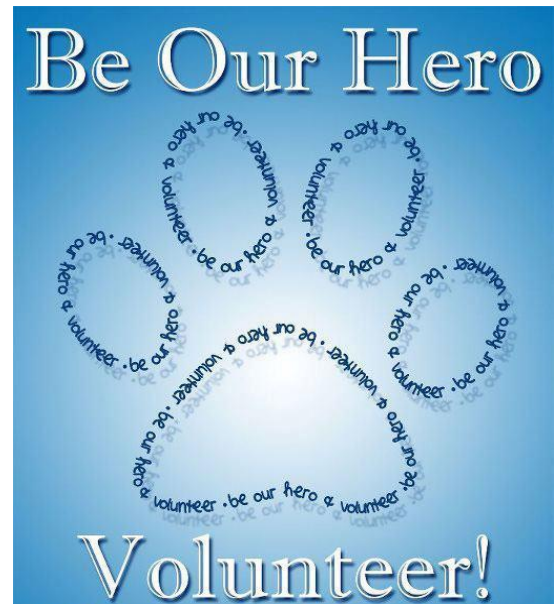
We were so glad to be able to participate in Jackson Middle School's Anti-Bullying program in May.







We wrapped up the 2012-2013 school year at Lantrip Elementary in Eastwood at the annual Community & Family picnic. Volunteer Lisa First brought her adopted rescue dog, Pinto. She also made a lot of fun items we gave away to the students and their families. We had a great time at the picnic and enjoyed spending the evening with our Eastwood neighbors.



Have you seen a homeless animal in your community and thought to yourself "there has to be something I can do to help." Barrio Dogs encourages you to Be Your Own Hero and help make a difference! Sign up and become a volunteer for Barrio Dogs. These are our areas of interest:

**A Home for All Team (AHFA):** Rehabs our sick, neglected, skittish and shy rescues in boarding and provides training to prepare them for a foster or forever home.

**Foster to Adopt Team:** Gets our rescues out of boarding and into foster or forever homes.

**Marketing & Social Media Team:** Markets and uses all media platforms to promote our mission.

**Community Outreach Team:** Attends civic clubs and community meetings and churches to increase awareness of animal abandonment, neglect, abuse and overpopulation. In charge of the FixIt spay/neuter project.

**Education & Therapy Team:** Provides educational presentations at schools, homeless shelters and elderly centers and provides reading and therapy sessions for children at different venues.

**Administration:** Sends follow up letters, thank you cards, organizes files, responds to correspondence and sends out tax receipts.

To sign up, go to [barriodogs.org](http://barriodogs.org) and fill out the online volunteer application.







Barrio Dogs has been working more closely with the East End Patrol as part of the Houston Police Department's Positive Interaction Program (PIP). PIP engages residents to work on issues of mutual interest involving public safety and public welfare. Since our Barrio Watchdog project focuses on some of the same concerns as PIP like neglect and mistreatment of animals, chained dogs and roaming packs of dogs, working with PIP has been useful for us.



Barrio Dogs at an Eastside Patrol PIP meeting



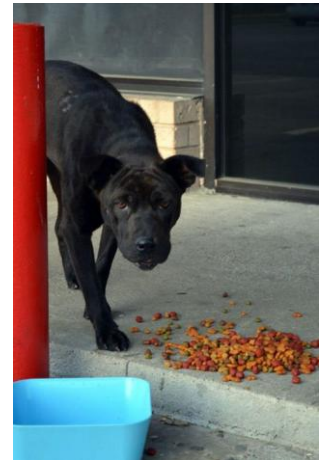
HPD's Eastside Patrol brought together representatives from Barrio Dogs, the District Attorney's Office, the SPCA, BARC and CM James Rodriguez's office to address a dumping problem near Hidalgo Park. Unknown individuals have been dumping dead animals along an isolated street near the park for several months. Barrio Dogs has been documenting the problem and provided pictures to the police. Dumping is a huge problem in Houston; in the East End, people dump dead and live animals, trash, old furniture, used tires and other items along the streets and bayous. We are working to educate residents about how to report dumping when they see it.



BARRIO DOGS FOR BETTER COMMUNITIES  
barrio dogs, inc.™

the situation first hand. On a Saturday afternoon in April, we drove through the area and saw many chained dogs, roaming dogs and dogs that looked homeless.

We also found an area with several weathered houses and dogs laying in the yard and driveway. We stopped and talked to the residents, who told us they feed the dogs but were not their owners. They pointed out one dog that had recently had a litter of puppies. We left some food and made plans to vet and fix the dogs.



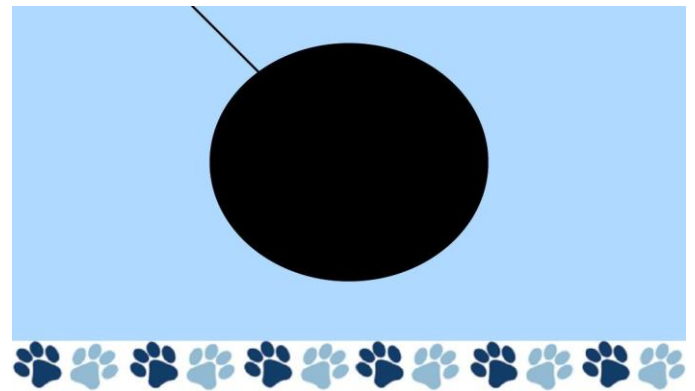
In late April, with the help of volunteers, we transported six Denver Harbor dogs to Gulfgate Animal Hospital and fixed and vetted them. We were able to find homes for two of them and plan to return to Denver Harbor later this year to spay and neuter more animals.







As part of our community outreach efforts, we created a door hanger (pictured on the right), one side in English and the other in Spanish, with important information about spaying and neutering pets, Houston leash and animal dumping laws and Texas dog chaining laws. Volunteers got together in late May to distribute the door hangers in the Magnolia Park area along with information about upcoming Barrio Dogs' events. We will distribute more door hangers later this year as part of our FixItL!t spay and neuter initiative.



**Barrio Dogs, Inc. is an all volunteer nonprofit group based in Houston's East End. We are working hard to improve the lives of the animals in our community and in the process, improve the lives of its residents. HERE'S HOW YOU CAN HELP.**

**SPAY AND NEUTER YOUR PETS.** Houston has a terrible animal overpopulation problem. Each year thousands of animals are euthanized at area shelters, often within hours of arrival. An estimated 1.2 million homeless and unwanted dogs live on Houston's streets and suffer from hunger, illness, extreme weather and attacks by humans and other dogs. Don't contribute to the problem by letting your pets produce unwanted litters; get them fixed! Here are some places that can spay and neuter your pet for a fairly low price.

- Gulfgate Animal Hospital, 216 Winkler Drive, 713-643-5723
- Pasadena Spay-Neuter & Wellness Clinic, 913 Shaw, 713-343-1700
- SNAP, 1801 Durham, 713-862-8001
- Harrisburg Veterinary Clinic, 5812 Harrisburg Blvd, 713-921-3300

**LEASH YOUR DOGS.** Did you know Houston has a leash law and that dogs cannot "run at large" in the city? All dogs must be properly restrained, meaning they must be leashed or enclosed behind a gate or fence. Don't let your dogs run loose in the street! If you do, bad things can happen like:



- Your dog bites someone.
- It gets hit by a car.
- It fights with other dogs and gets hurt.
- Animal Control picks up your dog, impounds it and gives you a citation. If Animal Control has your dog, you only have a certain amount of time to retrieve it; if you are too late, your pet could be euthanized!

**NO MORE CHAINS!** In Texas, it's illegal to chain your dog on a short chain, chain it overnight and chain it during extreme hot or cold weather. Chaining dogs is not only inhumane and cruel; it makes them more aggressive and likely to bite. **If you see a dog that is chained in violation of state law or to report animal cruelty or neglect,** call the Houston Police Dept's dispatch at 713-884-3131 (DON'T call 911), the Houston Humane Society at 713-443-6421, ext 391 or the SPCA at 713-869-SPCA (7722) to report it.

**DON'T DUMP YOUR DOG.** Animal abandonment is a Class A misdemeanor, punishable by up to one year in prison and a fine of up to \$4,000 (TX Penal Code, §42.09, Animal Cruelty). If you can't keep your dog, try other options. If it has behavior problems and is not spayed or neutered, don't dump it; get it fixed! Also, you can try to find it another home by reaching out to friends, coworkers and family members but don't dump it. Dumping your pet on the streets is cruel and inhumane!

For more information, go to  
[barriodogs.org](http://barriodogs.org)  
[facebook.com/barriodogs](https://facebook.com/barriodogs)  
[facebook.com/barriodogsenespanol](https://facebook.com/barriodogsenespanol)  
[twitter.com@barriodogs](https://twitter.com/barriodogs)





## Barrio Dogs Third Anniversary Celebration

We celebrated Barrio Dogs' third anniversary on a Sunday afternoon in April at Bohemeo's in our East End community. The party included live music, food and a tribute to Norma Zenteno, one of our first and biggest supporters. Norma passed away in February 2013 after suffering complications from her treatment for breast cancer. This year's tribute included the Spirit of Zenteno band and other local musicians. While it was a great afternoon, many of the people present were thinking about Norma and her many contributions to Barrio Dogs. We think her spirit was with us though as we commemorated our hard work during the past year.



Students from Carnegie Vanguard High School



Nick Gaitan & Umbrella Man performing



Barrio Dogs' team members



Father Sal DeGeorge from St. Patrick's Church



A lot of four-legged friends joined us



## Barrio Dogs Volunteer Profile

### *Lisa First*



Lisa, Aurora and Pinto

My lifelong love of animals and my recent adoption of a homeless dog named Pinto is my inspiration for volunteering my time and effort to help other dogs who are homeless. There is a huge problem in Houston.

Pinto lived his life between railroad tracks and a broken down metal building. He only survived because he had a guardian angel. Every day Aurora would go and feed Pinto on the street. If she was ill, her husband Frank would bring him a pizza and bathe him. Aurora endured a lot of abuse trying to care for Pinto. She was personally threatened, cursed and heckled daily for caring for a straggly street dog, one of over 1 million in Houston. Street dogs are often looked upon as rats and are beaten and abused by many. After her visits with Pinto, Aurora's heart was heavy knowing she had to leave him behind. Aurora always had to make sure she said her last goodbyes to her buddy not knowing if he would survive another night.

Two years later another Angel arrived. Her name was Eva and she was a volunteer with Barrio Dogs. Operation SAVE PINTO went into effect.

Eva and Aurora worked as a TEAM to save Pinto. He was finally rescued and transported to Gulfgate Animal Hospital where he received the care he needed.

I had heard about Barrio Dogs which educates the community for change. Pinto was my first foster dog from Barrio Dogs. His story touched my heart in a way I can't even describe. When I picked him up, I vowed he would never be on the streets again. We adopted Pinto.



Pinto on the street before he was rescued

Today I give back and participate in Barrio Dogs' educational programs, teaching and reading at schools in low income communities to educate young children about the care of dogs so the cycle of abuse of these animals will be broken. I don't want any dog to suffer like Pinto. As you can see from the pictures, Pinto is a rock star and he too is an ambassador for change!





# FOSTERS WANTED

NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR FOSTERS FOR BARRIO DOGS

NO EXPERIENCE REQUIRED.

Job Requirements: Must love dogs and have room in your home and your heart for a rescued Barrio Dog.

Salary: Self-rewarding.

Benefits: Endless amounts of unconditional love.

Job Requirements: Must be able to attend adoption events and have the time and patience to take care of a rescued dog.

TO COMPLETE AN APPLICATION, GO TO [barriodogs.org/docs/fosterapplication.pdf](http://barriodogs.org/docs/fosterapplication.pdf)



**barriodogs.org**  
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**info@barriodogs.org**




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**Get it now.**  
[www.cafepress.com/barriodogs/8315419](http://www.cafepress.com/barriodogs/8315419)

Thank you Carnegie Vanguard High School Canine Club for collecting dog food donations for us!



Do you want to build a movement to help the animals in your community?



Animal overpopulation is a big problem throughout Houston. We are happy to share information and resources with anyone who wants to organize a movement to help the animals in their own community. To learn more, contact us at [info@barriodogs.org](mailto:info@barriodogs.org).



**Donate to our cause!**

Barrio Dogs is funded entirely by donations. We are also staffed 100% by volunteers and have no overhead costs. All contributions go to our spay and neuter efforts, vetting, care and boarding for rescued dogs and community education efforts. Donations are tax-deductible; for more information or to donate, please visit us at [www.barriodogs.org/donate.html](http://www.barriodogs.org/donate.html).