

A different kind of humanitarian effort

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SHERWOOD -- On the day humanitarians rushed to help victims of a car bombing in Beirut, a different kind of humanitarian effort found four cats from that war-torn city being introduced in Sherwood.

Karel , Nancy, Dido and Cookie were rescued by Beirut for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, the only animal shelter in a country of about 4 million people, and are available for adoption from the Cat Adoption Team. Nine other Beirut cats are up for adoption through the Pixie Project in Northeast Portland.

The cats and two volunteers from the Beirut shelter arrived in Portland early last week, their passage paid by donations and frequent-flyer miles. It was the second visit to Portland by the volunteer group: In October, it brought over eight dogs and eight cats to new homes.

International animal lovers - more than its own troubled homeland - help keep the Beirut project going, said Helena Hesayne , who oversees the dog shelter in Beirut. Pets in Beirut are often dumped when they are imperfect or old, she said. And Beirut residents forced to evacuate during violence must abandon their pets.

Animals from the Beirut shelter have been adopted out in the United States, Britain, Canada, Germany and Holland.



The Oregonian/Abby Haight Cookie, a two-year-old cat from Beirut, awaits adoption at the Cat Adoption Team in Sherwood. Cats from the war-torn city were flown to Oregon in a partnership among Beirut for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, Lebanon's only animal shelter, and the Cat Adoption Team and the Pixie Project of Portland.

Supporters of the Beirut shelter know the first impression they make -- that they should spend their energy on the human suffering around them rather than on the suffering of dogs and cats.

But the two aren't mutually exclusive, they respond. About 6,000 human aid organizations are at work in Lebanon, Hesayne said. The animals have far fewer advocates.

"We don't feel that we are in any way 'taking away' from what might go to help people," shelter director Jason Mier wrote in an email. "For every animal we have helped we have affected just as many people. Just as we help the animals, we help people - it is impossible to separate the two."

The Cat Adoption Team is located at 14175 S.W. Galbreath Drive, and
Pixie Project, 510 N.E. Martin Luther King Blvd. For more information, click [here](#).

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