

Straydog Inc.

The Arnold Family's Happy Home for Strays
P.O. Box 1465, Gun Barrel City, Texas 75147
www.straydog.org

Dear Friends,

In these three years since Pat's death I have been overwhelmed by the enormity of her day-to-day responsibilities. I've been running full throttle just to keep up with the daily operations at the shelter, the website updates, and the periodic newsletters. I apologize for not personally thanking each of you for your continued support of Straydog, and for not always answering your letters in as timely a manner as Pat did.

Over the years Pat and I (and our children) had many pets, and we always considered them to be part of our family. When Pat brought home Happy, our first stray dog, back in 1992, I remember pointing out to Pat that Happy would not be the last stray she would encounter, but neither of us imagined that this one act of compassion would lead us down the road to creating Straydog. As Pat continued to find more strays (or as more and more strays continued to find Pat), we moved to our current 20-acre property out in the country, where we had room to expand. I continued to commute to my job at Merrill Corporation in Dallas while Pat ran the shelter. In March 1997 *The Dallas Morning News* published a feature story on Straydog. To our surprise an unbelievable number of you contributed to our shelter. Pat developed friendships with a great many of you through correspondence and thank-you notes, while I compiled newsletters from Pat's handwritten daily journal, which she referred to as her *Dog Log*.

In November 2002 I was offered early retirement from my employer of 25 years, and from then on I devoted all my time to helping Pat at Straydog. We worked together for six and a half months until, with no warning whatsoever, Pat suffered a brain aneurysm and died the next day. I had lost my wife and partner of 46 years. The family was devastated, but we wanted to go forward with Straydog in Pat's memory.

At first I found myself angry and bitter about my loss and very frustrated with the situation I was so suddenly thrust into. Now I find myself looking forward each and every day to working at Straydog. I realize that I am no longer doing this just in Pat's memory, but I am carrying on the mission of Straydog because I have the same passion for this cause that Pat had.

In June of this year Straydog's general manager, Juana Vazquez (who had worked for and with Pat and who Pat always said was the best employee she ever had) and I were married, and now once again I have a partner who is committed to Straydog's success and who is helping me make sure that Pat's mission at Straydog will continue to go forward.

With your help and support we will continue managing Straydog providing a better life for as many dogs as we possibly can while at the same time working to solve the general overpopulation problem. Thank you and God bless you.

Sincerely,

Bill Arnold
September 2006