

The Matilde Mission

Pet Homes for Ranch Chinchillas, Inc.



The Matilde Mission has been founded to provide safe and loving homes for chinchillas who would otherwise be slaughtered for their fur.

Our goal is to work cooperatively with ranchers and pelters to bring an end to pelting, and in the process make it possible for every chinchilla to lead a full, healthy, comfortable life from birth until natural death.

NOVEMBER 2005

Dear Friends:

It is with great excitement that we write to you to announce the formal creation of The Matilde Mission: Pet Homes for Ranch Chinchillas, Inc!

The Mission has grown out of the success of the "2004 PHFR (Pet Homes for Ranchies) Midwest Project," founded by Adam and Sally Blacke. In 2004, these dedicated chinchilla enthusiasts made contact with a pelting ranch in the upper Midwest. Knowing that the ranchers were interested in transitioning out of the pelting business, but were having difficulty finding a buyer for their entire herd, our friends made them an offer: to buy the ranch "extras," chinchillas who would be pelted because they weren't as marketable on the pet market or as breeding stock. The ranchers agreed, and over the course of several months, funds were raised and approximately a hundred chinchillas were saved; either adopted directly or fostered by rescue workers in several states and later placed in pet homes that were screened for responsible ownership.

When we learned of the success of "Pet Homes for Ranchies," we were inspired. Until very recently, we knew next-to-nothing about chinchillas! We bought Matilde at a pet store in early 2004, and have been enchanted ever since by her intelligence, her playfulness, and her extraordinarily loving nature. As we fell in love with Matilde, we began to research what conditions were like for other chinchillas in the United States. We were appalled to discover that even now, thousands of chinchillas live brief and unhappy lives, confined in tiny metal cages, only to be slaughtered and pelted for their famously soft fur.

We wish we could tell you that chinchilla fur was losing popularity. Unfortunately, recent years have seen a dramatic upswing in the popularity of fur in the United States; chinchilla fur has proved particularly popular. The cost in lives to these remarkable animals is devastating: it takes more than 100 of these small animals to make a single full-length coat. The two primary killing techniques are electrocution and neck-breaking, neither is instantaneous or painless.

The Matilde Mission is not a lobbying group; we have no interest in political activism. We are a hands-on charity whose focus is to save lives and provide loving, responsible pet homes for chinchillas that would otherwise be needlessly slaughtered for their fur. We are practical and realistic, recognizing that the way to maximize effectiveness is to work cooperatively with ranchers. According to one large-scale rancher's testimony, "Good ranchers average close to \$30 a pelt." That number often diminishes when the costs of processing are factored in.

On the other hand, a live animal sold as a pet or as breeding stock will bring the rancher \$75-\$500, sometimes more.

The Matilde Mission seeks to acquire chinchillas that would be pelted without "rewarding" ranchers; we purchase the extras at or below the minimum price that ranchers get for selling their live animals, which is still more profitable to the rancher than pelting. The Matilde Mission knows that ranching is a business and that only by providing economic incentive to deal in live animals can we pave the way for a future where chinchillas in this country are respected and protected as pets.

Across this country, there are a number of chinchilla ranches who are willing to work with us. Purchasing these at-risk ranch chinchillas, transporting them from ranches to safe houses and ensuring they are set up with basic provisions and veterinary care is not cheap. Everyone involved in this project has already made substantial financial commitments.

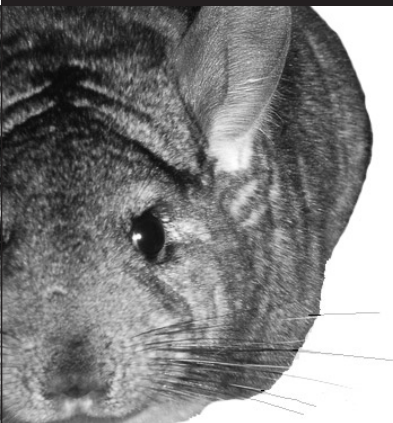
With your help, we can give thousands of these most extraordinary and loving of animals hope for a better, happier, longer life. If you've ever cradled a "chin", you know how sociable, affectionate and precious they can be. If you haven't, we do hope that someday soon you'll have that opportunity. In the meantime, we ask you to be as generous as you can. Matilde, and her millions of fellow chins across this country and around the world, thank you for your support."

Sincerely,

Hugo and Eira Schwyzer

P.S. Coming soon! Visit us online (and donate!) at our new website: <http://matildesmission.org>.

MATTY'S CORNER



Won't you please help rescue my friends? Every contribution, big and small, goes directly towards giving chins safe, healthy, and loving homes! Thank you!

Yes! I would like to contribute to **The Matilde Mission!**

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Email _____ Phone _____

My check is enclosed for:
 \$10 \$100
 \$25 \$ _____
 \$50 Thank you!!

If you would like to donate with a credit card, please visit our website at matildesmission.org

Your tax-deductible donation will help fund future Mission projects across the United States. Matilde Mission funds will be used to acquire chinchillas who would otherwise be pelted, and provide them with safe and comfortable temporary shelter until they can be placed into loving homes. As a 501(c)3 registered charity, we are committed to low overhead costs that will ensure that the great bulk of our donations go directly to help rescue and re-home chinchillas. The Matilde Mission is a 501(c)3 tax-exempt charity (Federal ID #20-3036325).