

Ofelia Uribe — Milo and Lobo

Give Love, Bring Happiness

THERAPET CLIENT PROFILE

Life without pets? Never, for those of us who consider our dogs and cats family. The same holds true for Therapet clients like Ofelia Uribe, a classic program participant who lives alone with her two dogs.

The 82-year-old El Paso native and Bowie High graduate retired from an LVN career, where she worked for Sierra Medical Center, Providence Memorial and in private duty capacities. As a lifelong animal lover and former fundraising chair with the now-dissolved Animal Alliance, she saw a newspaper article about Therapet three years ago. That's when she became a part of the extended Therapet family, as her own daughter lives out of town.

Together with her five-year-old Chihuahua mix, Milo (she got him when he was just a few weeks old and homeless) and six-year-old dachshund mix, Lobo (she found him as a stray), they're virtually inseparable.

"They're my life and when the weather is nice like now, they go where I go—to stores, to church, to the bank, to see friends," she explained, adding that the doggie door lets them come and go from the yard as they please. "Milo and Lobo are my shadows and they follow me everywhere!"

The threesome walks two miles every morning in their Mission Valley neighborhood, then often congregates in the garden where Ofelia's green thumb grows tomatoes, chiles, okra and green onions.

"They're both so smart and obedient and understand everything I tell them," said Ofelia. She still does

all her own housework, takes care of her yard and lawn maintenance and continually mystifies physicians as an 11-year survivor of pancreatic cancer.

"The doctors say I'm a miracle," said Ofelia, who underwent chemotherapy and radiation treatment, spending two years on feeding tubes. "God saved me, but the doctors still can't believe how well I'm doing and how much I can still do myself!"

Today she closely follows politics/current events and thrives as an avid reader of bestselling library books. She checks out and reads two to three per week, especially biographies and non-fiction.

Ofelia said without Therapet, she wouldn't know how she would be able to care for her beloved canines. "Therapet is a tremendous help," she said. "What would I do without them? I really appreciate all the things they take care of, providing the pet food and regular vaccinations and anything else they need. Program coordinator Sandy Connor is wonderful, personable and attentive," handling all the details for Milo and Lobo.

"I don't know how people can live without a pet," she said, recalling a terrier she had who lived to be 23 years old. "They say sharing your life with them adds ten years to your life. At this rate I'll live forever!"

For more information about driving for (bimonthly food deliveries) or contributing to Therapet, referring a potential client or to learn more about program qualifications, please call our Program Coordinator at (915) 581-3789.

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