



West Gwynedd

❖ BRANCH NEWSLETTER ❖

Issue 4

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Contacts

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L@@k @ut - Strange Dog About !

A very strange dog was seen out and about in Caernarfon, Bangor and outside Petsmart this year. Brown and white in colour with very large feet and long floppy ears it attracted a great deal of attention from adults and children alike, especially when it started waving its paws and speaking to them.



The “dog” was a cover-up for Committee members Hilary Pritchard, Dave Hibbert and Alun Rees, and Branch supporters Sue Paul etc who donned the dogsuit to raise money for the Branch. It proved to be a good way of keeping warm at the chilly December collection in Safeway’s doorway, Caernarfon.

Anyone else fancy dressing up ?

1998 Fundraising

This year saw a lot of active fundraising with flag-days at Bangor, Caernarfon, Criccieth, Porthmadog & Pwllheli raising a grand total of £2,740. Events such as sales and collections at Ysbyty Gwynedd, Safeway (Caernarfon), Tesco (Bangor), Petsmart and Ras Antur Waunfawr, coffee mornings and Christmas Fayres netted a further £4,446. With over 20 collection boxes scattered in shops, garages etc, £1,055 was given by the generous public. Not just money was being collected either - our pet-food collecting boxes in Safeway (Caernarfon) yielded well over 1,000 cans of food for Bryn-y-Maen Animal Centre, with similar amounts at Safeway (Bangor) and Petsmart.

The money has been well-spent with almost £17,200 expended directly on vet bills within the Branch area and £1,000 to Regional contribution (see page 3).

Can you help this year ?

	<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>	<u>DAY</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>
Sat	1 May	Bangor Flag day #1	Sat	28 August	Caernarfon Flag
Fri	16 July	Caernarfon Stall	Sat	4 September	Bangor Flag #2
Wed	28 July	Pwllheli Flag day	Sat	16 October	Bangor Safeway
Sat	7 August	Porthmadog Flag & Stall	Sat	27 November	Bangor Flag #3
Thu	19 August	Criccieth Flag			

New Branch Website

The West Gwynedd Branch is always keen to keep up with the latest technology. In October 1998 a website was established by our Treasurer Alun Rees, and has been maintained by him since. The address is:

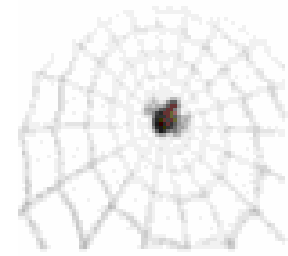
<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/aluntrees>

The facility has not cost the branch a penny to develop or maintain, and increases the opportunity for information exchange with other branches, Horsham and indeed the entire world.

Currently there are only a few Branch websites on the internet, each reflecting the unique nature of their sponsors. On our homepage are links to all these sites plus the national RSPCA website, the Charity Commission, and various others of related interest. There are details of our fund-raising activities, snippets from our Newsletters etc etc.

In the article on Branch websites that appeared in the Winter 1998 edition of the RSPCA's internet caf  s. This is substantiated by the logs from our website that most of the hits occur between 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. and on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays. In the first 3 months our website has received the following visits:

Visitors From	Number
USA Commercial	37
Network	36
Australia	8
Denmark	2
Netherlands	1
United Kingdom	58
TOTAL	142



Indeed, it proved its value within the first month when we were contacted by the Canada Goose Preservation Society through the webpage. They had been informed of the intended culling of some 50 geese at the Starcoast World at Pwllheli. Incensed, they contacted us, the local media and any other interested party they could find. We in turn informed the RSPCA inspectorate and the RSPB. As a result of all the adverse publicity generated, the slaughter was prevented.



Case Histories

Several dog-owners have needed assistance with paying for the removal of their pets' mammary tumours. This condition is very rare in animals that have been neutered, and is yet another reason for spaying

A dog found with its eye hanging out was taken to the police. After the eye was removed, she was rehomed by Bryn-y-Maen.

Focus on the Regional Board

The RSPCA in England and Wales is split into 10 Regions, (see map below).



Wales is Region 9, with its Headquarters at Brecon. Each Region in turn has its own Regional Board consisting of one elected delegate from each Branch committee. The person nominated by the Branch represents its views at the meetings and has full voting rights. The Regional Manager, Branch Co-ordinators and representatives of the Inspectorate also attend the Board meetings but are not entitled to vote. There are currently 17 active Branches in Wales.

Regional Boards make the running of the affairs of each area more democratic, and meetings are held 3 or 4 times each year. Each region has a certain amount of money in its budget and the Board for Region 9 ensures it is spent wisely in the interests of all animals throughout Wales. Any of the Branches or the inspectorate can suggest subjects for the agenda of the meetings and are able to discuss and share problems. West Gwynedd's representative is Margaret Eaglestone who has

been on the Board for many years and does a marvellous job representing the Branch.

West Gwynedd has previously benefited from the Region's support by a total of £6,560 from 1993 - 1995 to establish a subsidised neutering scheme in our area. This not only raised our profile, but helped fund the neutering of 232 cats, 163 dogs and 1 rabbit. In 1998, Regional Board money was allocated for similar schemes in the 4 poorest Branches in the Region. Assistance was also given towards the costs of developing a small animal unit at Llys Nini Animal Centre (Swansea), the Gower Bird Hospital, purchasing a horse-box for the North Wales inspectorate and many other smaller items.

Each Region also elects one delegate to represent their area on the RSPCA Council. Along with 15 elected national members, and up to 3 co-opted delegates with specialist knowledge, the Council acts as Trustees of the Society and determine its policy.



Case Histories

Two adventurous kittens had lucky escapes in two unrelated events. One fell from the top of a wardrobe in the owner's bedroom. The second jumped from an upstairs bedroom window. Shaken, but not stirred they were taken to the vets by their worried owners for a check-over. Both kittens made a quick and full recovery, with only the loss of their dignity.

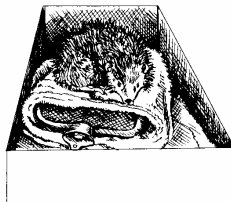


Rehabilitating Convalescing Hedgehogs

Joan Handforth of our neighbouring Aberconwy Branch is an expert in caring for sick, injured and baby hedgehogs. She has been doing this essential work for some years, and now the RSPCA Inspectors pass hedgehogs on to Joan's care. Last year an amazing 77 hedgehogs overwintered with her, each requiring individual attention depending on its injury or state of health.

At the end of the year hedgehogs born in the autumn may not have enough fat reserves to carry them through the winter. At this time they would normally hibernate, tightly rolled up inside a substantial warm, dry, nest. If they have not reached sufficient weight by November or December they must be kept warm, awake and fed throughout the winter months until ready for release in April or May.

During the late spring and summer, casualties arrive with injuries mainly due to road or garden strimmer accidents. Others are youngsters orphaned or separated from their mothers. Such youngsters are fed every two hours, day and night, until old enough to feed



on cat or dog food (especially *Felix* chicken or Butcher's tripe mix). Older casualties receive veterinary and continuing nursing care until they are well enough to be returned to the wild. Any animals that are incapable of surviving alone in their natural environment are released in "safe" habitats such as walled gardens, where they can be supplemented with food.

Last year, an appeal was made to the West Gwynedd Branch for volunteers to care for recovering hedgehogs. Three committee members volunteered, and two

hedgehogs were successfully rehabilitated and returned to the wild. Many more are expected this year.

If you can help with this valuable work by providing space in a shed or garden for convalescing hedgehogs or finding/ suggesting suitable safe release sites, or need advice about hedgehogs appearing distressed, please contact:

Joan Handforth

01492 584673

🏠 Case Histories

Several incidents of cats & dogs injured after being attacked by other animals required our assistance this year. One poor dog was bitten in the eye and needed it removing. Also, a hen lovebird bought as a companion for an existing bird was found on the floor of the cage following an attack by the cock bird. Sadly she never recovered, and died a short time later. Who says the course of true love runs smoothly?



Yes, we have NO shops

Please note that the RSPCA - West Gwynedd Branch does not run a regular shop. The animal charity shops in Bangor and Porthmadog are run by PAWS, while the shops in Caernarfon and Pwllheli are owned by Greenacres. Neither charity has any affiliation with the RSPCA, and any veterinary costs incurred by animals rehomed by them should be paid for by them.

1998 Branch Statistics

206 cats neutered	121 cats treated
115 dogs neutered	121 dogs treated
2 other neutered	9 other treated