

RSPCA West Gwynedd

❖ BRANCH NEWSLETTER ❖

Issue 16

April 2012

Inside this issue:

<i>Beware of Garden Hazards</i>	2
<i>And Now We Are One</i>	2
<i>The Collector's Tale</i>	3
<i>Penygroes Shop Closes</i>	3
<i>Contacts</i>	4
<i>Annual Branch Statistics</i>	4
<i>And finally..... The Encore</i>	4

Gemma

by David Hibbert

Gemma went to RSPCA Bryn-y-Maen Animal Centre on 16th November 2006 via

Inspector Chris Dunbar following an unspecified complaint. She was very underweight and in poor condition.

The owners agreed that they were unable to provide adequate conditions for a large German Shepherd dog (Alsatian) and signed her and another dog over to the RSPCA. In the two months she was there she became a firm favourite with the staff and volunteers.

Gemma was at Bryn-y-Maen for Christmas 2006 and her Christmas present was a new home with Steve and Helen Mitchell-Papes and their two children in Bangor. Steve and Helen adopted her on 16th January 2007. She was very quickly up to her proper weight and was a large hairy soft and loveable GSD.

When asked about helping with flag days Steve and Helen volunteered immediately, so in April, Gemma went along with Steve, and then with Helen, to seduce people into donating with her big brown eyes.

Steve and Helen (and Gemma) helped with Flag days and then with Tesco week. In fact Steve and Gemma hold the record for the largest amount collected in Bangor in an hour, and I'm still wondering how they did it. I suspect Steve is not telling me something but perhaps it was Gemma. In 4 years Gemma,

with Steve, Helen or daughter Holly in tow, has collected between £2,500 and £3,000.

In 2009 Gemma won "Dog of the Year" at the Bryn-y-Maen Dog Show along with rosettes for "Musical sits" and "Most appealing eyes"!!! But the National competition was cancelled that year due to farming restrictions so Gemma did not go on to win the National competition.

Sadly, in April 2011 she was diagnosed with lymphoma and was PTS in November. To quote Helen: "She was such a gentle soul. We all miss her, but we're glad she had the chance to have the life she deserved after such a bad start, she was really special."



Beware of Garden Hazards

As the days get longer and warmer, pets and their owners tend to spend more time outside in the garden but be aware of unwittingly introducing hazards for your pets, as many garden plants can be very toxic to animals.

Spring bulbs such as daffodils, narcissi, hyacinths and tulips are toxic to cats and dogs. If the bulbs are eaten they can prove fatal. Lilies are extremely toxic to cats both in the garden and as cut flowers. All the parts of azaleas and rhododendrons, if eaten, are toxic causing nausea, vomiting, depression, breathing difficulties, coma and can cause death in dogs and cats. Ivy leaves could lead to similar consequences.



Clematis and cyclamen are gastrointestinal tract and nervous system toxins that can lead to convulsions and paralysis. The leaves and seeds of foxgloves can cause nausea and vomiting. Chrysanthemums and marigolds are also toxic but the smell of these

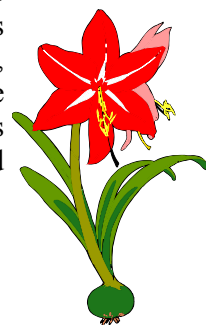
flowers usually deters pets from coming too close. Even in winter, the garden can be dangerous as the berries on holly can cause an upset stomach, tremors, seizures and loss of balance and even a few mistletoe berries eaten by a puppy can be fatal. The use of some products in the garden can also be dangerous to our pets. Cocoa shell mulch, now widely used as a mulch on flower beds, is to be avoided if you have a dog. Dogs are attracted to



this by its smell, but it contains theobromine which is very poisonous to dogs. Tree bark is a safer alternative. Many herbicides, pesticides and garden maintenance products can be poisonous to pets and wildlife – slug pellets commonly contain metaldehyde which is very toxic; creosote is lethal to cats at low doses– always read the labelling carefully before using any garden chemicals.

Other chemicals can also be harmful – white spirit and barbecue lighter fluid can cause severe poisoning if swallowed, licked off fur, absorbed through the skin or inhaled. Antifreeze, which is sweet and particularly attractive to cats, causes intoxication and rapid kidney failure.

Finally, just as you decide it's safer for your pets indoors, remember that some indoor plants such as amaryllis, asparagus fern, begonia, carnations, lilies and poinsettia can also be toxic, as can sharing some human foods such as grapes, raisins, green tomatoes, onions and mushrooms with our pets.



http://cats.about.com/od/catsafety/ss/toxicplants_10.htm
<http://www.pdsa.org.uk/pet-health-advice/further-information/safer-gardens>
http://www.dogstrust.org.uk/_resources/resources/factsheet09/factsheetpoisonoussubstances09.pdf

And Now We Are One

On January 1 2011, RSPCA West Gwynedd Branch and RSPCA Meirionnydd Branch officially merged. In order to save on reprinting headed paper, changing bank account names, Charity Commission details and many other administrative duties, it was decided to retain the name RSPCA West Gwynedd for the combined charity. We now cover virtually the whole of the Local Authority area of Gwynedd Council. Combining the finances of the two charities proved a major headache for the treasurer

Alun Rees and the Branch Support Specialist Carl Lloyd, but after 4 months of negotiations and form-filling the job was done.

During the year, a total of £8,600 was spent directly on animal welfare in the Meirionnydd area, including payment towards the costs of the useful weekly mobile clinic service to Blaenau Ffestiniog and free cat-neutering.

In 2012 we are extending our free dog neutering scheme in conjunction with the Dogs Trust, to owners on means-tested benefits in Meirionnydd. Any assistance in this district will be much appreciated as we have no active volunteers to help here.

The Collector's Tale

by David Hibbert

It is amazing what people will put in the bin! The bin in question is not the refuse or recycling, it is the "dog house" for pet food in Morrisons in Bangor. We have had a box there for many years now, but one day our old blue box was replaced by a yellow plastic "kennel" provided by *Pedigree Petfoods*. This appears to have been a national agreement with Morrisons as the Bangor store were given the names of three local(ish) pedigree dog charities who "would collect the contents". After discussions with Morrisons and phone calls to the charities concerned I found that the three charities did not know about the arrangement and did not want the pet food so I continued to collect the food and take it up to Bryn-y-Maen.

Typically, the box fills once a fortnight and I store alternate collections and take the dog food to Bryn-y-Maen once a month. The combined load usually amounts to just over 100 tins of dog food. 50 tins at 1.2kg, and 50 tins of 400g, plus over 20kg of biscuits etc., making over 100kg (16 stones) in total. That's more than I weigh! (and before I get any comments, a LOT more). We do have "other items" placed into the box. Tins of tuna, or occasionally salmon are a treat, but we recently had several tins of Heinz spaghetti, which dogs may like, but may cause digestive problems. Bryn-y-Maen have a lot of dogs and do not always have time to cater for the tastes of individual animals. Even some *dog* foods can have an undesirable effect on some dogs, but these can be given to other animals, such as hedgehogs,

seagulls or other "exotics". Mushroom soup, rice pudding or "Hot dog sausages" (in brine) may also be unsuitable for the dogs, but not for the staff, so that does not go to waste. We once had a donation of a jar of coffee. No use to the dogs, but appreciated by the staff, who are worth this small reward for their untiring work with the animals in their care. There is also a small amount of cat food, which Freda takes to feed her collection of strays and unwanted cats, many of which are feral or semi-feral and are difficult to re-home. So if you are in Morrisons, and see a figure in an embarrassing position picking something out of the bottom of the dog-house, don't kick him in, just say hello and lend a hand.



Penygroes Shop Closes

After almost 11 years of trading at two different premises on Snowdon Street, Penygroes, it was decided to close the door for the last time in September 2011.

Over the years the shops have raised a grand total of £105,569 thanks to the hard work of the unpaid volunteers and the support and custom of the people of Penygroes and further afield. Much of the profits went back to the animals and their owners in Nantlle Vale

(Dyffryn Nantlle) by assisting with veterinary costs and neutering fees.

Time stops for no man (or woman), and due to the advancing years of our landlady Mrs Williams (well into her nineties) and the demands on our stalwart Freda (over 65 shall we say) running two shops, it made reluctant sense to close. A big **"THANKS"** to everyone concerned.

Our shop in Pwllheli remains open and contributions are most welcome.

National Cruelty Hotline
0300 1234 999

RSPCA WEST GWYNEDD BRANCH

Shop at: 54 High Street, Pwllheli
Open 10:00 - 16:00 Tue, Wed, Fri & Saturday

Phone: 01758 750356 (Freda)
07900 597891 (Freda)
01248 671304 (Alun)

Email: Enquiries@RSPCAWestGwynedd.org



West Gwynedd Branch
Reg Charity 226126

We do what we can to help

We're on the Web!
www.RSPCAWestGwynedd.org

Branch Statistics for 2011

Animals given veterinary treatment funded by Branch voucher

Dogs	Cats	Rabbits	Other	Total
760	486	19	24	1,289

Animals neutered by Branch voucher

Dogs	Cats	Rabbits	Other	Total
190	376	9	2	577

Animals re-homed by Branch

Dogs	Cats	Rabbits	Other	Total
1	76	-	-	77

Total spent on vet bills: £38,586

Total spent on fostering: £15,016

All money spent locally has to be raised locally.

**We receive no lottery, nor government funding
nor grants from RSPCA HQ.**

We **urgently** need fundraisers to help out on collection days and to organise fundraising events, people willing to work on a regular basis in our shops, home-checkers for animals being adopted, people willing to help trap and to transport feral cats to veterinary surgeries. We also need regular donations of good quality clothes and bric-a-brac for the shop and temporary fosterers for cats and kittens.

Can YOU help in any way?

And Finally.....The Encore

Earlier this year our shop landlords organized and staged a musical fund-raiser on our behalf at the Glyn y Weddw Arms, Llanbedrog. The talented pair comprise Paul Brett a world-famous guitarist, composer, producer, journalist and collector and seller of guitars, and his partner Michele Breeze an actress, singer, author, producer and costumier. Between them they covered a wide musical extravaganza with songs from Michele's self-penned stageshows as Boudicca in "*The British Warrior Queen*" and Elizabeth I in "*The Queen's Chambers*". With dramatic lighting and rapid costume changes, Michele was transformed into Eva Peron from Evita, a role she played for four years in London and New Zealand. Paul caroused us with covers of Rod Stewart and songs from *Les Miserables*, and a duet with Michele of Bonnie Tyler and Meatloaf's hits.



CHARITY FUNDRAISING EVENING
A musical performance by EVITA & BOUDICCA Star
MICHELE BREEZE

CLASSIC MUSICALS & CLASSIC ROCK



Tickets: £10 incl. Hot Buffet Meal - Choice of dishes - Raffle

Friday 24th February 2012 - Glyn y Weddw Arms - Llanbedrog

Thanks are also due to the staff of the Glyn y Weddw Arms who provided an excellent hot buffet and bar service. The 50 people who turned up (especially those who won raffle prizes) were very pleased with the event.

The evening raised a staggering **£715**.