

# RSPCA West Gwynedd

## ❖ BRANCH NEWSLETTER ❖

Issue 13

April 2009

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### Virtual Shop Reaps Rewards

In addition to opening a new shop in Pwllheli in 2008, we also established an eBay for Charity account on the internet. This created a new range of opportunities for fund-raising, allowing us to auction items to a wider customer-base than Pwllheli and Penygroes. Successful sales ranged from several Haynes' Workshop manuals to an old AA badge. The star-sale had to be a 4" high Moorcroft Pansy pattern vase with a small chip on the rim. From a conservative starting price of £20 the bidding reached £100.99 on the same day. All went quiet until the closing minutes 10 days later when a flurry of bids closed at a staggering £231. The winning offer came from an animal-lover and Moorcroft collector at Llandudno who happened to have a friend who repairs antique pottery. The other bonus with this e-retailing is that anyone selling items on eBay can donate a percentage of the sale price to

a charity of their choice. RSPCA West Gwynedd Branch has so far benefitted from £331.44 since June 2008 from donors in Bangor, Llandrindod Wells, Blaenau Ffestiniog, Swansea and Newport. Thanks to our donors, buyers and our very own Peter Hawley for selecting and publishing items for sale.



The Moorcroft vase

### Shops News

The Branch shop in Pwllheli had its first anniversary in February 2009. It has been a very successful twelve months and has certainly given the Branch extra money to spend on local animals. We find that the income increases dramatically during the holiday season, which is only to be expected when the population size doubles with all the tourists. We have regular customers both local and visitors and several bring their dogs in to see us as we welcome dogs (and their owners) into the shop.

Penygroes shop is still ticking along and this year celebrates its ten year anniversary in August 2009. When I think that we originally took out a six

month lease "to see how it goes" it's marvellous to see it still open.

There have been some losses in volunteers staffing both shops over the year due to sickness, road traffic accidents and other reasons but we have also had new volunteers coming in.

Although some charity shops seem to need to advertise for items to sell or run costly trawls of neighbourhoods, we do not have this problem as people are very generous. We are extremely grateful to all who donate items to us to sell in the shops and also to those who come in to buy them. Thanks also to all our volunteers who give their time freely - nobody associated with the Branch is paid for their efforts.

## Community Animal Action Week (CAAW)

Each year since 2005, every RSPCA Inspectorate Group runs a "Community Animal Action Week" to help pet owners by providing free animal care advice, discounted micro-chipping, neutering vouchers and other assistance via the local RSPCA Branch. Local RSPCA officers and Animal Collection Officers (ACOs) team up with volunteers to visit as many homes in the selected areas as possible. The areas chosen are those which are particularly busy for the RSPCA on a day-to-day basis and where residents might appreciate the chance to meet local inspectors and receive assistance or advice about their animals. In 2008 Inspectorate Group WW6 which covers North Wales decided to come to Maesgeirchen on the outskirts of Bangor.

The event was well-publicised in advance by use of the community's newsletter, posters, internet and radio coverage. Between the 20<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> October, 1,470 premises were visited in Maesgeirchen, Coedmawr and Menai Bridge. 589 people answered the door, and 299 of these households admitted to having one or more animals. A total of 212 animals were micro-chipped (including 2 ferrets), and 82 neutering vouchers plus 14 welfare vouchers were issued. Nearly £450 was received in donations. The week was a great success with media coverage from the national RSPCA, BBC and Daily Post. Conwy MP Betty Williams also popped in to show her support. Details of the week can be found via our website on:

<http://www.rspcawestgwynedd.org.uk/CAAW-1.htm>.

## RSPCA Condemns Welsh Badger Cull Plans

The RSPCA is both disappointed and deeply concerned that the Welsh Assembly Government has decided to push ahead with plans to cull badgers. The Welsh Assembly Minister for Rural Affairs Elin Jones recently announced plans for a pilot cull in an area of North Pembrokeshire.

RSPCA Senior Wildlife Scientist Colin Booty said: "We're well aware of the costs of bovine TB in Wales, along with the efforts the Welsh Assembly Government is making to control the spread of the disease in cattle. However, we feel this Government's decision to eliminate badgers from a large area of the Welsh countryside is wrong. "The way in which this area has been chosen will mean that any lessons learnt, if there are any, will not be applicable to the rest of the country. The WAG's approach of throwing everything at the problem will also make it impossible to know which parts of the control strategy may have worked."

A 10-year study by the Independent Scientific Group on TB in cattle which cost some £50 million and the lives of nearly 11,000 badgers actually found that culling them carries the risk of increasing

the spread of the disease. That painstaking work led to their conclusion that badger culling could make "no meaningful contribution" to cattle TB control in Britain.

It is important to realise that most badgers are not infected. The findings of a study of badgers found dead in Wales were published in January 2007. The study - conducted for WAG - found that 7 out of 8 badgers tested negative for the disease.

The RSPCA believes one of the main opportunities for controlling the disease is vaccination, and the Society welcomed the recent news from Environment Secretary Hilary Benn who announced the deployment of an injectable badger vaccine next year. This will help to build knowledge about how an oral vaccine may be used in the future and is a very positive step in the right direction.

Whilst vaccine development is ongoing, the RSPCA believes other methods of control should continue, such as pre- and post-movement testing and stringent biosecurity measures. Both need proper monitoring and enforcement to make sure that they are being carried out and are allowed time to have an effect.



Please sign the petition on:  
<http://www.backoffbadgers.org.uk/>

## Collection Boxes

We are sorry to report the death in December 2008 of John Halsall of Boston Lodge, Porthmadog. A dear friend of the Branch, John used his coach-building and artistic skills which he developed on the Ffestiniog Railway, to maintain our collection of life-sized dog-boxes seen outside a number of shops in Porthmadog, Pwllheli, Caernarfon and Llanberis over the years. It is a fitting tribute to John that his finest creation can be found outside the Snowdon Mountain Railway station in Llanberis. This strikingly-decorated dog and her two pups are very popular with tourists who crowd round to have photos taken with the box and then make donations in excess of £100 per annum. Another of his dogs is soon to be reinstated as probably the "highest RSPCA dog in the world" when it returns to the soon to be opened visitor centre "*Hafod Eryri*" at the top of Snowdon.



Some of our boxes with the Snowdon Mt Railway dogs in the centre

## Animal Stories

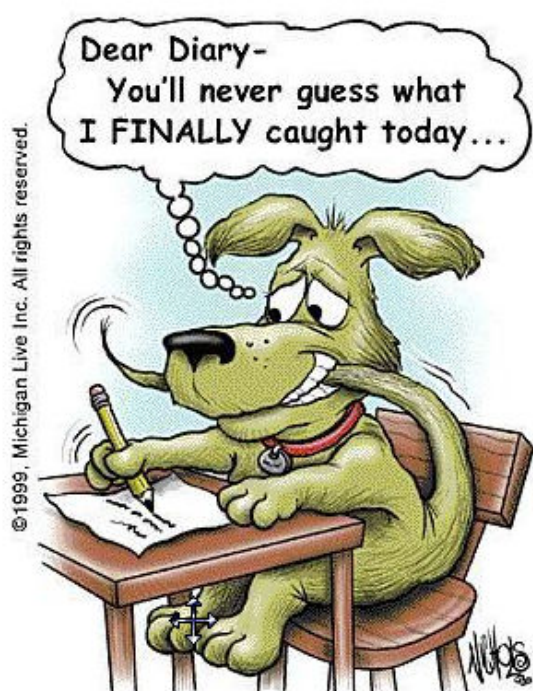
In the week before Christmas 2008 a young man came into Pwllheli shop with a large cardboard box, which could be smelled from quite a distance away. When we opened the box, inside was a 6-week old kitten, covered in faeces and very smelly. It had been found in a field just outside Pwllheli. It was accepted by Freda and

taken to the vet, where it was found to be a male and despite its malodorous condition, in good health. The kitten was given a home by Carol, one of the fulltime volunteers in the shop, and is now called "Bobby". Since then Carol has also given a home to another young cat with impaired vision, caused by severe cat 'flu. Bobby now has a friend called "Felix".

A mother cat and three kittens were found in the centre of Pwllheli and the kittens were all suffering from cat 'flu. One had such bad eyes that unfortunately, even though it was treated, one of its eyes burst and had to be removed. This has since been given a home, with another cat, by a lady in Nefyn.

A couple adopted a Rottweiler X German Shepherd Dog from a rescue, and within a very short time it was diagnosed as having a torn cruciate ligament, (you see it's not only footballers who suffer from this). The total cost of the treatment and operation was almost £3,000, unfortunately the dog was not insured.

People are not aware of the cost of veterinary treatment and it can be quite a shock when your animal goes to the vet. Before taking on a pet it is advisable to check out costs to ensure you are able to afford the upkeep of an animal. It is amazing how many people, who already ask us for help with their vet bills, will go out and purchase a new animal and come to us almost immediately for financial help. If you can't afford an animal you shouldn't take it on. It is a different matter if you already have an animal and your circumstances change.





**National Cruelty Hotline**  
**0300 1234 999**

**RSPCA WEST GWYNEDD BRANCH**

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

Paris House, 44 Snowdon Street, Penygroes  
Open 10:00 - 16:00 Tue, Wed & Friday

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

Email: [Enquiries@RSPCAWestGwynedd.org](mailto:Enquiries@RSPCAWestGwynedd.org)



**West Gwynedd Branch**  
**Reg Charity 226126**

*We do what we can to help*

***We're on the Web!***  
***[www.RSPCAWestGwynedd.org](http://www.RSPCAWestGwynedd.org)***

**Branch Statistics for 2008**

**Animals given veterinary treatment funded by Branch voucher**

Dogs	Cats	Rabbits	Other	Total
84	289	2	11	386

**Animals neutered by Branch voucher**

Dogs	Cats	Rabbits	Other	Total
73	305	1	1	380

**Animals re-homed by Branch**

Dogs	Cats	Rabbits	Other	Total
-	160	-	-	160

**Total spent on vet bills: £24,527**

**Total spent on fostering: £3,043**

**All money spent locally has to be raised locally.**

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

If you can give some time to help RSPCA West Gwynedd Branch in ANY way, check out our website for a full calendar of events, or contact us by e-mail, or phone any of the numbers given on this page and elsewhere.

## Mobile Clinic Adds Bangor to its Rounds

The mobile clinic run by our neighbouring Aberconwy Branch started coming to our Branch area on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2008. It has now become a familiar sight in Llys Dylan, Maesgeirchen, Bangor on Thursday afternoons between 3:00 p.m. and 4:30p.m.

The vet Jim Mason spends the morning at Llandudno and then Llanfairfechan. Tuesdays are spent in Colwyn Bay, Llanrwst and Blaenau Ffestiniog. Although slow to start with, the numbers of patients turning up at each 90-minute clinic are now into double figures with some regular attendees often travelling considerable distances. Initially there was the suspicion that the RSPCA only prosecute people for being cruel to their animals, but it is now appreciated that we are here to help as well.

The clinic offers free advice to anyone and subsidised consultations and treatments to pet-owners on a number of means-tested allowances including Income Support, Housing Benefit, Job-seekers' Allowance (income based), and Council Tax Benefit. The services offered include vaccinations, micro-chipping,

For further information contact the RSPCA Clinic on:  
**01492 584061**

