

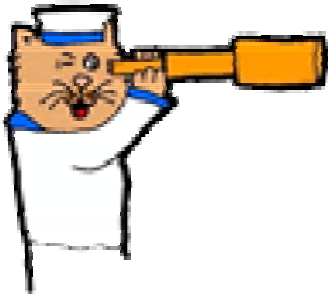
RSPCA West Gwynedd

❖ BRANCH NEWSLETTER ❖

Issue 8

April 2004

A Nautical Tale



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A newsletter produced by staff at Hafan, the marina in Pwllheli, in Spring 2002 told the tale of a stray cat that had appeared on site, very thin and bedraggled. Christened 'Bosun', he was too frightened of people to be approached. Staff soon realised that he was in trouble as he had managed to entangle his right front leg through his collar. This had resulted in a large wound in the "armpit" area, but Bosun could not be caught as he was too scared. Eventually the lure of food coaxed him into the Marina office where he was captured and subsequently taken to Deufor vets.

Examination found an extensive long-standing leg wound and West Gwynedd RSPCA were approached to help finance the treatment. Bosun spent the best part of two months as an in-patient at the practice, undergoing surgical repair and antibiotic treatment. When last reported, consideration was being given to skin-grafting to aid the healing process of the wound. Meanwhile Bosun has become something of a minor marina celebrity, receiving regular donations of food from berth-holders, and his own feature in the *Hafan News* newsletter.

Stop Thief !

The volunteers working in both Branch shops must always be on the alert for thieves and shop-lifters. It is a sad reflection of the times that even charity shops have become targets for theft. In November 2003 however, staff at our Bangor shop were almost outfoxed by a thief with a difference.

The volunteers were busily tidying the shop, when in walked an unaccompanied dog. He casually trotted to the window display and removed a doll. He then walked out with a volunteer in hot pursuit. The doll was

recovered and the volunteers were left with an apparently unique story to tell their customers.

However, all was not over as the crafty thief brazenly returned to the scene of the crime to take a different soft toy. He was again out-smarted by a volunteer, the commotion causing much hilarity to customers and staff alike.

The dog which had no collar nor tag was taken home temporarily by a local resident. Fortunately he was soon reunited with his rightful owner after the shop received reports of a missing dog. It was then discovered that the dog's name was Lucky !

Branch Support for Inspectorate

Having set a precedent by buying a trailer for the RSPCA Inspectors in Wales during the Foot and Mouth crisis, we were recently asked to pay for an inflatable pontoon (see below) to help rescue stranded porpoises and dolphins.



The picture shows an inflatable “dolphin” on a pontoon during a rescue training exercise. The specialised equipment costs over £1,200 but makes the re-floating task much easier and less stressful for the dolphin and rescuers.

About 35 live cetaceans strand each year on the coastlines of Britain. If the animals are healthy, then the outlook is usually good, particularly if they are not stranded for long. A successful rescue of a rare striped dolphin, which was stranded on Anglesey in 1995 was made by the Anglesey Zoo and other parties.

Dolphins breathe air, and when stranded on the shore need to be kept cool with water.

If a stranded dolphin or porpoise is found...

Phone 1 of the following for help **immediately**:

RSPCA **08705 555 999**

Environment Agency **0800 807 060**

British Divers Marine Life Rescue (BDMLR) **01634 281680**

Anglesey Sea Zoo **01248 430411**

Useful websites:

<http://www.bdmlr.org.uk>

<http://www.crru.org.uk>

<http://www.nhm.ac.uk>

Fostering and Re-homing Success

The Branch continues to foster cats and kittens pending re-homing. 2003 was a particularly successful year with 165 being found new homes, some as far afield as Cheltenham and Liverpool. Clive & Shirley, and Phil & Kath continue to be the main fosterers with some Branch Committee members taking in individual animals short-term in emergencies.

It was realised last year that due to the increasing demand for spaces for unwanted kittens, we needed to improve and expand the facilities at Phil & Kath's. So the Branch invested in a new shed complete with heating for the colder months of the year. No doubt the new facility will soon be put to good use as a new season of fostering begins.

Ysgol yr Hendre's Pet Food Collection

Ysgol yr Hendre, Caernarfon has become the first school in the Branch area to have a pet food collection box permanently on site. The headmaster, Mr Oliver, was approached by cat-fosterers Phil and Kath early in 2004 to ask if the school would be willing to participate in such a scheme. We were thrilled when Mr

Oliver agreed, and the purpose-built food post-box was delivered to the school. The response from the children has been tremendous so far with regular donations of tinned and packeted foods.

Ysgol Syr Hugh Owen, Caernarfon also continues to support animals with their annual Christmas food collection.



Focus on RSPCA West Gwynedd Shops

Our shops in Bangor and Penygroes are gaining quite a reputation as Aladdin's caves. Visitors on holiday to the area will often call in having been surprised at the variety and quality of the bargains to be found here in previous years.

Both shops are run entirely by hard-working volunteers, with no paid staff. This ensures maximum profit for Branch funds to be spent on local animals. These shops have become the main source of income for the Branch. Running the shops relies on continued commitment from the volunteers who work together to ensure sufficient manpower to provide cover. Bangor shop is open daily except Sunday and Wednesday, Penygroes shop is open Monday to Saturday.

The shops sell a great variety of goods

including clothing and bric-a-brac. They differ from many other high-street charity shops in that they sell only limited amounts of new goods, preferring to give the shopper the opportunity to leisurely browse through good quality second-hand articles in the hope of finding that long sought after bargain.

If you have any goods to donate to either shop, please call in or telephone the contact numbers given on the back page. We apologise that large household items e.g. settees, wardrobes etc cannot be accepted due to lack of space.

We are always glad of help at the shops. Volunteers would be especially welcome in Bangor, if only to cover during volunteer holiday periods. An hour or two a week, on a regular basis, would make such a difference and ensure the continuing success of the Branch shops. **Can you help?**



Fashionable Fund-raising

The Branch continues in its quest to raise funds for local animals by various means. In 2003 we decided to try something a little different and set about arranging a fashion show. We were fortunate to be supported by Lonsdale's of Pwllheli who offered to provide the elegant day and evening wear for the show.

A suitable venue had to be arranged and we were thrilled to be offered the facilities of Pwllheli Sailing Club, free of charge for the evening of October 2nd. "Models" were persuaded to appear - Committee members,

friends and friends-of-friends, most appearing for the first time on a cat-walk. Needless to say there was much entertainment both on the cat-walk and behind the scenes in the dressing room. The event raised £308 and a good night was had by all.

The Branch is grateful to everyone who helped make the evening a great success. It may even become an annual event.



Committee Changes

2003 saw some changes in the Branch Committee with the departure of five of its members. We would like to thank them for their service and

extend our best wishes to them all for the future. We appreciate their continued support to the Branch as fund-raisers, volunteers and home-checkers.

RSPCA WEST GWYNEDD BRANCH

Shops at: 115 High Street, Bangor
Open 10:00 - 16:00 except Wednesday & Sunday
Tel: 01248 351354
44 Snowdon Street, Penygroes
Open 10:00 - 16:00 Monday - Saturday

Phone: 01758 750356 (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 2003

Animals given veterinary treatment funded by Branch voucher

Dogs	Cats	Rabbits	Other	Total
126	169	1	2	298

Animals neutered by Branch voucher

Dogs	Cats	Rabbits	Other	Total
74	332	1	4	411

Animals re-homed by Branch

Dogs	Cats	Rabbits	Other	Total
	165	-	-	165

Total spent on vet bills: £20,768

Total spent on fostering: £2,744

All money spent locally has to be raised locally.

**We receive no lottery, nor 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.

And finally.....

A man saw a sign in a public house in Luton: "Talking Dog for Sale". He asked the barman about the dog and was told to see the dog in the back garden. The fella goes into a very pleasant garden and sees a black mongrel just sitting there.

"Do you talk?" he asked.

"Sure do." the dog replied.

"So, what's your story?"

The dog looks up and says, "Well, I discovered my gift of talking pretty young and I wanted to help the government, so I told MI5 about my gift, and in no time they had me jetting from country to country, sitting in rooms with spies and world leaders, because no one figured a dog would be eavesdropping.

I was one of their most valuable spies eight years running."

"But the jetting around really tired me out, and I knew I wasn't getting any younger and I wanted to settle down. So I signed up for a job at the airport to do some undercover security work, mostly wandering near suspicious characters and listening in. I uncovered some incredible dealings there and was awarded loads of medals.

Had a wife, a few puppies, and now I'm just retired."

The geezer is amazed. He goes back in and asks the owner what he wants for the dog.

The owner says, "Ten quid."

The bloke says, "Ten quid !!! – But this dog is amazing. Why on earth are you selling him so cheap?"

"Cause he's a damn liar. He's never done any of that stuff."