

RSPCA West Gwynedd

❖ BRANCH NEWSLETTER ❖

Issue 9

April 2005

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Home and Away

Our fosterers Phil & Kath and Clive & Shirley had another busy year with rehoming cats and kittens. In total 192 were rehomed and we are grateful to our fosterers for all their efforts yet again.

Many adopters keep in touch, sending letters, e-mails and Christmas cards, often with photos of the adoptees. Odin and Thor (seen below) were rehomed as kittens this year and although both are slightly deaf, certainly seem to enjoy life and being mischievous as their owners reported recently:



"I have to say many thanks to you all over the help and support regarding Odin. After his treatment finished it took a good four weeks before the limp disappeared. But it did. He has gained weight and appears to have slight hearing, enough to hear me open the fridge door at times! Thor is a huge stunning cat. He is

very long and looks a little oriental. Goodness knows what their parents were like, but you'd never tell they were out of the same litter. Odin is short and stocky, Thor is long and lean.

Thor climbs the curtains like I've never seen, is a real magpie for sparkly objects, pinches pens and runs off with them in his mouth like a bone. He is extremely active, loves

the Hoover, loves to climb in all those places he shouldn't. The pair of them LOVE playing with the hamsters, which are in another room, but given the smallest window of opportunity they are in there and have

dismantled the cage three times and removed the little occupants, but do not try to do them harm. We should have named them the Kray twins!

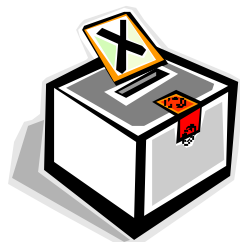
I am going to have them neutered hopefully in the next couple of weeks, as I've noticed their play has got rather rough lately! More than normal that is."

Treasurer joins Council

In May 2004, Branch Treasurer Alun Rees achieved a long-standing wish to be elected to the national Council of the RSPCA. Having been approached by the Regional Councillor for Wales – Ann Hughes-Roberts early in the year, he had only a few weeks to draft his electoral address and collect the necessary 10 supporting signatures for nomination. He was duly elected with 4,952 votes.

"Life on Council is very interesting, giving a different perspective of the bigger picture" said Alun. "The minimum attendance is 7 Council meetings per

annum, plus 5 Committee meetings. I opted for the Scientific, Technical & Academic Committee (STAC). Most of the meetings are held at our HQ in Horsham, or London, so a typical day will start with the alarm-clock ringing at 4:30 a.m. in order to catch the 5:50 train to London from Llandudno Junction. If the meeting goes on much after 5:00 p.m. it means I will not get home before 11:00 p.m., with work the next day. These are exciting times with the Hunting Bill having become an Act of Parliament, and the advent of the Animal Welfare Bill being passed".



Make-over makes money

The Branch is always looking for new ways to raise money and this year was no exception. The fashion show, supported by Lonsdales, Pwllheli has become an annual event, and the models are now expert at the quick-change and strutting the cat-walk. This year's show raised £273.48. In September we were approached by a Branch supporter with the idea of holding a cosmetics party. The idea soon escalated into organisation at full-throttle as it was decided to make it into a bigger event – a Christmas Fair – to be held in October. Meifod (Bontnewydd) offered their marvellous conservatory as a venue.



Virgin Vie agreed not only to display their cosmetics but also to do a make-up demonstration on the night.

Their products are not tested on animals so we could use them at an RSPCA event. They in turn gave 10% of the evening's orders value to the event.

Other stall-holders were invited, each contributing a table charge. Goods for sale included jewellery, cakes and puddings, Christmas decorations, cards, gifts, flowers and a photography stall. The event raised over £400 and the Branch is grateful for the support of all those involved. As for a similar event in 2005 – watch this space

Case Histories

Most of the Branch expenditure each year is on almoning. Members of the public within the West Gwynedd area contact us by phone, e-mail or face-to-face in our shops seeking financial assistance with vet bills. Almoning is done through a voucher system. We help with both treatment and neutering of animals, but help is available only for people on state benefits or in exceptional cases, people on low income and full-time students. The vouchers issued are then handed in to the vet surgery by the animal's owner. Any charges over and above the value of the voucher must be paid by the owner.

Freda Holme is chief almoner, as well as Branch Secretary, and on busy days may receive up to 10 requests for assistance. Most requests are to help dogs and cats, but in 2004 we also helped treat an iguana having fits, a corn-snake which was refusing to eat, and an African Grey parrot with diarrhoea.

Some calls can be quite distressing, especially where animals have been deliberately hurt. One such case was a cat shot by an air-rifle. On X-ray, five pellets were found of which only 3 could be removed. The cat survived its injuries but lost an eye.

Freda receives lots of calls from owners of pets involved in fights, falls from heights and animals swallowing things they shouldn't have e.g. pebbles, stones and rubber washers. One dog was reported as having its teeth stuck in a bone. When asked "Don't you mean a bone stuck in its teeth?" Freda was told that it was an over-ambitious dog with a large bone. Veterinary costs to treat such cases can be phenomenal as surgery is essential to save the animal. Bills in excess of £300 are not unusual these days and it is always advisable to insure your pet where possible.

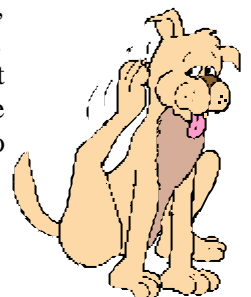
A summary of the numbers of animals treated and neutered with the help of Branch almoning is given on page 4.

Once bitten.....

2004 was certainly a good year for fleas it seems. Increasing voucher requests were made for treatment of animals with fleas and associated conditions. More of the cats and kittens coming into fostering care also had fleas, some literally alive with "little friends" and having to be treated immediately.

Having fleas can be extremely distressing for pets and left untreated can cause serious secondary bacterial infections and flea allergies that will return every time the animal is bitten by a flea, often causing baldness

and severe itching. Heavy infestations in kittens can lead to anaemia and death in severe cases. As fleas can also live in pets' bedding, household carpets and furnishing, its not only pets that are left scratching, owners can also be bitten ! So please remember to treat your pets regularly to avoid distress to all concerned. Contact your vet for advice on the best treatment for your pet.



Focus on Working Together

Whereas most of West Gwynedd Branch's funds are used locally, sometimes we are called upon to work together with other Branches in Wales to help animals regionally. One such project is Equine Rehoming in Wales run by Sally Learoyd. Sally is employed on a part-time contract to arrange care and rehome horses taken in by the RSPCA from all over Wales. The project is highly successful with well over 200 equines rehomed in the last 3 years. Below is one such happy tale.

Quentin and his friend Fern were abandoned in a wet field in West Wales. Fern was too weak to stand and was carried into the lorry on the dolphin mat by some enterprising Inspectors. Quentin was terribly thin but was terrified of humans, so he had to be darted by a vet in order to be caught. His initial handling took place in Wales, and when he had gained in confidence he was moved to RSPCA Felledge in County Durham for



breaking and schooling. Although staff had worked hard with him in Wales, the move set him back and the Felledge staff needed all their reserves of patience to persuade him that life could be fun. He was worked for a year and then rehomed to an experienced home in Scotland.

His progress since then has been remarkable. His new owners have discovered his huge talent for jumping and he is competing at a very high level as a novice show-jumper. In 2004 he travelled to a competition in Ireland, and this year will be aiming at Horse of the Year Show qualifiers.

Quentin (known as The Mighty Quinn for competitions) is a credit to his owners – the Laing family, to Felledge Equine Centre, his trainers and of course to RSPCA Wales, without whom he would not be alive.

Sally will be giving the talk at this year's AGM of RSPCA West Gwynedd, so do come along.

<http://www.horseandponysales.co.uk/rspca.htm>

Shops More Accessible

Regular customers to our shops in Bangor and Penygroes may have noticed some changes this year. Charity shops must adhere to requirements of the law and safety of both customers and shop volunteers. The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 came into force on 1st October 2004 requiring premises to overcome physical barriers to access. In order to comply with this and general health & safety issues, the Penygroes shop closed for 3 weeks in September, whilst necessary improvements were done. Regular customers have since been very positive in their comments on improvements. Volunteers at the Bangor shop are also working towards meeting the standards.

The shops continue to be the Branch's main income source. Both are run entirely by non-paid volunteers and committee members, willing to donate time and energy to keep the shops going. **Could you help?** A few hours a week on a regular basis would be much appreciated. The opening hours are as follows :

Bangor – Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri, Sat 10:30 to 4:00

Phone Shirley on 01248 351354

Penygroes – Mon, Tues, Wed, Fri 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Phone Freda on 01758 750356

Donations of clean, good quality clothing and bedding, books, toys, bric-a-brac always gratefully accepted.

Companion Dog Show 2005

This year's Companion Dog Show, at the RSPCA's Animal Centre, Upper Colwyn Bay, will be held on **Sunday, May 22nd**. Last year's show was a big success, attracting over 350 people and lots of dogs of all shapes and sizes on a fine sunny day. One of the winners was Josh, a cocker spaniel, fostered temporarily by the Branch following the death of

his owner in 2004. A spirited youngster, Josh soon found a home with a lovely new family in Llandudno and settled in marvellously. His new family were so proud of him winning a prize.

Please support this year's show, bring your dog to compete or just come along for the fun of the show, stalls and boot sale. We look forward to seeing you there.

**National Cruelty Hotline
08705 555 999**

RSPCA WEST GWYNEDD BRANCH

Shops at: 115 High Street, Bangor
Open 10:30 - 16:00 except Wednesday & Sunday
Tel: 01248 351354
44 Snowdon Street, Penygroes
Open 10:00 - 16:00 Mon, Tue, Wed & Friday

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 2004

Animals given veterinary treatment funded by Branch voucher

Dogs	Cats	Rabbits	Other	Total
123	250	3	10	386

Animals neutered by Branch voucher

Dogs	Cats	Rabbits	Other	Total
47	318	1	1	367

Animals re-homed by Branch

Dogs	Cats	Rabbits	Other	Total
8	192	-	-	200

Total spent on vet bills: £25,675

Total spent on fostering: £3,269

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 family in Africa had a faithful pet dachshund. One day, the dachshund was chasing butterflies and went further and further into the forest. Before long he realised that he was lost.

Then he spotted a leopard heading in his direction with the obvious intention of having lunch.

The dachshund thought quickly. He noticed some bones on the ground nearby, and immediately settled down to chew on the bones with his back to the approaching cat.

When the leopard was close enough to hear, the dachshund exclaimed loudly, "Lovely, that was a really delicious leopard. I wonder if there are any more around here?"

The leopard stopped in his tracks, and, with a surprised look on his face, he slunk away into the trees. "Whew," he said to himself, "that was close. That dachshund nearly had me."

A monkey had been watching the whole episode from a nearby tree, and thought that he could trade this knowledge for protection from the leopard.

So, he ran after the leopard, but at such a speed and with such noise that the dachshund saw him, and guessed that something was happening.

The monkey soon caught up with the leopard, told him the tale and strikes a protection deal with the leopard. The leopard is furious at being made a fool of and says, "Come on, monkey, hop on my back and you'll see what happens to sneaky canines that try to fool me."

But the dachshund saw the leopard coming, with the monkey on his back, and he was a clever little doggy. Instead of running, the dog sat down with his back to the approaching leopard and just when they get close enough to hear, the dachshund says, "Where's that monkey got to? I sent him off half an hour ago to bring me another leopard."