

# RSPCA West Gwynedd

## ❖ BRANCH NEWSLETTER ❖

Issue 10

April 2006

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### Young helpers

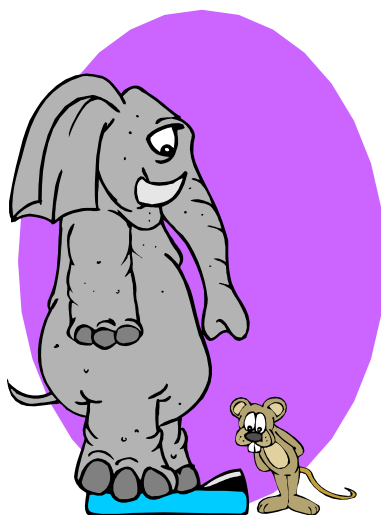
**Y**ou're never too young to raise money for the animals – with a little help from a responsible adult. 3 young ladies – Sylvie Smith (8), Alana Mai Owen (7) and Teleri Owen (11) raised over £44 recently for RSPCA West Gwynedd by dressing up as a dog, a rock-star and a Welsh lady and making a collection in their village of Talysarn. Well done girls.



Verity (Sylvie's mother) with the girls and Freda (Branch Secretary).

### Porky Pets

The RSPCA's campaign during RSPCA week this year is "Overweight Pets". Overfeeding an animal can be just as cruel as underfeeding. It is estimated that 30% of Britain's pets are overweight, usually as a result of overeating and the owner's habit of slipping their pet the odd tit-bit too often.



Fat pets live shorter lives, have less ability to undergo surgery and recover from diseases. Obesity may cause or worsen conditions such as heart problems, diabetes, arthritis, skin disease and heat intolerance.

What can you do if you think or know your pet is a "porker"? First take your pet to see your vet. Once your vet has diagnosed weight problems, try following these tips:

- Cut out all treats and table snacks
- Feed cats/dogs before you eat and keep them in another room during meals
- Exercise your pet regularly
- Stop pets eating leftovers or scavenging outside
- Divide the daily food allowance into two to four small meals
- Weigh your pet weekly and keep a record

Follow your vet's advice

## Home and Away

The Branch continues to re-home cats and kittens where it can and in 2005, 208 were successfully re-homed by Phil, Kath and Freda. Sometimes kittens are found abandoned, like the male ginger kitten that was left in a cardboard box in Nefyn. Three kittens were discovered by a lady walking her dog in Nefyn. They had been left in a lidded bucket in a field with air-holes pushed through the lid. Luckily they had managed to push this off and escaped into the lane. The lady managed to catch them all and kept them until they recovered from cat-flu. She then found them new loving homes. Another four kittens were found dumped in a quarry above Rhosgadfan. As can be seen in the picture (right), they grew into quite a handful. They too were re-homed in two groups of two kittens in order to keep each other company in their new homes.

The Branch does not have facilities for kennelling dogs but occasionally Freda, Branch secretary, will foster dogs at home until new owners can be

found. Such was the case in 2005 when she took in 5 labrador x boxer pups. Pups are well known for being lively and Freda recalls the day when all five were racing like 'red indians' around the old well-head in her garden with Toby, her own Welsh Terrier, standing on top, wondering when these youngsters could be re-homed.



Wil, Bodger, Badger and Smudge in safe hands.

## Case Histories

As almoners, Branch officers often have to deal with pet owners that are very distressed about their animal's injuries or condition. 2005 proved no different. Many cats were reported missing and then returned home injured, mostly due to road traffic accidents. One cat returned covered in oil and had to be completely shaved. Another was attacked on the tail by a dog and had to have the tail amputated. A kitten had its tail amputated as it had become maggot-infested, and a male cat was treated for a rat-bite to its leg. Other common

problems with cats include abscesses, cat-flu and expensive dental problems.

The most common problems with dogs are pyometra, caesarians, road traffic accidents, diabetes and haematomas. A boxer cross mastiff bitch suffered massive blood loss and had to have an emergency operation to remove a dead puppy. A lurcher was admitted having tried to jump a fence, but unfortunately failed to clear it and tore its belly and chest.

## Race the Train



The "Race the Train" charity run is held on the Welsh Highland Railway as part of the Caernarfon Festival in July. The runners board the train in Caernarfon and are taken to Dinas from where they try to beat the train on the 5Km journey back. Last year, vets, nurses and friends from the P E Jones practice in Treborth, Bangor, took part in the race and raised almost £170 for RSPCA West Gwynedd. The picture shows most of the "The Green Team" at the end of the race looking remarkably fresh..

## It Makes Sense

Freda, Branch Secretary and chief almoner says that of the veterinary problems she encounters with dogs, pyometra and caesarians top the list. Both can prove very costly to the dog and the owner's pocket, and unless treated quickly can result in the death of the pet.

Pyometra literally means "pus in the uterus". It affects entire female animals, particularly dogs, but also occurs in cats, ferrets, guinea-pigs and rabbits. Infection builds up in the uterus and toxins are absorbed via the bloodstream. Signs include depression, lack of appetite, increased thirst, vomiting, abdominal distension & pain, increased urination and an abnormal profuse bloody discharge. The body temperature may be high, normal or low.

Immediate treatment is required to save the

animal. Removal of the uterus is the treatment of choice together with antibiotic treatment and intravenous fluids.

The RSPCA recommends that pets are neutered. Neutering can prevent problems such as pyometra and the need for caesarians. Un-neutered bitches come into heat twice yearly for about three weeks each time. They can go through phantom pregnancies and are also more prone to tumours of their breasts in later life. Whilst in heat, a bitch usually attracts lots of male dog admirers, queuing at the owner's front door!

For further advice, talk to your vet. Pet owners on means-tested benefits may also be eligible to financial help from their local RSPCA Branch or the Dogs' Trust schemes.

## The Abandoned Terrapin

Phil, our Bangor shop manager, turned up at the shop one day in December to find a small plastic sandwich box left by the gate to the backyard. At first it was thought to be discarded rubbish, but on further investigation the box was found to contain a small yellow-bellied terrapin. It was so cold that ice could be seen on its shell.



Terrapins are relatives of turtles and tortoises and need special care. This species should be housed in temperatures between 22 and 25C. Luckily Phil had owned terrapins before and used his experience to slowly warm the little reptile until it regained consciousness and started to move and eat. A few more hours in the cold and this abandonment could have proved fatal.

The terrapin was re-homed a few weeks later having made a full recovery. It may go on to live for over 30 years.

## All Change at Bangor Shop

In June 2005, Shirley who had run our Branch shop in Bangor for 4 years decided she needed a break and left us. We are very grateful to Shirley for all her hard work over the years.

We took the opportunity when Shirley left, to close the shop for re-decoration and to complete changes to comply with access requirements. Although losing some of its "Aladdin's Cave" concept, the shop has become more open-plan and accessible to all-

comers.

The shop re-opened in July with Phil as shop manager, ably assisted by his wife Kath, and Rob, Josie and Jackie.

Both our Bangor and Penygroes shops are run entirely by volunteers with no paid staff. This helps us gain maximum profit from the ventures. If you would like to help at either shop, please contact Phil on **01248 351354** or Freda on **01758 750356**. Any help would be much appreciated.

**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](http://www.RSPCAWestGwynedd.org)*

**Branch Statistics for 2005**

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

Dogs	Cats	Rabbits	Other	Total
93	203	1	1	298

**Animals neutered by Branch voucher**

Dogs	Cats	Rabbits	Other	Total
38	234	-	1	273

**Animals re-homed by Branch**

Dogs	Cats	Rabbits	Other	Total
8	208	-	1	217

**Total spent on vet bills: £19,110**

**Total spent on fostering: £1,935**

**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.

## Ann's Fashion Show Diary



"Perhaps the outfits won't fit me," I thought hopefully, as I tried on the clothes chosen for one of our usual models at our annual fashion show in Pwllheli. Illness had struck Helen that day which left us a model short for the show. Slowly it dawned on me that the outfits fitted and that the "back-room girl" would have to join the other volunteer models on the cat-walk that night. The show held at the Sailing Club in Pwllheli with lovely clothes supplied by Lonsdales, Gaol Street, Pwllheli was a great success raising £345. And the reluctant model..... as the Branch chairman said with a smile: "Don't give up the day job." Let's hope all the models are well next year!

Two of this year's models are Julie (left), and Karen (right) shown in their finery on the "catwalk".

