

RSPCA West Gwynedd

❖ BRANCH NEWSLETTER ❖

Issue 12

April 2008

Inside this issue:

Fund-raising Friends	2
Daisy May finds a home	3
Max	3
Contacts	4
Annual Branch Statistics	4
Household hazards	4

The Power of Communication

It all started with this heart-breaking e-mail to our website from a distraught owner: "Hi there, I guess this is a long shot, but my lovely ginger male cat has gone missing from the Llanynghenedl / Valley area of Anglesey. He's 4 years old, very soft coat and fairly large in size. His name is Symba. Has a cat of this description been brought into your Rescue Centre please? I really miss him."



The message was forwarded to RSPCA Animal Centre Bryn-y-Maen and RSPCA Inspector Sabina Dunkling who covers Anglesey on the off-chance that they may have heard

something. Five weeks later Sabina rang and said that she had picked up a ginger tom from the right area and had taken it to Bryn-y-Maen for safe-keeping. A quick exchange of e-mails, photographs and telephone-calls was made and the next day the original owner was re-united with her beloved cat during a tearful meeting. In her own words:

"I just wanted to send you an email to thank you for helping bring my cat home. I went to Bryn-y-Maen RSPCA today and YES it was Symba!!! He's lost quite a bit of weight, expected I guess, but after an hour of being home he's settled down again (is sitting on my lap as I type this to you). I think he's had a run in with a dog as he's not so friendly with my two anymore...but its early days, and time will only tell. I also had him microchipped at the Centre today.

So thank you very very much for helping to keep him safe and bring him home. I am extremely grateful, and glad to be just one of the RSPCA's success stories."

Don't you just love a happy ending?

Shops News

2007 saw West Gwynedd Branch committee taking the difficult decision to close our shop in Bangor after six years as it threatened to run at a loss. So in September, the doors were closed for the last time. We are indebted to all those volunteers who helped over the years.

So on to ventures new and on February 4th, 2008, after a month of setting up, we opened a Branch shop in Pwllheli. The shop, manned totally by unpaid

volunteers, is so far doing a roaring trade. Long may the trend continue. Pay us a visit and buy yourself a bargain.



Fund-raising Friends

When Julie Holland was looking for a birthday gift with a difference for her sister Jean Bray, a supervised abseil into Devil's Gorge, Loggerheads seemed to fit the bill. As word spread amongst their friends and family this soon developed into a fund-raising opportunity with 10 eager participants keen to test their bottle. Their chosen charity was RSPCA West Gwynedd Branch which has been helping animal welfare in north west Wales since 1877.

On a cold morning in late November, the two young women and their friends turned up anticipating a relatively gentle introduction down the 75ft slope of "The Slide", but due to the wetness of the rock they had to step off a bridge instead ! This proved a good



Julie and friend take the plunge from the bridge

confidence-builder as it involved a free hang abseil (NO BODY CONTACT WITH THE SIDES). Despite both sisters being afraid of heights, they pluckily took the plunge putting all their faith in the two instructors and a piece of rope. When Julie returned with a broad grin on her face she announced that it was less scary than being a model at a fashion-show previously held in aid of the RSPCA Branch.

All the volunteers were so keen by this time that they had another go before going on to the final challenge of the 150ft descent of The Devil's Gorge which includes a 120ft overhang, described by the instructors as "real

nerve-racking stuff".



Jean descends the Devil's Gorge

Everyone eventually returned unscathed and excited by the event and an incredible total of £637.50 sponsorship had been raised for their beneficiary charity. Branch Treasurer Alun Rees said "Events like this are vital to our fund-raising. Each Branch of the RSPCA is a separately registered charity and the trustees are responsible for all its fund-raising and expenditure. In 2006 we spent over £29,000 on vet bills, almost £4,000 on boarding of animals, and rehomed over 200 animals. We are really grateful to Julie and her friends for showing this initiative and will be presenting them with certificates in due course".

Amongst our other resourceful fund-raisers during the year, two stand out for their athleticism. Jayne Jacobs – a veterinary nurse at the P E Jones practice, Treborth – completed the Great North Run in September 2007 raising £383 for the Branch.

One of our younger supporters Damian Bialozynski ran the Anglesey 5k race and finished in a creditable 9th place out of 94 runners on 23rd September 2007 and raised £27 in aid of RSPCA West Gwynedd Branch. His achievement was even more impressive given that it was his first race.

Congratulations and thanks to all.



Jayne approaches the finish-line still smiling

Daisy May finds a home

Last June, Freda our Branch secretary was asked to foster a bichon frise who had developed a habit of continually urinating on her owner's bed. Despite the problem disappearing under Freda's care, on being returned to her owner the old habit came back and we were asked to find her a new home. During the next two months with Freda, Sasha (as she was then known) was found to have another habit—thieving! One day, Freda returned from answering the telephone to find her plate of sandwiches, left on the kitchen table, empty. This little dog could jump and climb to reach her target.



In September, she was successfully re-homed. Now renamed Daisy May, the little imp continues to steal things and as she is small enough to get through the cat flap, most stolen items are eventually found in the garden. To date these have included mobile phones, an inhaler, make-up items and a passport. The passport had been kept in a handbag and it was only pure luck that it was found to be missing before the owner's daughter set off for the airport. Since then, Rocky the cat, has been witnessed tugging at the zip tag of the handbag and gradually opening the zip to reveal the bag's contents, only for Daisy May to take whatever she wants. What teamwork!

Max

by David & Pat

Igo for a walk each morning with a beautiful, slim, long legged blonde. That description might explain why people say "Isn't she gorgeous,...what is she?" SHE is actually a HE, (men can be good looking too) and he is my wife's dog Max, a 'blonde' saluki that we had from Bryn-y-Maen in July last year. He was 13 kg when he was rescued from a farm six months previously, and the farmer was eventually taken to court and fined £500 plus £1,000 costs but was allowed to keep his 10 sheepdogs!

Max was found with other dogs in uncleaned pens with concrete floors, and still suffers from skin problems. He has a bald patch of red skin on his stomach, possibly the result of urine burns, but he is a very clean dog, and often cleans his bald patches, which keeps them bald.



He is still slim, but is now 24kg, and looks like a cross between a whippet and a golden labrador. He is very sedate about the house, not like a labrador at all, but he runs like a whippet when we go for our morning walk on 'Roman Camp'. This is a lovely spot with views of the mountains, the two Menai bridges, and Puffin Island. It is also popular for *al fresco* parties. I just wish they would take their empties home. Not only are these untidy, but 'not quite empty' cans attract slugs, which then die, presumably happy.

We used to use beer in a little dish to catch slugs in our garden (slug pellets are bad news for birds) until one morning there were no slugs and no beer in the dish. We couldn't understand this until I opened the shed door and out crawled a very hungover hedgehog, blinking in the sunlight, who crawled off to find a dark corner under a bush.

Max loves the sun, which is understandable as Salukis originate in the Middle East, and he has the silky hair and regal demeanor of an Afghan. If he feels neglected he will show his petulance and sit on our settee. He has been known to steal food, and then looks me straight in the eye with a look of wide eyed innocence. He eats most things, but prefers a piece of bread and butter to a dog biscuit! This is handy for feeding him tablets. It took a while to find that he had a broken tooth, which led to some rather expensive dental treatment (why didn't we get insurance?). In the car, he likes to see where we are going, and will stand up to see, and then we go round a corner and he falls over, but he will still not sit down. He is now settled with us, but is still wary of dogs that he doesn't know. If he is off the lead, he can go on a detour to avoid dogs or people, or just go home on his own! (He is very independent!) Like a lot of dogs (and people) he has "selective hearing", and will not always come when called, but he can hear his dinner plate being put on the floor, and never needs calling for that.



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 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 2007

Animals given veterinary treatment funded by Branch voucher

Dogs	Cats	Rabbits	Other	Total
65	229	4	-	298

Animals neutered by Branch voucher

Dogs	Cats	Rabbits	Other	Total
24	300	-	1	325

Animals re-homed by Branch

Dogs	Cats	Rabbits	Other	Total
5	203	-	-	208

Total spent on vet bills: £23,204

Total spent on fostering: £4,277

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.

Household hazards

(as advised by Cibyn Veterinary Clinic Newsletter)

Did you know that many everyday items around the house can be lethal to our pets? Here we look at a few of the more common ones.

Chocolate is probably the number one hazard for *dogs*, particularly at Christmas and Easter when there may be more lying around the home. The toxic component is called theobromine, which is present in variable concentrations — the higher the cocoa content, the more dangerous the chocolate.

Turning to *cats* — most varieties of **lily** pose a significant risk, although it is only recently that

awareness of this has been raised. All parts of the plant including the flowers and the pollen are poisonous.

So what other foodstuffs present a danger? There are now several reports confirming that *dogs* eating even fairly small quantities of **grapes**, **raisins** or **sultanas** can develop renal

failure. Additionally items such as fruitcake (which contains sultanas and raisins) will also pose a risk.

Turning to vegetables, **onions** are also a hazard to dogs, with all parts of the plant being considered toxic, whether cooked or raw. Other members of the onion family — such as garlic, leeks and chives may also pose some risk. So - don't panic, do remember that lilies are toxic to cats, and in terms of feeding, the best bet is always to feed diets and treats specifically formulated for pets.

