

# RSPCA West Gwynedd

## ❖ BRANCH NEWSLETTER ❖

Issue 14

April 2010

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### The One That Got Away

It was the afternoon of Christmas Eve when the call came to the Branch saying "I've got a cockerel in a box here, can you come to pick it up?" It transpired that the bird had been wandering in Caernarfon for four days and had eventually got into this person's back yard where he was caught and put into a Gwynedd Council recycling box. A call had already been made to the RSPCA National Call Centre (NCC) and a promise made to pass the call on to be dealt with locally. As it was unlikely that the cockerel would be picked up until after Christmas, Alun and Ann decided to collect it and put it into their shed in a cage until a home could be found. The cockerel, now named Kevin (after his rescuer), settled down to a hearty meal of corn and water. The light in the shed was left on overnight to prevent the neighbours being awoken as Christmas Day dawned by a crowing Kevin, which would not have gone down well in the *cul-de-sac*!

News had spread that Kevin was in need of a home and on Christmas Day morning came the phone call offering him a home in a lovely rural setting. He had become somewhat

of a celebrity and it caused quite a stir in Llanrug to see a caged cockerel in the back of a car being delivered to a new home and not being prepared for dinner!

A few weeks went by before more was heard of Kevin. His fame had indeed spread and his original owner had come forward identifying Kevin as one of his prize breeding birds which had gone missing when his henhouse had been broken into. Kevin was returned home to his girlfriends in exchange for some hens. Some weeks later the henhouse was again broken into and four other cockerels stolen. Suspicions were raised

that this may have been thieves specifically looking for birds for illegal cock-fighting and the police and RSPCA were informed. Kevin was lucky yet again as he was not taken this time. We also found out that this was not the first time that the police had been involved in Kevin's story. The police had apparently been informed that a cockerel was roaming free in Caernarfon in the days before Christmas and had sent out a squad car and two officers to apprehend the culprit who evaded arrest as he couldn't be found when they got there.



### STOP PRESS

RSPCA West Gwynedd Branch is in the process of taking over our neighbouring Meirionnydd

Branch which has been under National Council trusteeship for the last 5 years. Visit our website for updates of developments.

## Ollie Finds a Home

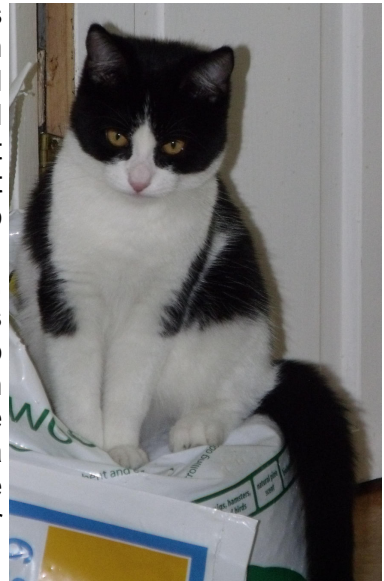
Three small kittens were found abandoned by the river Cegin in Maesgeirchen by some children out playing. They took them home and their mother contacted the Branch to say that she had found a home for one but wanted the others rehoming and that she was concerned about their condition. On collection, the two



remaining kittens were found to be covered in oil and one had no use of her back legs. A visit to the vet revealed that it

was likely that this little mite had been stood upon and had a broken back, and as a result the vet recommended that it should be put to sleep immediately.

The remaining kitten, now called Ollie, was nursed back to health and though still a scrappy little bundle found a loving home as the before and after photos demonstrate.



## How Times Change.....or do they?

The Gwynedd Council Archives at Caernarfon contains a fascinating glimpse into the past of the local RSPCA in the form of the Annual Report of the "Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals West Caernarvonshire and Anglesey Branch" 1936 (item XD70/308). The full version can be seen by kind permission of the Archives at:

[http://www.rspca.west.gwynedd.care4free.net/News\\_Archives-1.htm](http://www.rspca.west.gwynedd.care4free.net/News_Archives-1.htm).

The first point of interest is the number of dignitaries on the General Committee, with the Chairs of both Caernarvonshire and Anglesey Councils, the Mayors of Bangor, Caernarvon, Pwllheli and Beaumaris, the Chief Constables of Caernarvonshire and Anglesey, the Medical Officer of Health for Caernarvonshire, as well as Lord Boston of Moelfre being listed. Other Committee members include two Reverends, a J.P. and Lady Deane of Penmaenmawr.

The full home addresses and telephone numbers of the local inspectors are given, as well as 31 Local Secretaries and 25 Junior League contacts.

The two Inspectors' reports both begin very formally with "I beg to submit my report.....", and proceed to list their activities during the previous 12 months in a similar manner to

those in our recent annual reports. Some of the comments include concerns about the lack of humane slaughter of sheep without pre-stunning being permitted by Local Authorities, the prevalence of hobbling of sheep, the loss of life and suffering of sea-birds due to oil spillages, holiday makers galloping horses on unsuitable surfaces and the incompetent treatment of horses by boy drivers. Nowadays we have boy racers in cars. Lists of lethal chambers for the "painless destruction of small animals" are also listed including police stations, chemists and what appear to be private houses.

The guest speaker at the AGM was Mr Diggon, Assistant Secretary from Headquarters who spoke on the problems of stray dogs, trapping of wild birds, the suffering caused to seabirds by oil pollution and "the numbers of stray cats, which amounted to some thousands in the large towns." The education of children in animal welfare was also emphasised. "Tea was afterwards served" [sic].

An extensive list of the names, addresses and amounts donated was followed by the accounts for the year. Considering the country was just emerging from the Great Depression (sound familiar?) the activity is most impressive. Bangor Flag Day raised £25 8s 10d (that's £25.44p for the youngsters reading this).

## Shops

**W**est Gwynedd RSPCA Branch continues to run two wholly volunteer-staffed charity shops in Penygroes and Pwllheli. Penygroes shop has been open for 11 years and continues to trade thanks to the concerted efforts of Freda, our Branch secretary and two stalwart volunteers Brenda and Sheila. The shop continues to be a centre for socialising with many customers calling in several times a week for a chat. We don't really mind because as they chat they browse and usually end up buying something before heading for the door. Pwllheli shop has now been running for 2 years under Freda's command. Again we are

grateful to our small band of volunteers Carole, Peter, Lesley, Jano and Arwel (now left) who regularly give their time to staff the shop four days a week. Freda remains our main "sorter" downstairs in the cellar storeroom and is fondly referred to as our "mole in the hole" who occasionally sees daylight when customers come in seeking advice about their animals, wanting animals rehomed or needing almoning vouchers to help with veterinary costs.

Our shops, like all businesses, were hit by the recession and profits were down this year. However, it is hoped that after this long cold winter, the summer will see visitors flocking into the area again all looking for a bargain.

## Events and Collections

**T**ESCO RSPCA week continues to be our best single event fundraiser. Collections are held every day for a week at TESCO stores in Bangor, Caernarfon and Porthmadog where volunteer availability allows. In 2009 we raised £2,889. If you can help at any of the stores this year between 26 April and 2 May please contact us at the numbers given on the back page. We would really appreciate your help.

We no longer hold our Meifod Christmas Fair due to lack of volunteers but pre-Christmas is still a busy time. A stall was held at Carmel school selling RSPCA goods and donated Christmas toys and decorations raising £154. It's a good way of advertising the Branch's existence to the next generation of animal-lovers. Ann continues to run her Webb Ivory catalogue at Christmas and this year 25% of the cost of all goods sold was donated making £310 profit. Many customers regard it

as getting their present-buying done and at the same time donating to a good cause.

When you receive an email from a lady called Olga with a subject of "enquiry about personal donation", your first instinct is SPAM. The truth was almost stranger than fiction as she was a Russian physicist who wanted to hold a puppy-themed birthday party for her son's first birthday which she thought both he and his two and half year old brother might enjoy. Her idea was to get friends to bring dog food, bowls, leads and toys which could be donated to the RSPCA's Bryn Y Maen Animal Shelter, Colwyn Bay. She asked if we had any small animal-themed toys, stickers and colouring books that she could put into goody bags for children at the party to take home with them. When Olga and her boys saw the RSPCA goods that we had on offer at our clandestine rendezvous in TESCO car-park, they were thrilled and went away having spent £65. What a marvellous way to help animals.

## We Help Where We Can

**A** telephone call came through one evening during the icy spell in December from a lady in Bethesda who had fallen on ice and broken her leg. The lady owned a dog that needed his regular walks and unfortunately her husband was also unwell at the time. Initially we suggested putting an advert in the local shop asking for help and then we contacted David from our committee who does most of the

home-checks for animals being re-homed in the Bethesda area to see if he had any ideas. Within a few hours, David had rallied the troops and together with the help of the shopkeeper who had taken the trouble to ask his dog-owning customers if they might help, a rota had been set up to exercise the dog. How did the lady have her accident? She slipped on the ice trying to avoid tripping over her pet – owning animals isn't always easy!

**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)  
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 2009**

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

Dogs	Cats	Rabbits	Other	Total
115	210	-	3	328

**Animals neutered by Branch voucher**

Dogs	Cats	Rabbits	Other	Total
159	325	5	5	494

**Animals re-homed by Branch**

Dogs	Cats	Rabbits	Other	Total
9	133	-	1	143

**Total spent on vet bills: £30,330**

**Total spent on fostering: £15,718**

**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.

## Let's Work Together

**W**est Gwynedd Branch has few active volunteers and it is often difficult to get worthwhile projects off the ground due to lack of manpower. So this year it was decided that we should, wherever feasible, join forces with others for the good of animal welfare.

Gwynedd Council's Companion Animal Welfare Enhancement Scheme (CAWES) Officer, Alaw Jones, approached the Branch asking for support in setting up a series of Microchipping days in Gwynedd. It was agreed that initially West Gwynedd Branch would supply the microchips and clerical support whilst Gwynedd's Dog Wardens, who are appropriately trained, would do the actual microchipping of the animals. So far two one-day events have been held at Porthmadog and Caernarfon where a total of 101 dogs of all shapes and sizes (not all Dalmatians) and 5 cats were microchipped. These sessions also allow the Branch to promote their current neutering schemes and provide general advice on animal welfare through RSPCA leaflets. Further events are planned for Blaenau Ffestiniog and Bala in 2010. Gwynedd Council has now agreed to fund the events totally themselves but would continue to appreciate

the Branch's presence to promote neutering schemes and provide support.

Another of our working together projects involves the Dogs Trust. Two years ago an offer was made by them for RSPCA branches to "buy into" their dog neutering schemes. This permitted us to purchase vouchers from them at £30 each which allows us to offer a joint scheme for pet owners on means tested benefits to have their dogs neutered for free. The scheme operates through veterinary surgeries involved in the Dogs Trust scheme currently Cibyn Veterinary Clinic, Caernarfon; Milfeddyfon Deufor, Y Ffôr, Pwllheli and Bodrwnsiwn Veterinary Group, Bangor and Menai Bridge. The Branch is very grateful to the staff of all these veterinary practices for taking part in the scheme and for coping with the additional paperwork involved.

To date we have been able to support neutering of 233 dogs under the scheme and in addition the Branch decided to fund free microchipping of these dogs at the same time as they were being neutered. Entry into the scheme is dependent on agreeing to the dog being microchipped unless a chip is already in place.