

VOLUNTEERS' MEWSLETTER 23

November 2008



Hello Catlovers!

After 10 days with internet connection problems, hours spent installing, uninstalling, rebooting and troubleshooting etc, plus umpteen frustrating conversations with NINE *****!! Aol technicians, I resorted to the Freecycle site and asked for the donation of a spare modem or router in the hopes of saving our sanity.

My request took me this evening to the outskirts of both Henley and Maidenhead. Freecycle came up trumps and I am now the proud recipient of both a donated secondhand modem as well as a router which Aol actually recognises. I also ordered a brand new wireless router by snailmail from Aol after threatening to leave them and then negotiating £3 per month off my monthly fees!

At the time of writing, with some trepidation I'd managed to connect, and even reconnect, successfully to the internet with only moderate teething problems and only having to reboot once.

The same evening as I was putting this newsletter together, I had to deal an upsetting and fruitless rescue of an injured muntjac deer I found in the road just outside my village. It had only just been hit and traffic was passing it at speed, oblivious to the fact it was still alive.

A helpful and strapping breakdown recovery vehicle driver pitched up to assist me in moving the distressed animal to safety as we were both causing traffic mayhem and it was on a dark stretch of road. I called the RSPCA, grabbed a high-viz jacket and torch (thanks Mark!) and after an hour waiting at the roadside, wondered if I should call Bev with her rescue van! However, when I checked the deer again, it had sadly (but mercifully) died, so I cancelled the RSPCA callout.

Having lived in the village for 17 years, I know to slow down along that stretch of road, which is a favourite crossed place with badgers and deer, but very sadly it's a place I've had cause to stop at many times in the past. Other drivers seem to have no regard at all. I know that speeding is the catchword of the times but this is an instance where I wish the speed restrictions were in force a 100 yards further outside the village!

NEWS FROM HQ

Sue asked me to highlight the Cliveden Run – see separate article further down the newsletter.

Beverley will be sending you all a Christmas message with my next newsletter.

FUNDRAISING UPDATE

Hazel continues to raise money for us at her evening linedancing occasions and her tabletop sales bring in a tidy sum over the year. Many thanks to Hazel for your kind efforts.

There has also been a flurry of fundraising activities since the last newsletter:

Beverley and Jenny hit Maidenhead on 11th October and made £143.71 - not bad for a recession!

Sainsburys Taplow collection raised £282.18.

We made £164.00 at the Combined Charities Fair at Maidenhead Town Hall on 25th October.

The RSPCA-hosted fundraiser at Holyport Hall on 1st November raised £95.24.

Cox Green jumble sale on 8th November raised the sum of £179.43. It was lovely to see so many volunteers there, some of whom I hadn't seen in ages due to me not being able to help out much recently.

CLIVEDEN CROSS COUNTRY RUN

Tim Hopkins, one of our supporters, is participating in the Cliveden 6 mile Cross Country Run on 28 December to raise money for CLAWS.

Tim is in training and recently completed 2 six-mile runs.

Obviously we want to give him maximum support, so a poster sponsorship form have been prepared which is shown at the end of this newsletter. (Please return any completed sponsorship forms to Sue Collins) If you have any queries, please ring the CLAWS helpline.

Posters & sponsorship forms are being distributed to local vets and pet shops, Maidenhead Library, Moss End Garden Centre, Town Hall, Knowl Hill Cattery - any more ideas of where we can get posters up? We have been promised some publicity in the Maidenhead Advertiser. Also any bright ideas for further publicity would be much appreciated!

Here is some more general information about the Cliveden Cross Country Run:

Approximately 6 miles of scenic, but testing terrain in the beautiful grounds of Cliveden House.

The race starts and finishes in front of the famous hotel and winds its way through the attractive

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National Trust land. There are some harsh hill climbs. Yew Tree Hill is the best known one where people have to climb about 200 feet on wooden steps.

Unfortunately the National Trust will not let the organisers provide refreshments other than hot drinks but people are welcome to bring their own eats.

There are no stalls at this event.

Parking is very tight within the grounds and is reserved for runners only so supporters are asked to share cars and park outside the grounds. There is quite a large verge opposite the Feathers pub to the north of the entrance to Cliveden.

The number of runners (500) is dictated by the available parking. The race is fully subscribed already.

Note: There is a link to the details from our website.

NEWS FROM FOSTERS

Keith and Evelyn (Jones) have now bought a ground floor flat and moved in last month. They have approached a local cat rescue charity - called The Scratching Post - with regard to fostering and a lady is coming round to do a home visit soon. They can't wait to have a moggie cluttering up their lives again.

CLEO

Cleo was homed to an elderly lady about 2 years ago and we recently received an emergency phonecall from her sister-in-law who had sadly found the lady passed away.

Nicky stepped into the breach and rushed over to collect the cat and, believe it or not, when she reached the property realised it was a cat she had fostered as a kitten. What an extraordinary coincidence!

Nicky took Cleo home for the night and dropped her off at the cattery on her way to work next day.

TIGGER (OR AN UPSET AT THE MAINE NURSING HOME FOR ELDERLY CATS! by Ann Maine)

We had just settled down for the evening – nice fire, glass of wine – when flip flap we hear 16 year old Tigger come in. I get up to feed him only to find that he has already fed and the remains are left for us. I could tell it had been a rat by the long tail that was left.

So Tigger heads for the fire in the sitting room and settles down in front of it as usual to roast his tummy. Soon he starts making some sinister noises and I guess what is about to happen. I grab him and start running for the kitchen but - too late – we leave a trail of desecration all along the carpet behind us.

Much to my shame - and I admit it - I hide in the toilet while my dear and good husband clears up and it's safe for me to come out.

Moments like this are infrequent. More often are moments when our old boy shows us how much he has to come to love and trust us after all that he had been through in his life (this is his third home). Sometimes we get a glimpse that he truly understands what we have done for him. These are the joys of taking on an elderly cat.

Thankfully it is only rarely that he decides to show us his appreciation by bringing us a really big present!



Photos: Tigger the Terrible

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OLLIE

Ollie was a lovely pussycat I did a homecheck for earlier this year after he came into the cattery when a his previous owner sadly died. A smashing couple called in Cookham took him in quickly and I was lucky enough to meet Ollie later that week. He looked settled and content, as if he'd been there for ages.

I received the tragic news in October that Ollie had suddenly fallen ill and despite all efforts, could not be saved. We always hope our rescued companions will live long lives, but sadly that is not always possible.

Lucy and I talked about it and she kindly sent me the following tribute:

We felt so happy having him in our home. He was an absolute joy to be around and we miss him terribly as you know.

He settled in from day one. The pic where he is laying on the carpet is the first day we brought him home and as you can see he felt relaxed at once!

He loved the garden and even ventured onto the fence a couple of times. This made us so happy as we know that he was very new to the outdoors. He kept looking at the sky and birds flying past with amazement!

He had lots of favourite places around the house like the spare room bed and his chair in the dining room (shown above). He also liked nothing more than cuddling up to us in bed every morning which was wonderful. He was so playful and would have a mad dash around the house at about 8 o'clock every night. He was not very vocal and would only meow when being taken to the vets or make a wonderful little trill when he got excited about something (usually food). We would always talk to him like he was human and he often answered back.

I know that we will never have another Ollie as he was so special and cannot be replaced. We feel desperate without him and sad that he didn't have more time to enjoy his new home. One thing is for sure, we loved him very much and he brought us happiness that we will never ever forget.



Photo: Ollie

REHOMING NEWS

I am pleased to say that Lucy and her partner kindly returned to us and took home too young females for cuddles and mending of hearts.

Lucy reports: *We just felt so lonely without Ollie in the house so decided to bring Ella and Milly home. They are wonderful and have helped cheer us up immensely.*

The girls are both great additions to our home and are making us laugh already with their antics!!

They have settled in very well and keep waking us up at 6am every morning for cuddles!



Photo:
Ella & Milly

FUNDRAISING EVENTS

Nov 29th	Henley	Street Collection	9am to 3pm
Nov 30th	Kensington Town Hall	Animal Aid Xmas Without Cruelty	
Dec 6th	Maidenhead	Street Collection	9am to 3pm
Dec 28th	Cliveden	Sponsored Cross Country Run	11am

Volunteers wanted!!!

Can anybody help out at the remaining events scheduled for this year?

If so can you please contact Jenny Alder?

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JET'S CORNER



Hello again from Jet's Joint!!

I hope you've all been good since my last cat-tale and haven't been eating too many mice. We've been loving the central heating but not the snows. Our radiator hammock is wonderful, but my brother keeps trying to kick me off it. He tried the other evening which MummySam thought was funny so she took a photo of us. He's a great lump and weighed a ton!




Photo: Ozzie (L) and Jet (R)

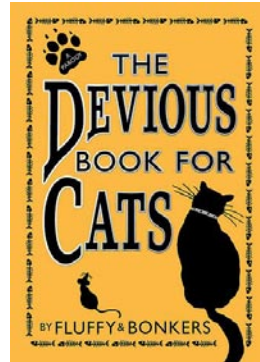
My other boyfriend Stripes has been coming almost every day for ages. He likes our food and I often find him curled up on the sofa, the ottomanboxthingy or on the chair under the dinner table. When it's cold he comes in earlier in the evening when DaddyMark is still around so he gets grumbled at. The stupid thing fell off the chair the other evening and MummySam let out a naughty word cos she was startled and didn't know Stripes was in the house. She thinks he's part Ninja – wotever that is. She tried tickling him under his chin the other day but he wasn't impurredred and said a rude word to her after a bit. He's such a grrumpyguts. I was a bit shocked and so was Mummy even though I didn't translate it for her. So I went and told him off by sniffing his tail and bashing him as he went out of the flappydoorthing. Much as I like having boyfriends, I like food better so we mustn't upset MummySam, speshully cos she gives me Whiskas treats which are yummy!

Mummy told me about a book written by some other cats. I reckon they pinched the idea from me so I'm not happy!

Paws for thought: Once in the bath, Mummy's chest makes a good place curl up for warmth and a close-up cuddle. She can't kick me off in case I accidentally scratch her trying to avoid the nasty wet stuff! A good ploy don't you reckon??

Jet xx 

BOOK: "THE DEVIOS BOOK FOR CATS"



The following piece is from "The Devious Book for Cats" by Fluffy and Bonkers (published by Harper Collins at £10.99).

"BATHTUB BOTTLE CAP

When you get all cross-eyed and crazy, the bathtub is one of the best places to scramble around like a maniac. Except if your person was in there first. Then it's all wet and nasty. Well, there's a way to curb her inconsiderate behaviour while also having a great time. Late at night, while she's sound asleep, haul your favourite bottle cap into the tub and bat it around in the dark for hours of fun. When you've finished, leave it upside down, right near the centre. Come morning when your bleary-eyed person hops in for her shower, she should step right on your booby trap. Even if she doesn't, it may still manage to clog the drain."

We are grateful to Harper Collins for allowing us to use this extract.

Jill Jones reviewed the book for CLAWS and says: *"It was a good read. Entertaining, well observed and a true reflection of cat behaviour"*

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AND FINALLY...

Ann Maine

Ann is offering some Fairtrade items for sale, as approved by Beverley. I hope to attach some details and prices in the next newsletter as I don't have the correct software yet to read the original document.

******Warning for all cat-owners******

There is a warning doing the rounds at the moment about the danger of antifreeze for cats. Antifreeze unfortunately is poison to cats and distressingly, once ingested, there is nothing a vet can do for the animal. Of course with it now being winter, it will be a bigger problem.

If you wish to know more about this subject then please visit the site: www.antifreezekills.co.uk. (We also have a link up on our website.)

Would you please have a look at the site and sign the petition (before 7th December) - it only takes a couple of minutes. Please send it on to all the animal lovers in your address books to do the same.

There has sadly been a spate of suspected malicious poisonings near Wolverhampton and one poor chap has lost several pets. The link to the story is here: <http://www.expressandstar.com/2008/11/06/cats-being-poisoned-with-anti-freeze/>

So please be cautious and keep an eye out for cats hovering under or near cars which can leak this green noxious substance onto the road – you know how they like to wash themselves clean once indoors. Our cat Rocky is nicknamed Sumpo because of his habit of sitting under cars and getting covered in oil. Now we must watch out for green stuff as well during the winter!

As ever, thank you for reading my newsletters. They are only as informative as the news which is passed on to its author, so please, if you have any news, any snippets, anecdotes or anything you wish me to include about CLAWS, local events, items of interest to cat-owners, then please contact me.

Thank you.

Sam Collington/Nov 2008