

# VOLUNTEERS' MEWSLETTER 24

## December 2008



Hello Catlovers!

I'd hoped to get this last newsletter of the year out to you in time for Christmas but sadly events conspired against making that possible, so here it is, better late than never!

### BEVERLEY'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

*I have to start by apologising for not organising a newsletter this year. I'm afraid that I literally ran out of time!!!!!!*

*The year started quietly enough with cats coming in and cats going out on a regular basis. That all changed in July with not only people going away on holiday and leaving their animal, plus the inevitable kittens, but more seriously a recession loomed large. This effected not only people but their animals. So within the space of a few weeks our allotted pens (and more) were full up with cats, so were the fosterers and so was I. Luckily this year we had 6 pens given to us by people giving up on fostering. I have had 2 erected in my garden, 2 in Frances's garden and 2 will be going up in the New Year in new volunteer Pam's garden. This means that with the 4 pens at Knowl Hill, we can take in 10 cats and 5 mums with babies. Of course, none of this would have been possible without the continued dedication and commitment of the CLAWS volunteers. They turn out in all weathers to shake a tin or stand up to their hocks in mud in the middle of a rainy field. I do not know what I would do without them and certainly we would not be able to help as many cats as we do!!!!!!*

*Also an unsung hero: Sue, who manages the CLAWS helpline 24 /7. It is her voice that helps so many people and brings them back to us, the same voice that treats the time-waster, the angry, the upset and the nuisances with the same kindness and consideration as the genuine enquirer.*

*Finally, a big thanks to Steve Cooke, our vet at Kelperland. Without his support CLAWS could not help as many animals as we do. Also thanks to Vaughan who continues to perfect our web to make it look professional and appealing.*

*So it only leaves me to say that I hope you and your pets have a happy and safe Christmas and New Year.*

Best Wishes  
Beverley

### NEWS FROM HQ

CLAWS has been lucky enough to welcome some new volunteers to the fold this year. Thank you for joining us and I look forward to meeting you all at some point in the future.

Mandy Hussey: starting off with cat cuddling at Knowl Hill and may progress to tin rattling.

Sandy Hussey: cat-cuddler, stalls and street collections.

Micheala Holt: starting off cuddling cats and would like to progress into ANYTHING - stalls and street collections (and maybe even bungee jumping if I can persuade her lol!)

Debby Loe: will help behind a stall or shake a tin.

Pam Casement: will start with two pens in garden and to foster, then might strike out into fundraising.

Sue Cottrell: has started helping behind stalls and street collections.

Penny Noakes: stall and street collections.

### ADVICE FROM BEVERLEY

*Well, Christmas is now, all of a sudden upon us!!!! Everyone rushing around buying presents and good things to eat and drink. So now is the time to stop and think for a second about your pets and their welfare over the Christmas holidays. What you think is delicious, can in fact kill your pet. The Christmas pud, cake and mince pies particularly are lethal. They contain dried fruit which our livers can metabolise but our pets cannot. Not only is it harmful to them but in some cases deadly. The bones of turkey, pork, chicken, lamb - any animal bones can be dangerous too. If the bones are crunched up and swallowed, they can cause constipation or damage their throats on the way down. Chocolate, much loved by us all can cause sickness and liver damage to our pets, again causing pain and sometimes death. By remembering to put away in fridges and cupboards all left over food and scraps you can take away the enticement for your pets. Final word on food and drink. Remember when you put your drink on the floor, a nosey cat or dog will be along in no time to investigate. Again with lethal consequences.*

*Freezing weather has us all reaching for the antifreeze and de-icer. For some unknown reason, both smell sweet and encourage animals to lick the containers. A very little of either is very very toxic.*

*Finally, is your pet on medication? If so have you ordered enough tablets/liquid/powder to last over the holidays.*

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*I do hope that these few tips will help keep you and your animals out of the vets over the Christmas period.*

Editor's note: sorry to be late in passing this valuable information on. I hope that your pets have behaved themselves and not ended up in casualty from investigating one too many things behind your backs. My Rocky has definitely put our nerves to the test!

### MINUTES OF TRUSTEES MEETING 20.11.08

#### 1. FUND RAISING EVENTS

The events we have for the rest of the year are the Cookham Show, Henley and Maidenhead street collections, the Cat Show at Bracknell and a stall in spring of 2009.

#### 2. REHOMING

To date we have 8 cats in Knowl Hill Cattery and 14 with fosterers making a total of 22 cats waiting to be rehomed. These range in age from 6 months to 2 years. As we do not rehome over Christmas and New Year, if they cannot be found suitable homes in the next couple of weeks they may be with us until well into January.

#### 3. FINANCE

The accounts for the financial year have been received back from the Accountant and have been sent to the Charities Commission. We have been fortunate this year to have received two legacies which has helped with our income. We have also received the Gift Aid repayment of £1563.

Our main outgoings for the year are Vet bills of £12,747, Cattery charges of £14,928 and food of £2,233.

#### 4. BOARDING PENS

We have now been given a total of 6 pens. These have recently been or will be, erected in Volunteers' gardens. This will help with keeping the Cattery bill down during 2009 as we will not need so many pens there.

#### 5. OTHER ITEMS

We will have a picture board at Knowl Hill Cattery showing animals needing new homes. This will be updated regularly.

We are fortunate to have four new fundraising and fostering volunteers.

#### 6. DATE OF THE NEXT TRUSTEES MEETING

The next Trustees meeting would be the last Thursday in March 2009.

### FUNDRAISING UPDATE

The Cookham Christmas Fair raised a fabulous £404.00.

Henley street collection last month raised £247.13.

Bracknell Cat Show raised £248.56.

Animal Aid show at Kensington raised £276.95.

Maidenhead street collection & stall in the Nicholson's Centre raised £69.94

Cox Green Christmas Bazaar raised £87.00 (see photos at end)

The Cliveden sponsored run was due to take place on 28.12.08. We hope that CLAWS fundraiser Tim Hopkins managed to make it round the course and wish him luck with his recovery from the run! I'll report back on events in the next Mewsletter.

### NEWS FROM FOSTERERS

Keith and Evelyn Jones fostered for CLAWS for a while but have now moved to Hertfordshire. Keith dropped me the following note recently:

*We moved into our own flat after a year of renting and immediately got in touch with a local cat rescue outfit called The Scratching Post. A totally different set-up to CLAWS with far fewer volunteers - almost a one-man (or woman) band - but running two shops to raise funds. They have some space in a cattery out in the sticks but are always chronically short on money. When I approached them about fostering they were interested, but when Sue, who runs the outfit with her mother, came to see us she told us she preferred to keep the cats in the cattery so that people visiting could see the whole range of moggies waiting to be re-homed. We eventually persuaded her that a cat that just couldn't handle being in the cattery could still have prospective new owners come to see them at our house. It just so happened that she had one cat that fitted the bill and in due course we welcomed Kiera, a three year old Bengali into our home. What a character! She made herself right at home and when we delivered her to her new home the other weekend the house seemed dead on our return. Let's hope that they have another stir-crazy moggie for us before long.*



Photo: Kiera

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### Pixie & Portia

While I was manning the information stall at the Nicholson's Centre a couple of weeks ago, a delightful gentleman, Bob, approached me and pointed out two of the cats on the story boards: Pixie & Portia. It turns out they had belonged to his mother but we'd stepped in to care for them. We had a chat about things and I assured him that Pixie & Portia were so pretty they were bound to be rehomed soon, but of course we would be shutting for the Christmas break. I mentioned this to Sue who said a parcel had arrived from the gentleman concerned. Upon opening the parcel, she found some toys and special food for Pixie and Portia for Christmas, plus a cash donation for CLAWS. Isn't that lovely?

Unfortunately I was sidetracked at the information stall, so never got to say goodbye to Bob, so if you should see this newsletter Bob, then I'd like to say thanks for the chat and I wish you a Happy New Year.

### Beth

Meanwhile, I'd like to send lots of positive vibes to Sue & Mike who have been looking after Beth for a good while now. Beth has always been a special needs cat and a great character, but lately she has been battling a kidney problem. Fingers crossed for an improvement in her health.

### **REHOMING NEWS**

I did a homecheck in Henley at the end of last month and am glad to say that youngster Magic & Merlin were rehomed earlier this month.

### **FUNDRAISING EVENTS FOR 2009**

To be advised in due course

### **JET'S CORNER**



Hello again from Jet's Joint!

It has been a busy month since MummySam's last Mewsletter. I have helped her to put up purrretty Pussmas lights all over the place, brought her mouses in case she wanted light snacks, have played with the few baubles she put up and have explored all the corners she thought were safe from investigation.

My boyfriend Rocky has taught me a new trick. He likes to sit on top of the fridge freezer sometimes but he found that the radio was a good place to sit out of the way as well. So I've copied him, as you can see from the picture below:



*Photo: me and Rocky*

MummySam has got a tall bubblelamp with fishes in it that she switches on when we have visitors. I like to watch the fish go up and down but haven't worked out how to get them out yet!

Rocky, the meathead, has fused some lights by chewing on them. He somehow managed to get the same bulb out twice from the kitchen lights and it took a while for the "penny to drop" so Daddymark could sort it out. He was mystified at how Rocky could apparently delicately remove a bulb when Daddy had trouble doing so and needed a special tool! My boyfriend Rocky is cleverer than he looks.

Daddy washed the car today and didn't put the rags away afterwards so Mummy took a photo of him:



*Photo: Rocky on the rags*

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My other boyfriend Stripes still comes to the house regularly. We didn't see much of him at Kittymas, but as soon as Daddymark's old man left, Stripes was in the flappycattything like a ferret up a drainpipe! He likes my fleece too:



Photo: Stripes absolutely sparko!

That's all for this year. What else can I say but Merry Kittymas and a Happy Miaow Year!

**Paws for thought:** paddle on your human's tummy to aid digestion of Kittymas food!

Jet xx 

### Cox Green Christmas Fair

Held on the same day as the Maidenhead collection. I popped round to the Cox Green Community Centre to drop off the storyboards and headed for the CLAWS stall which was manned by Anne Maine and Barbara Walter. They were doing sterling work, offering up all sorts of gift items, christmassy items as well as homemade cakes. Well done on your efforts ladies.

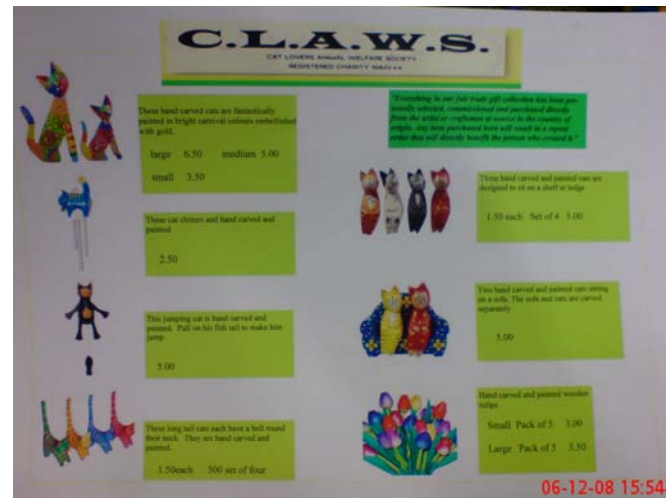


Photo: Volunteers Ann & Barbara, with local vicar Rev Joan Hicks who has kindly supported us at other events.

The Fair seemed to be well attended and there was lots of interest. I am only sorry to have been on a very limited budget on the day.

### Ann Maine – Fairtrade items

Ann is offering cat-themed Fairtrade items for sale, as approved by Beverley. These are handmade cat ornaments and cat chimes, beautifully painted and decorative. Ann is selling them to raise funds for CLAWS and they will be offered on our stalls next year. I purchased a sitting cat and a chime which have added some smashing colour to the Christmas decorations in our living room!



### AND FINALLY...

That's about it from me too. I hope you have enjoyed the Mewsletters this year. Thank you for all your support and feedback – it's what keeps me going. Thank you also to Beverley, Sue and Jenny for feeding me the regular updates needed to make this Mewsletter factual. Thanks to all of you for your input and efforts in helping to make CLAWS such a wonderful cat rescue organisation. I feel privileged to have met such like-minded people.

Please accept my good wishes for a Happy New Year. I hope that 2009 brings you all you wish for.

Sam Collington/Dec 2008