



# AS News



OUR NAME SAYS IT ALL

Issue No. 59 Patron: Twiggy WINTER 2003/4 REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 295345

Visit our secure site: [www.animalsamaritans.org.uk](http://www.animalsamaritans.org.uk)

where you can donate online in total confidence and safety

Object of Animal Samaritans

*'To rescue and provide care and shelter for unwanted, abandoned, neglected or ill-treated animals and to provide new homes for such animals wherever possible.*

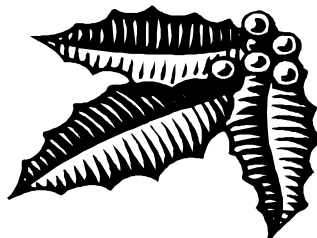
*'To assist owners of pets to meet veterinary fees where owners are unable to meet such fees'.*

Animal Samaritans – *your* charity – homes hundreds of unwanted animals every year. So far this year, you have helped us home 90 cats, 70 dogs and 69 rabbits. Through your subscriptions and generous donations, you have contributed the funds that enable this work to be done, including paying vets bills which have amounted to £7675.10 so far this year. We have also been able – thanks to you – to offer free micro chipping and neutering.

In response to requests, we have redesigned our newsletter on smaller pages. **Please let us know if you prefer it this way or as before!** We have also changed the layout so that similar information is kept together, such as our Contact address &c which is all on the back page.

All our active members work for no payment. We have no sanctuary; all our animals are fostered in our own homes and we return wildlife back into its proper habitat after treatment. As our 18th birthday approaches in 2004, we know we can continue to rely on our Members to keep on helping our animal friends.

We wish all our Members



A Very Merry Christmas &  
A Prosperous New Year



**Please remember to feed the birds!**

## CHILDREN'S CORNER

Hi everyone! I bet you are all looking forward to Christmas and the New Year.

I'm sure most of you know that some people don't have a holiday at this time but did you know that many people celebrate a completely different new year from us? Well, they do, and one of these is all about animals.

The **Chinese Lunar New Year** is the oldest in history. It began over 4,500 years ago and it is based on the movement of the moon rather than the sun (as our year is). It has all sorts of unusual things about it, the main one is that its years are named after animals – 12 of them, in honour of those animals that visited the Buddha before he died: **Rat, Ox, Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Goat (or Sheep), Monkey, Rooster, Dog and Pig**. The Chinese believe the animal ruling the year in which a person is born has a strong effect on personality. They say: "This is the animal that hides in your heart."

Each Chinese New Year starts sometime in our January or February. This year (2003) the Year of the Goat started on 1 February and the Year of the Monkey will start on 22 January 2004. If you were 13 this year (born between 15 Feb 1991 and 3 Feb 1992) you would be a Goat person and your personality is said to be the same as Mr Spock (Leonard Nimoy), George Harrison, Boris Becker and our last King, George VI – charming, elegant and artistic, fond of nature and *very* creative!

Are you a typical Goat person, or do you know one? Think about it and let me know ([bunshaz@aol.com](mailto:bunshaz@aol.com)) for the next newsletter. Talk to you again in the Year of the Monkey!

Auntie Sharon

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## 2003 CHRISTMAS DRAW

We are delighted to report a successful raffle and announce the lucky winners. The following tickets were drawn on 15 December in the order as shown and the winners have been sent their respective prizes. Congratulations to them and to all who supported us.

Ticket No. 00890	Mr R Munday, SE16	wins	£200
Ticket No. 06349	Ann Keatley, E10	wins	£100
Ticket No. 05483	Mrs D Richards, Bromley	wins	£75
Ticket No. 07922	Lynda Webb, Ash	wins	£50
Ticket No. 05961	Mrs Z Cownley, SE13	wins	£10
Ticket No. 00370	Mrs K Thomas, Sidcup	wins	£10
Ticket No. 04882	Mrs J Green, Ripon	wins	£10
Ticket No. 00232	E. Humphrey, Welling	wins	£10

## BOOK REVIEW

**WILD HEALTH: HOW ANIMALS KEEP THEMSELVES WELL AND WHAT WE CAN LEARN FROM THEM** by Cindy Engel (Weidenfeld, 276 pages, £20 ISBN 0 297 64684 2)

Wildlife doesn't always do the healthy thing! In North America, wild bears are attracted to human rubbish and baboons in Africa wait for hotel waste to be unattended before ransacking it. It's only natural, really, as our waste is easier to get at than going hunting and gathering. We all tend to take the easiest path when it is available.

This book points out that any animal that is removed from its natural habitat is likely to become 'maladaptive', that is, behave badly since its behaviour is closely related to its proper environment, behaviour that is most probably totally unsuitable in its new situation. We know this, of course, but how often are we unwitting contributors to such disasters? When we pause and think of this as far as we ourselves are concerned – we, as animals – isn't the same true for us, too, and shouldn't we remember to be more aware of our responsibilities to our wild friends? (*Note our policy regarding wildlife in the panel on the front of this Newsletter.*)

But this book is far more about the positive lessons that animals can teach us if we observe them when they are sick or hurt. We humans have already picked up many 'wonder cures' from native peoples in, for example, the Amazonian rainforest, though many of these have been hijacked by multinationals who patent them for their own profit. Now, we can learn even more from animals, and not just such things as dogs and cats eating grass and other herbs to make themselves be sick when they are unwell.

For instance, a wild chimpanzee in Tanzania was observed by two scientists to be tired and not eating while all around her were feeding. She seemed to have a stiff back and her motions were not normal. What is more, she paid no attention to her young son who was moaning. The scientists saw her look out a particular shrub, select its shoots and strip away their highly poisonous outer layers. She then ate the inner, less poisonous pith for about 20 minutes, chewing and sucking at it. (Her son tried it but spat it out in disgust!) A day later, she was back to health, one with her group and feeding normally.

There is a long record of such observations. In Han dynasty China, a general noticed his horses got well after eating *Plantago asiatica* and he gave it to his sick soldiers who also got well on it.

This book includes many such stories, including some about the value of certain parasites which have recently been found to be beneficial to humans when our general immune system is good. Of course, when our immune system is low, these same parasites can do us serious harm and the same balancing 'control' – the state of the immune system – has been observed in animals. If there is a major change in environment – physical or social – the general immune system is stressed and damage from otherwise insignificant bacteria, parasites or viruses becomes much more likely.

When he first set up his hospital in Lambaréné in Gabon, West Africa, Albert Schweitzer was ridiculed by his European medical colleagues for putting his patients immediately back into a jungle environment after surgery. He persevered and has since been proved right by ensuring his patients' immune systems were kept as up to date as possible with the many potential microscopic dangers of the tropics.

There is much further research to be done but this book has widened our knowledge base greatly. It is also a pleasure to read.



## DOG RESCUES

We can report considerable success this year in rehoming rescued dogs.

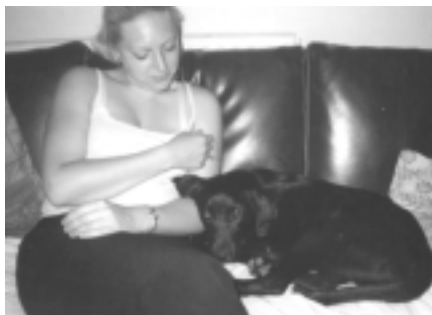
**Star** (below) had to be rehomed because he was being bullied by another dog. He was very timid and withdrawn and used to hide all the time. Now we have found him the right home and he is improving immensely.



**Bungle** ⇒  
was just 6 months old & had been beaten badly (as you can see in the photo).

It took a lot of time to find him the right home.

Here ⇒  
at his fosterer's you can see he was already much happier!



And see the letters from **Molly** and **Billy** on the previous page!

## CAT RESCUES

We can also report success in rehoming rescued cats.

Among the many cats we have rehomed this year, there were three kittens who were found in a garden under a shed with their mum who was trying her best to look after them. **Jess & Bart** were two of these and here they are enjoying their new life on their new owners' comfy sofa!



## VETS CORNER

Christmas is a time when many homes are stocked with food, chocolates, toys and decorations. Rather un-festively, all of these delights can represent real health hazards to pets, especially but not exclusively, to dogs.

As far as chocolate is concerned, not everyone is aware that it contains a substance called theobromine which can be toxic to dogs, depending on the amount eaten, the type of chocolate (plain is worse than milk) and the size of the dog. When dogs do eat chocolate to excess (as treats or by an unguarded theft) it can cause symptoms which may vary from vomiting & increased heart rate to convulsions and even death.

As little as 2½ ounces of plain chocolate could be toxic to a 10kg dog (eg a Westie) but the only safe levels of human quality chocolate for dogs is none at all. If your dog does like chocolate (don't they all?) give special dog chocolate only to avoid problems.

Festive decorations and small toys are a common unintentional addition to the diets of some pets at Christmas. – there are few vets who have not spent time in the post-holiday period surgically removing indigestible trinkets of varying sizes from the digestive tracts of both dogs *and* cats , so be aware of the risks.

The hazards of simple over-indulgence are well known to us all, but *we* only have ourselves to blame, your pet doesn't know any better- you may simply overfeed them out of misplaced kindness or they may just help themselves to the turkey when your back is turned.

Overeating hazards include obesity, vomiting & diarrhoea and bones lodged in stomachs and intestines; so keep your food locked away, be cruel to be kind and have a happy holiday.

Philip Parker MRCVS – Sidcup Veterinary Centre

### Are you a Pregnant Pet Owner?

Owning a pet can be highly beneficial. Pet owners are known to have lower blood pressure, less stress and better overall cardiovascular health than people in similar circumstances without pets.

However, if you are pregnant and have pets, you should take some precautions to avoid potentially dangerous exposures:

- Wash your hands frequently. This will help limit exposure to fleas, ticks, irritant oils from poison oak and ivy, and infectious fungus like ringworm (all can be carried on your pet's fur). To limit their exposure, consider keeping your pets out of wooded areas while you are pregnant.
- Avoid being scratched by your cat. Cat scratch fever is a disease caused by a bacterium, Bartonella, marked by swollen lymph nodes, joint pain, and fever.
- Do not clean the litter box. Toxoplasmosis, a protozoan parasite found in soil and animal faeces, can be contracted through cleaning a litter pan. Developing foetuses are especially at risk for severe disease; infection may result in miscarriage or stillbirth.
- Consider loaning your kitty to a friend or family member for the duration of your pregnancy.
- Have your pets checked for parasites such as hookworm and intestinal roundworms-these can be passed from animals to humans through faeces.

## Neutering Offer

Neutering isn't cruel; it is for the animals' benefit. We need to control their numbers which are much too high. Those of you who have un-neutered pets will know how much of a problem they can be when on heat or have unplanned litters.

If you have a cat, dog or rabbit which you think should be neutered but are worried about the cost, we are offering **ONE HUNDRED MEMBERS FREE NEUTERING.**

This offer is limited to one per household. If you wish to apply, please write to us at our PO Box number or telephone us.


## Microchipping Offer

Our pets can sometimes stray

Worse still, they can be stolen.

Why not have your pet microchipped?

We offer a discount service: ring Sarah at

 020 8304 1933

And, to benefit our animals, we are OFFERING **FREE MICROCHIPPING** on a one per household basis to the **FIRST 100 MEMBERS** who apply.

## In Memoriam

For my darling Becky my little dog

I have her sister who misses her so much

We loved her so much and will never forget her

Daisy and Holli

*(for those in need)*

## A Spiritual Healer for Pets

**Betty Brewer**

 **020 8850 5785**

## Pet Insurance Policy

Ask for details of our Pet Insurance Policy which is very competitive for cats and dogs under 8 years of age.

A good investment as Vet bills are rising all the time.

## PET BEREAVEMENT

We all encounter tragedy and personal loss at one time or another in our lives. When we are overcome, confused or defeated about ourselves or someone else, we can always contact The Samaritans who will help us through those dark days.

If you are saddened and dejected at losing a beloved pet, you will find a sympathetic ear, understanding and support at our pet bereavement service.



## How to contact us



### Post

Animal Samaritans  
PO Box 154  
Bexleyheath  
DA16 2WS

for all communications



### Our Website

[www.animalsamaritans.org.uk](http://www.animalsamaritans.org.uk)

is regularly updated

e-mail to: [info@animalsamaritans.org.uk](mailto:info@animalsamaritans.org.uk)

and send us an e-mail with your opinions; we hope to link as many of our Members as possible through the website



### Telephone

Our dedicated telephone also has an answerphone: 020 8303 1859

### **MEMBERS – Please Note !**

We have completed verifying our membership records but:

1. Please check the details (name and address) we note on your subscription renewal letter.
2. Please check the new Membership Cards enclosed for all recently renewed members.

## **Application Form for NEW Members**

SURNAME: ..... Miss/Mrs/Ms/Mr

First Name: .....

Address: .....  
.....  
.....

Postcode: .....

E-mail address: .....

- Adult £8.00 annual subscription
- Young person (under 18) £5.00 annual subscription
- Senior Citizen/Unemployed £5.00 annual subscription