



TUNBRIDGE WELLS AND MAIDSTONE BRANCH AND THE HEADCORN CATTERY

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SPRING/SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2014
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GREETINGS to all our Members, Friends, Volunteers, Staff and Supporters!! Where has the time gone since the last newsletter? It is quite scary how it flies. We sincerely hope that all our readers have survived this awful, wet and windy winter and send our best wishes to anyone living in a flood hit area that may be reading this. We sincerely hope that all of you and your animals are safe and well and looking forward to some good, sunny weather.

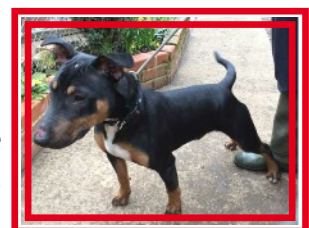
QUEEN VICTORIA SILVER MEDAL - Daphne Harris, who has worked tirelessly for the branch and animal welfare for 40 years was proposed by staff, trustees, a vet, a council trustee and volunteers for the RSPCA Queen Victoria Silver Medal - an honour that we felt she had more than earned during her dedicated lifetime. Unfortunately the Society chose not to award it on this occasion without offering a very good reason but we will not give up!! Daphne herself said ' I do what I do for the animals but I am very touched and flattered that you consider me worthy to receive this prestigious award. I shall continue to help as many animals as I can for as long as I can'.

DOGS - Needless to say we have been incredibly busy taking in many animals in need but also finding plenty of good and loving homes. We have also taken in some dogs that were due to be put to sleep or in desperate need and, in conjunction with local kennels with whom we are working very closely, have been able to assess them and get them ready for a brighter future. The dogs are proving very popular on our website with lots of people showing interest - no wonder they seem to be smiling!



Top Row: **Bonnie**, 3 yrs still looking for a home, **Fiona**, found a loving home, **Taz** 1 year old already found his forever home, **Bear** 5 years looking for his forever home

Second Row: **Zimba** - smiling all the way! 8 years and hoping for his forever home soon, **Teddy**, already found his forever home, Sweet **Dolly**, 8 years old and rehomed, **Doug** already found his loving home, **Rocky** only 9 months old and badly treated. Now rehomed.



Anyone interested in one of our lovely animals should contact us on the details at top of page

MORE CONCERNS FOR WOODLAND WALKERS

In the last issue we raised awareness about Seasonal Canine illness in the hope that you would all manage to keep your dogs safe during the long, lovely summer.

It would seem however, that Mother Nature has dealt another blow to us with yet another illness similar to **Alabama Rot**, named after it was first discovered in Alabama, America. The symptoms of this disease are very similar to Alabama Rot and the name is being used to describe the disease in this country. Alabama Rot was associated with greyhounds but now seems to be affecting other breeds. Early signs are lesions on the skin followed by depression, loss of appetite, vomiting leading to serious kidney problems.

Information taken from the BBC Countryfile.com website states that several cases were discovered in the New Forest between December 2012 and March 2013. Surrey, Cornwall, Worcestershire and County Durham have also seen dogs affected. The source of the disease is unknown and, according to the Environment Agency, does not seem to be caused by any chemical contamination of water supplies. Dog owners are advised to be very vigilant when visiting woodlands in these areas and should seek veterinary advice immediately if their dog develops lesions or becomes unwell after a walk. Several dogs have died after contracting this disease but owners are urged not to panic! **The number of dogs affected is much smaller than the number of dogs being walked in these areas** - but it is best to be prepared and aware.

We are sure that all veterinary surgeons are aware of this problem. Anyone wanting to find out more information can go online to the BBC Countryfile website or just type in Alabama Rot in the search bar and a huge amount of information is at your disposal. If you don't own (or even like) computers and are worried, talk to your own vet.

Having said all this we sincerely hope that you and your lovely pets have a safe and happy summer holiday - wherever you are going.

YELLOW DOG UK is another very interesting website-based company that was suggested to me recently when I took on a dog in need of much care and attention following a road accident. It is a very simple idea which helps you to signal to other dog owners that your dog needs space. This might be because your dog is very nervous, is in season, is aggressive or indeed any other reason that you might feel the need to keep it apart from other dogs for a period of time.

I have been in touch with this company and they are happy for me to 'spread the word' to other people who might find this very useful. So if you think it might help you log onto their website where you will find lots of interesting items you can purchase.

OUR BRANCH SHOP & CLINIC AT 72 -74A Wheeler Street, Maidstone is going to be fully refurbished in the near future which means it will be closed for a couple of weeks. This refurbishment is long overdue and we hope that you will all be patient with us. We hope that you will all find the new shop even more bright and friendly.

DON'T FORGET we run a clinic at the shop every Wednesday afternoon for those people on benefit or very low income and we are always in need of good quality clothing, bric a brac etc.

www.YELLOWDOGUK.co.uk

A **YELLOW RIBBON** or some other yellow indicator on a dogs leash means **this dog needs some space**.

There are many reasons why a dog may need space:

		
...pup in training.	...in season.	...unwell.
		
...old & grumpy.	...post-oo.	...nervous.

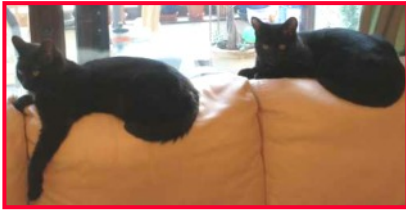
Please do not approach this dog or its people with your dog. Maintain a respectable distance or give this dog and his/her person time to move out of your way.

Thank you!

Yellow Dog owners appreciate your help and respect!

Get your **FREE** Yellow Ribbon from our website.

HOME SWEET, SWEET HOME



Just look at what happens when our animals find a new and loving home!!



MEET ROCKY & NEMO 2 brothers who have found their forever home with Peter and Rosie Willoughby. (Nemo is so called

because his new owners couldn't find him for the first 3 days!) Peter and Rosie say "They couldn't be happier and are very affectionate, giving us a great deal of pleasure. They are still a little wary of strangers but we have got to the stage where a lovely woman comes to stay and cat-sits when we go away. Rocky already hops up on to the sofa next to her so there is no problem. Thank you very much for providing us with two such lovely pets".



MEET TIGGER - this lovely boy certainly knows how to make the most of his new home - with the aid of course of his loving new owners Coleen and Charles Tanswell.



And lastly meet TEDDY. This beautiful mastiff X was saved at the 11th hour from being put to sleep. At only 1 year old he has now found a new and loving home with the Reeves family who absolutely adore him.

A HUGE THANK YOU once more to all those lovely people who have taken our animals and given them new and loving homes



SNIPPETS OF NEWS

CRUELTY RESULTS FROM RECENT APRIL PRESS RELEASES: A man from Colchester in Essex has been banned from keeping animals for life after neglecting his pet rabbit and allowing her to starve to death. He was also given an 8-week suspended custodial sentence, 120 hours of unpaid work and made to pay costs of £2369 at Colchester Magistrates' Court.

A mother and daughter have been banned for 15 years from keeping all animals after being found guilty of causing unnecessary suffering to 3 horses. Each was given an 8-week suspended prison sentence, 80 hours of community service and made to pay £180 costs at Norwich Magistrates' Court. They were each also found guilty in February of 13 different offences under the Animal Welfare Act all relating to neglect of horse welfare and a breach of a ban on keeping animals!! ALL WE CAN SAY IS WELL DONE TO INSPECTORS AND ALL THOSE INVOLVED IN BRINGING THESE PEOPLE TO JUSTICE!

A NEW COMMUNITY INITIATIVE, MAIDSTONE PET PARTNERSHIP, has been launched to help promote responsible pet ownership. It has been set up by Leonie Harrington who has volunteered with the branch for 5 years. Partners include local vets, councils, community organisations and businesses. Daphne helped launch the partnership in February and introduced the first campaign, which highlights the benefits of cat neutering. We had a stall promoting the work we do and the event raised £913.53 (including gift aid) for the branch.

TALK GIVEN

Daphne Harris and myself (Kate Matthews) recently gave a talk to the Boughton Monchelsea Friendship Circle about the work of the RSPCA and the branches and how they work together.

Many people still do not understand the complicated set-up of the RSPCA and the fact that the branches, like ours, are completely self-funding. It was good to be able to tell people about our work and also that we, as well as the National Society, are entirely dependent on public funding receiving no money from the Government.

The talk was well received and after a question and answer session we were treated to tea and biscuits and they donated £50 to the welfare of animals at Headcorn.

My Saluki rescue proved to be extremely popular at the end thus rounding off a very enjoyable afternoon.

RABBIT AWARENESS



PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE if you own a rabbit or you know anyone who does can you help us to raise awareness of FLY STRIKE which can happen so easily in the warm weather. Flies get into the rabbit hutch and lay their eggs in the toilet area in particular and it is essential that this is cleaned out daily to avoid maggots hatching. If the maggots get onto the rabbit's bottom they start eating away at it's flesh and untreated can lead to untold pain, misery and even



death. Many people do not realise how easy it is for the maggots to hatch and start causing problems so daily cleaning and disinfecting, especially of the toilet area, is essential. Also check your rabbit's bottom daily to make sure nothing nasty is happening!! If in doubt just wash its rear end in warm, soapy water. There are products on the market such as Rearguard which you can use to help to protect bunny's rear end! This way Bunny can enjoy its summer outside without fear.

WE HAVE A LOT of baby rabbits (some seen above) all looking for caring and loving owners. Rabbits take a lot of looking after and cleaning out. They need a large hutch (minimum 4 ft long) and an outside 'play' area with shade where they can scamper around. If you give them the time they need they can make very rewarding pets although not necessarily for very young children. Mums and Dads need to want bunny also to ensure their care long term.

Daphne, on behalf of the branch, would like to highlight to all our supporters that it is thanks to a large legacy and continued financial support that the shop and clinic can finally be updated and more work can be done at the Headcorn Cattery. Planning permission is now being sought for 6 isolation cat pens to be built and a disabled toilet so that customers who travel a distance (and also staff and volunteers) don't have to use the toilet in the Manager's home which is the current situation. This is just another major step forward to secure Headcorn for the future. Daphne said it is lovely to be able to report on something else positive that the generosity of supporters has given us. On behalf of all the animals we help a big THANK YOU!.

Last but not least a very good friend to the branch, Jo Piccioni, is standing for election for the National Society Council elections in the near future. Joe has done a huge amount to help the branch and the society over the years so if you are a current member of the Society can you please consider voting for him. His expertise is invaluable.