



TUNBRIDGE WELLS AND MAIDSTONE BRANCH AND THE HEADCORN CATTERY

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SEASONS GREETINGS TO ALL OUR READERS AND PETS



HAPPY CHRISTMAS FOR US!!

**WE ARE JUST SOME OF
THE LUCKY BRANCH
ANIMALS TO FIND A
LOVING HOME FOR
CHRISTMAS. THANK
YOU TO ALL OUR LOVELY
NEW OWNERS. PLEASE
DON'T FORGET OUR
FRIENDS WHO ARE
STILL LOOKING**

SUGAR SUBSTITUTES



With so much talk of cutting the effects of sugar in our lives I thought it worthwhile to highlight an important fact that maybe many people are not aware of.

Most sugar substitutes are OK for animals but *XYLITOL*, which is an excellent sugar substitute available on many supermarket shelves, is **POISONOUS TO DOGS**. This came to my attention recently when I personally was looking for a good sugar substitute to use in baking for health reasons but, although it is stated on the packet, it is on the back at the bottom and easily missed. Concerned about this fact I contacted my vet to check the situation. It was confirmed that *XYLITOL* is just as dangerous to dogs as **CHOCOLATE**, some say more so. My vet's advice was that if the dog ingested any at all to watch carefully. If she showed any sign of illness or sickness within ½ hour I was to take her straight in. This is not meant to be a scare mongering article but an important piece of information to raise awareness. It is also worth being aware that *Xylitol* is a very popular sugar replacement used in sugar-free sweets, mints, chewing gum etc so always worth a quick check on anything.

XYLITOL is an excellent product being a spoon for spoon granulated sugar replacement and as long as you use it with extreme care around your doggy friends, and never feed any titbits containing it to pets, you shouldn't have any problems. I have continued to use *Xylitol* with care with no problem but have made the decision to change to another product when this batch is used up purely for peace of mind.



BARBIE'S STORY



Barbie was just one of the many cats that Daphne and Katie Harris have cared for over their many years working in animal rescue. She was born in a shed and was found with her brother Leo the Lion. They were both adopted by Katie and Daphne and went on to have a very happy and peaceful life. Barbie loved all the other cats and human contact and lived with Guy, a long haired white chappy, referred to as 'Barbie's husband'. Sadly Guy died 2 years ago but Barbie carried on surrounded by all her cat and human friends. Sadly recently after 14 lovely years of health and happiness Barbie became suddenly very sick. It was thought that she had had a stroke or something similar. Daphne and Katie had no choice but to take her to the vets to be put to sleep to save her suffering.

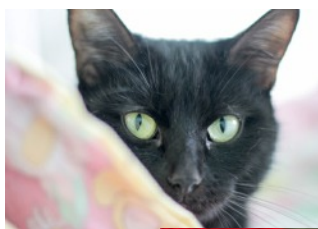
We tell Barbie's story because it is relevant to what we find is increasingly happening in the world of animal rescue. Some animals are being brought in as strays having been abandoned as old or sick and don't have the dignity of being helped at the end of their lives when they need us most. Others have obviously had loving homes, are **MICROCHIPPED** and have got lost. Sadly many of these animals have not had their microchip details updated and cannot be reunited with their owners.

This year the branch has taken in, cared for and nursed all these animals back to health and either found loving homes for them or, if too sick to rehome (fortunately not too often), we have cared for them and given them warmth food, love and comfort, whatever the cost, until the inevitable has to happen.

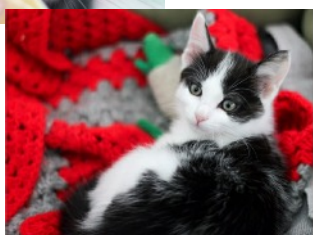
**PLEASE MAKE SURE MICROCHIP DETAILS ARE UPDATED -
AN ANIMAL'S HAPPINESS DEPENDS ON IT**

There is no need to abandon an animal because of sickness or old age. If you know of anyone who is struggling they should contact us or other animal charities to see what help they can get. Genuine cases will be helped.

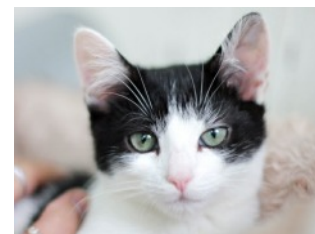
Double The Fun!!



Katana and daughter Solo. 1-2 yrs and 9 weeks of age



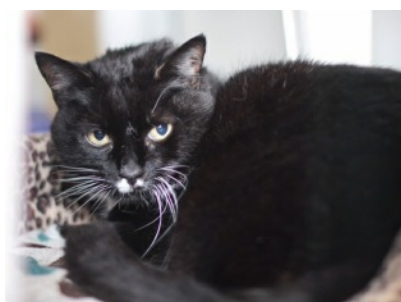
These delightful couples are all looking for for a loving new home together. Don't overlook the oldies - they are fit and healthy and very loving!!! All would be a great addition to any family.



Charlie (top) and Jenny. Brother and sister. 5-6 months.

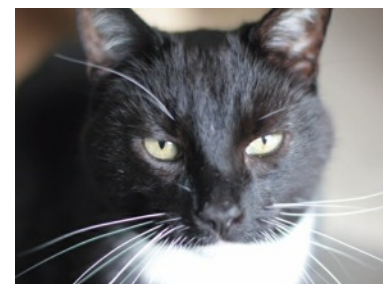


Betty (tabby) and Loki, 6 and 4 years respectively. Delightful, very bonded



Fudge and Smudge are healthy and delightful 12 year olds looking for a new and loving home. They were homed from us as kittens but sadly their owner can no longer keep them. They are a truly loving pair of cats but are naturally shocked at their sudden change of circumstances

**CALL THE BRANCH ON 01622 891222 OR
KATIE ON 07595 997674. FOR MORE
INFORMATION ABOUT THESE LOVING PAIRS**



VHD (VIRAL HAEMORRHAGIC DISEASE) AND VHD2 IN RABBITS

VHD is a highly contagious disease in rabbits that can become fatal very quickly. Incidents have been seen in Portsmouth but it is feared that it is more widespread. It can be spread directly or indirectly, often spread by insects and birds but it can be easily transmitted from one infected animal to another through contact or human touch. The incubation period is short and death normally occurs within 12-36 hours. Symptoms include high temperature, anorexia, lethargy and dullness, convulsions, lack of coordination, paralysis, breathing problems, and bleeding from the nose. Several symptoms can appear together. In its most acute form VHD will show itself with sudden death and in more unusual cases (about 5-10%) a chronic condition can occur where severe jaundice and weight loss are evident. These rabbits generally die 1-2 weeks later. The good news is that rabbits can have an annual vaccination against this.

VHD2 however is a new and nasty, mutant strain of this disease which can kill in hours. It causes internal haemorrhaging and bleeding from all orifices. It is feared that this could be resistant to the normal vaccine but a new vaccine, Filavac, is available from Europe under special import licence. Head Vet Ian Hopkins from the Holly House Veterinary Surgery in Cheshire, which is part of the Willows Veterinary Group points out that this vaccine only lasts for 6 months.

Pet owners are being encouraged to be vigilant and be scrupulous about cleaning hutches regularly including food and water bowls. This disease does not necessarily present with any symptoms. Because wild rabbits tend to die in burrows and pets at home, it is difficult to get post mortem evidence to see just how prevalent this disease is but a new case was recently identified in Cheshire after post mortem.

This information has been taken from the Animal Veterinary Hospital and Equine Unit Website and the July issue of the Veterinary Times also available online. There is much more information available on the internet. Alternatively contact your own vet for more information and advice.



SMOKEY PAWS CHARITY

We thought you would like to know about this superb charity and our support of it. Smokey Paws raises money to provide oxygen masks for animals that have had the misfortune to get caught in a fire. These oxygen masks come in 3 sizes to accommodate all kinds of animals. Animals will usually run and hide if fire breaks out causing them to be more vulnerable to smoke inhalation quicker than their human counterparts. These masks are slowly being introduced to all fire services across the country but at a cost of £90 a set the charity relies heavily on donations.

We were informed at the recent Regional Board Meeting that these masks have already saved the lives of many animals including a large number of cats from a multi-cat house that had caught fire. This is obviously another huge step forward in the care and welfare of animals and it is saving even greater heartache for home owners who have already suffered damage to their homes through fire.

We are very pleased to announce that at the Regional Board Meeting held at Horsham it was agreed that the South East Region board would donate £5000 to this very important cause to benefit animals. The Kent Fire and Rescue Service is welcoming more of these life-saving masks for pets on Thursday 19th November and we understand that the whole of Kent will now be covered. The charity will then move into other areas and as the South East Region also covers Essex and Surrey the money we have donated will help provide masks and training in those areas. It is hoped that the masks will eventually be available at all KFRS stations around the country.

If anyone would like more information about this charity you can check out their website at www.smokeypaws.co.uk. A nice, positive note on which to end 2016 and start a new year.

We would like to thank all our readers, members, friends and supporters for your continued support throughout 2016 and wish you and all your pets A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS and a PROSPEROUS AND SAFE NEW YEAR