

## NEWSLETTER - JANUARY 2005



In February, the Cat Welfare, will be 10 years old!!!

Nodoubt, at the time of starting, few people gave our fledgling society much chance of surviving. However, after many trials, tribulations and learning curves, not to forget many rewarding experiences we are still going strong, and going from strength to strength.

Of the original sixteen voluntary workers who, in February, 1995, started Cat Welfare, only Sylvia Palmer, sisters Jackie and Christine Castro, Marrie Chang and Bill Westbrook are still actively involved. These five stalwarts have kept the sanctuary going over the years, and battled valiantly, paying many of the bills from their own pockets, cleaning the sanctuary, feeding and socialising the cats and kittens - ie giving them their daily ration of cuddles and love!

Over a year ago, Nanette Roberts joined us. She does Wednesdays at the sanctuary, assisting the original overworked volunteers. Would you like to help her?

As you may know, we receive no Government subsidy, so all moneys must be raised by ourselves - and our expenses are in the vicinity of 6.000 per annum! (That's with Jackie, Christine, Sylvia and Marie sponsoring 4 days food per week, out of their own pockets!)

Our funds in 2004 came from membership - (is yours up to date???)  
Jumble Sales outside the Piazza.

A Book Sale and Coffee Morning at the Garrison Library

A Book Sale with Tapas and Wine Evening at the Garrison Library.

Volunteers participating in bootsales.

A Bumper Christmas Raffle.

Donations from NAFFI and the MOD Darts Club, plus other donations from supporters, both local and overseas.

Many grateful thanks especially to new members (MOD wives) Lisa Fenwick, Louise Pascuzzi (the donation of 2,000 books) and Christine Topham. These lovely young women have really worked hard, arranging the two Garrison Library booksales, 'doing' bootsales, getting us BFBS coverage...

Our expenses were high last year - We paid the vet fees for many wounded and sick, homeless street cats so as to have them healed. We assisted a number of people who had difficulty in paying their vet bills - also, necessary treatment for the sanctuary cats.

Jackie and Christine have either caught or collected each and every one of these cats, taken them to the vet, and when they had recovered, often in our sanctuary - so to keep down costs - released them. This they do after a hard day's work, 'doing' the sanctuary three times a week, (a 3/4 hour job), and shopping for best food prices..! How many hours in a day?

Morrisons, as many of you will know, have kindly allowed us to place a food collection box in their shop. Through generous cat friends like you, we collect around two days food supplies per week from this bin - a Godsend! We hope that this year we will also be allowed to place our food boxes in other supermarkets...

2004 was a high profile year. The Chronicle, Panorama, GBC Radio and TV and BFBS Radio have all been very kind and given us generous coverage, and hence high visibility in all that we have done.

We homed a number of cats and kittens in 2004 - not enough though - as we have in the region of 80 abandoned cats and kittens in the sanctuary and being fostered by our helpers. Can you help with homing some of these adorable companions that are craving a loving family? GBC Radio gives us a Homing Spot every Monday morning. We get a nice response, and are very grateful for this sponsorship. We hope that the local press will be able to assist us in a similar way. The Gibraltar Magazine features two of our cats monthly, hence creating an awareness of the need for loving homes...

In the latter part of last year, Simon Metcalf and his MOD friends started urgently needed repairs to the sanctuary. Repairs are progressing well, and it should be looking really great by the end of February. More about this in our next newsletter!

St Francis of Assisi Awards were given to four young boys from Bayside and St Anne's Schools for their concern for cats. This will be a biannual award, and part of our 'animal education' program.

In June, and later in September of 2004, Cat Welfare undertook two, one week 'Snip a Stray' Clinics. Nanette had been involved in clinics in Spain, and was able to organise these for us. Voluntary vets and nurses from England, with local Cat Welfare helpers Jackie, Christine, Sylvia, Frances, Lisa, Louise, Christine T and Nanette caught the cats, often 'till 3am. In total, 376 cats were caught, spayed/neutered, and then released back into their habitat.

Our clinics have drastically reduced the local breeding population, and removed the necessity of Government, through the local vet clinic, 'culling' the 'excess' cat population, as happened previously. A more humane method of birth control - don't you think?

International charities, World Wide Vets, Twinkle Animal Trust and Kismet Account assisted us financially and arranged voluntary vets and nurses for us. Ian McFarlane from Kismet came out on both occasions, and advised and assisted us local volunteers. GSPCA helped on both occasions with finances, and their treasurer, Lynne Lister (MOD wife), was a tremendous help to us on the first 'Snip'.

For this, our 10th year, fund raising is of paramount importance.

We hope to 'do' Boot Sales on Sundays at Morrisons - we will need any contributions you can spare, plus, please, can you help with manning the stall sometimes - the more helpers, the more Sundays?

*Sunday 29th January*, we will be holding (weather permitting...) a 'Bring and Buy' - Bric a Brac/Book Stall/Cake Sale in front of the Piazza from 10 am. Will you bring a cake, bric a brac or books?

*Saturday, 12th February*, we will be holding a Raffle and Cake Sale outside Morrisons. We will also have some cute kittens and cats to home. All contributions - but no cats please! - will be most welcome!

In Spring, once the Sanctuary is looking really great - thanks to Simon - we will hold an Open Day - so please come along - more later!

We will also be organising a Coffee Morning (or two), and in June, we will be holding a Bumper Family Day with lots of exciting stalls and things to do... More later! Have good ideas? Get involved?

In October, the Feast of St Francis, patron saint of animals, and also International Animal Day, we, and the GSPCA, will be organising something special for our animal companions!

Then, ofcourse, another 'Snip a Stray' so as to keep the local homeless cat population from multiplying! This time the international charities won't be able to assist us financially, (Tsunami...) so we and the GSPCA must raise all the funds ourselves... So you can see how necessary fundraising and membership are - and sponsorship?

We hope that we've given you some idea of what your Cat Welfare Society has been up to this past year, and what is envisaged for this, our 10th anniversary year.

If you will join our team of cat friends, and help us help the cats, we will be absolutely grateful for whatever you can do!

Cat Welfare wishes you a happy, peaceful and safe 2005.

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