PET ACTION GROUP NEWSLETTER 4

June 2011

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Hope Floats Website Design / **http://www.hopefloatsdesign.co.za**

HELP KEEP OUR PETS WARM THIS WINTER PLEASE DONATE A BLANKET!

It is freezing cold outside and some pets do not have any isolation against the cold. Most of them do not even have a kennel let alone a blanket to keep them warm against the cold. Though we are not in a position to give each dog a kennel, we at least try to give each one a blanket.

Pet Action kindly requests all animal lovers to help them by donating some blankets to these poor animals and relieve their suffering during the winter time.

Each month Pet Action is giving blankets to the dogs/cats that are sterilised as it is very important that these animals are kept warm after an operation.

At this stage we have completely run out of blankets and the situation is now getting desperate.

It will be much appreciated if you can donate a blanket for an underprivileged dog/cat. We will also welcome any second-hand blankets or even old linen/duvets.

We will collect at your home. Please phone us - 083 637 8491 / 084 580 4489 or 084 384 5710.

PET ACTION'S MAIN OBJECTIVE: WHAT WE ARE AND WHAT WE ARE NOT

We have realised that there is a misperception amongst the public regarding the function of Pet Action.

Our main purpose is the sterilisation of dogs/cats and the basic treatment of sick animals of people who cannot afford veterinary costs. We are not in the position to pay for expensive operations, i.e. when a dog or cat gets hit by a vehicle and has a broken leg. We are solely dependent on donations from the public and can only do as much as our funds allow us to do.

We often receive phone calls from public who pick up stray dogs/cats and then they expect Pet Action to come and fetch these animals and take them in. When we then inform them that we are unable to help, some people accuse us of not being animal lovers and that we do not care about the welfare of animals! Unfortunately we are not a shelter and therefore we do not have kennels to accommodate stray dogs - though we would love to be able to. All stray dogs must be taken to the SPCA as this is the first place pet owners usually go to look for their lost pets. In order for an organisation to run a shelter for homeless pets, the organisation must have enough resources and personnel which Pet Action does not have at this stage.

Please bear in mind that we are a group of volunteers who are solely doing it for the love of animals. We do not have an office where we work from and we do not receive salaries. Some of us have full time jobs and only do animal welfare on a part-time basis.

PARIS, THE RESCUED POODLE, AGAIN NEEDS YOUR HELP

Paris, the rescued French Poodle, needs another operation. Can you help with a donation?

In our 3rd newsletter of December 2010 we have made an appeal for donations towards Paris' next operation, but unfortunately we have not received any donations. Paris needs a second operation as more lumps have been discovered in her breasts since last year. According to the vet there is always a chance that it might become cancerous and we really do not want to take the risk. During Paris' first operation last year four of her breasts were removed (mastectomy) and six lumps in total were removed. The biopsy showed that the lumps were not cancerous. We really hope the second operation will be as successful as the first.

Paris' owner is not in a position to pay for the whole operation and therefore we are asking all animal lovers out there to make a contribution towards her next operation. Donations can be paid into Pet Action's bank account. We would really appreciate your help in this regard as Paris went through so many trials and tribulations during her lifetime and we would therefore like her to be around for many more years to come!

Internet payments
Investec Private Bank
Branch code: 580105
Account: 50003950025

Please use the reference "Paris" when making a donation.

ANOTHER FRENCH POODLE RESCUED BY DANIAL - THIS IS LEO'S STORY

At the beginning of the year Danial Smith saw an advertisement on Mxit of a Male Standard Poodle for sale. The price was too high and he temporarily put the matter at the back of his mind. Towards the middle of February the advertisement was still running and Danial contacted the owner, apparently a registered breeder, who informed him that her husband was about to drop the dog on the golden highway. After making the owner promise not to do this, Danial endeavoured several unsuccessful attempts to have the dog transported to Bloemfontein before a well-doer came to the rescue and transported the dog from Van der Bijl to Bloemfontein at no cost.

On Leo's arrival in Bloemfontein Danial was horrified and very disgusted to see the condition of the dog. Not only was he riddled with fleas, but the whole of his lower back had formed a crust due to an irritation caused by the flea bites. His ears were infected by mites. Overall the dog was timid, scared and filthy.

Helena Thirion, the owner of Fauna Doggy Parlour, offered to groom Leo and shaved almost four black garbage bags of hair (full of tick eggs) off him. Leo's grooming is now being sponsored by Helena for a full year and he visits the parlour on a weekly basis.
After a month of intensive treatment and dedicated care, Leo's scab has healed and is now covered with fur. Leo is extremely lovable, well mannered and intelligent. He has made his debut appearance at the Bloem Show as mascot of Pet Action - with Paris.

He has also made an appearance on the catwalk with his fellow housemates, Tristan and Miss Paris at the Wedding Expo, gracing the models with their show stopper dresses.

The lesson to learn from this experience is to stop buying puppies from backyard breeders. When you choose a puppy it should always be from a respectable and (preferably) registered breeder.

Before and after photos of Leo:

GYPSEY
WHY PEOPLE SHOULD RATHER ADOPT A DOG FROM A WELFARE ORGANISATION

From Stray Dog To Queen - a truly inspiring story about thinking twice before you buy an animal.

The love, care, commitment and devotion of a stray animal is so much better, they will forever be grateful to you for giving them a better life. Gypsey almost was not with us anymore, but she fought hard to live as she was so happy to have found a good home and she didn't want to give it up! During August 2010 Pet Action received a phone call from a lady who picked up an 8 week old puppy alongside the road between Welkom and Bloemfontein and asked Pet Action's help to look for a good home for the puppy. At that time Barry and Yodette were looking for a puppy and Pet Action asked them to consider adopting the little one. They decided to give her a chance and offered her a good home.

This is Gypsey's story as told by her owner Yodette: We fetched Gypsey from the people who rescued her. They picked her up alongside the road between Welkom and Bloemfontein. We did not have a big yard, so Gypsey made turns to go to Barry's and my work with us - which is how we came up with the name Gypsey (the travelling dog). Gypsey has became our child and have so much love to give. Even if we leave her alone for 5 minutes and come back, she would dance and cry of happiness. She sleeps with us on the bed with her head on the pillow and is so lovable. No human can give as much care and support as a stray animal. When Gypsey was seven months old a terrible thing happened - she got hit by a car. My child (Gypsey) was crying of pain. She broke both her front legs and at first the doctor wanted to put her to sleep, then amputate the leg, but eventually the doctor saw how much Gypsey meant to us and he tried something else by operating on her front leg. Her legs were in splits for 5 weeks. The vet was not very positive regarding her recovery and said if she recovered she won't be able to bend her one leg, but Gypsey is a fighter and surprised us all! She is bending both her legs and you won't even know that both her legs were broken. It is R8 000 later, but she is worth every penny… She sleeps with us in bed and gets her Rooibos tea every morning otherwise she refuses to get out of bed! She is just like a child. If you show respect, love and care to your animal, you will get it all returned x 100. Remember an animal has a heart, soul and brain - just like a human being.

township/small holding project

Pet Action is trying to create a better life for all the animals in need that crosses their path. This includes: sterilisation/castration of dogs and cats, de-worming, vaccination, providing dogs with kennels (if available) to protect them from the heat in summer and bitterly cold in the winter. In some instances dogs are tied to very short and heavy chains and we then provide them with a longer and lighter chain.

Education is also done by Pet Action to teach pet owners basic pet care. They have found that lack of education in most instances results in animal abuse. That is why it is so important to teach young children how to properly take care of their pets.

The biggest problem they face in the townships/small holdings is the overpopulation of pets due to the fact that people cannot afford to have their pets sterilised. Most of the people they help are unemployed and therefore do not have an income to provide in their own basis needs like food, warm clothing and blankets, let alone provide in the basic needs of their pets. More and more people are getting retrenched and have lost their homes due to the current economic situation and cannot afford to take care of their pets any longer. In most cases they surrender their once beloved pets to shelters like the SPCA. Pet Action wants to avoid this tragic situation by sterilising as many dogs and cats as they can. Unfortunately they can only do as much as their finances allow them to do as sterilisation is a very costly exercise. Though the sterilisations are done by the vets at a reduced cost, it still costs them about R400 per dog/cat as the animals which are sterilised must be vaccinated and de-wormed as well.

Corrie and her husband, Jaco, from Monkeynastix offered their assistance to Judy to help these dogs in the Bloemside area (see pictures below) to make life a bit more easier for them. Some of these dogs were tied up to very short chains, which were replaced by runner cables and lighter chains. Pet Action also provided them with kennels. The ideal situation for these dogs would off course have been to run loose and not be tied up 24/7, but unfortunately most of these people do not have fences around their yards.

Internet payments
Investec Private Bank
Branch code: 580105
Account: 50003950025

If you wish to contribute to our township/small holding project, please use the reference “Township” when making a donation.

PET ACTION ALSO CARES ABOUT THE WELFARE OF PEOPLE

Last year in October Bloemnuus reported on a white squatter camp at the Estoire small holdings in Bloemfontein. The majority of people who are living there are unemployed and most of them own dogs and cats. They really find it hard to provide for themselves let alone provide food and veterinary care for their pets. Pet Action started a feeding scheme and have also sterilised about 30 dogs and cats. We feed about 30 dogs and cats on a monthly basis.

One of the lucky doggies who survived a fire is a 8 month old foxterrier-cross named Brigitta. Brigitta used to live with her owner, Mr Eugene Van den Heever, in a shack on a small holding in Estoire (see picture of her and Van den Heever below). During the evening of 17 February 2011 Mr Van Heerden was sitting with his friend in his car and didn't realise that his house was burning. He rushed into the shack and found Brigitta hiding under his bed and grabbed her just in time. In the process he contracted mild burn wounds to his face. He lost everything he owned - all his clothes, bed, refrigerator, TV, radio and his watch. He is still not quite sure how the fire started, but when the Fire Brigade showed up the shack had already burned to the ground. Pet Action decided to do something to help Mr Van den Heever and Brigitta. We contacted Ben Burger from Bloemnuus who did an article about Van den Heever and his plot. Many people opened their hearts and contributed food and clothing to Mr Van Heerden. Even Brigitta received a bag of dog food.

Brigitta was sterilised by Pet Action in April and is now living with Mr Van Heerden in a caravan on the same property in Estoire where his shack burned down. She is one lucky little girl!

Our Wish List

Financial Support - Individuals and businesses can sponsor one sterilisation per year at R350 (or instalments of R30 per month) or save some of your small change in a collection tin for us (we will deliver collection tins on request).

Volunteers - you can help us to transport the animals that need to be sterilised to and from the veterinary clinics in Bloemfontein. You will be compensated for transport.

Old dog kennels that you are not using anymore. Most of the animals don't have shelters and have to sleep in the bitterly cold. It will also help to provide shelter against the warm sun during summer. We will come and collect the kennel from you.

Dog/cat **blankets, collars**, **beds**, **food**.

DOG FOOD:
THE HIDDEN DANGER

During the past two months several dogs in Bloemfontein died because of aflatoxins which were present in some brands of dog food. Please be very cautious when you buy dog food and rather stick to the known brands to avoid your dog from getting "poisoned". See press release below from the South African Veterinary Association.

Urgent SAVA press release re. on-going aflatoxicosis cases:
The South African Veterinary Association (SAVA) notes with alarm that the number of cases of aflatoxicosis presented to the Onderstepoort Veterinary Academic Hospital is on the increase rather than decreasing since our last press release.

The foods implicated in the toxicity thus far are: Legends, Hi Pro and Buddies.

SAVA urges members of the public to stop feeding these foods immediately and to report any signs of illness in their dogs to their nearest veterinarian. Signs of aflatoxicosis toxicity include: lethargy and depression, loss of appetite, vomiting, bloody diarrhoea, jaundice, weakness and seizures.

The Onderstepoort Veterinary Institute has been instrumental in isolating the toxins from foods presented for analysis, and the public is urged to take samples of any suspicious foods (preferably in the original packaging) to their nearest veterinarian to submit for tests.

Our Sponsors

Thank you to all our veterinarians, **Bayswater Animal Clinic**, **Vetovs Animal Clinic**, **Vethealth Animal Clinic** and **Bloemfontein Animal Clinic** who perform
sterilisations and treatments at a reduced cost to people in the low class income groups.
Thank you to **TFD Bloemfontein** for occasionally sponsoring some damaged pet food.
Thanks to **Elbe** from Van Niekerkshof for kennelling some of our dogs/cats that is available for adoption free of charge. Elbe also groom some dogs for us free of charge.
Helena Thirion from Fauna Doggy Parlour for Leo's free grooming each week. She is also going to sponsor a generous amount of doggie jackets which Pet Actions are going to sell at the Vryfees in July.
To all of you who we did not mention by name that supported Pet Action the past few months, a big thank you.
Senwes for the R5 000 prize money Pet Action won in the Greens to Dreams Golf day hosted by Senwes. Frontline also sponsored some tick and flea products which were also one of our prizes.

Picture of Judy with the lady from Frontline below: