

Tails to Tell

In the run-up to Christmas, the RSPCA is always concerned about the prospect of people adopting or buying pets as Christmas presents. Far too often, these animals rapidly become unwanted and the RSPCA and other animal rescue charities have to deal with the increased numbers of pets that, through no fault of their own, are without a home; either dumped or signed over for rehoming.

This is the tale of one poor cat that had once been someone's pet. but for him his luck changed just before Christmas last year and he possibly had his best Christmas in a long time!

About this time last year, a concerned member of the public had handed a tatty black male moggy in to their local veterinary practice. He had been wandering in the area for some months but had obviously been out on his own for



a lot longer. He was in poor condition, thin, with fleas and sore eyes and looked a sorry sight.

The vet practice contacted this Branch and after

blood tests and some vital medical treatment he was given to one of our experienced fosterers, Angela, to start the process of rehabilitation. He needed lots of TLC, good food and encouragement. Angela named him 'Jack'. At the outset he was exhausted and once sure of his surroundings he relaxed, ate and slept, recovering his strength slowly. Every week brought something new and although initially nervous of strangers, improvements in his well being brought out the best in his personality. There were one or two minor hiccups with his health, which given his age (8-10 years old) and the fact he had been in such a bad way, wasn't surprising. Eventually after several months in our care, patience was rewarded and Jack found his new forever home. It was a match made in heaven.

Angela found it hard to part with Jack so she was delighted when she received this letter and photo earlier this year.

Dear Angela

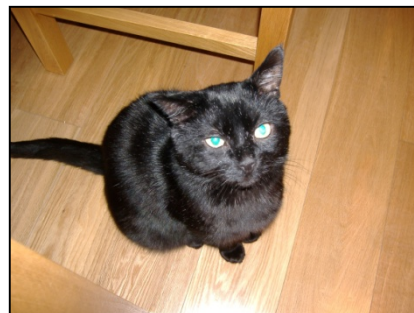
I thought I'd write and let you know how I am. I am having a fine time here with my new family. Christmas was great; everyone was home so I got extra cuddles. I have become very confident. I don't hide anymore. When visitors come in I greet them and wait patiently for a hug. If they sit down, I like to sneak up and jump up on their laps. Even if they don't like cats! I'm not fussy. On Boxing Day there were lots of people here, I think I sat on everyone's lap at one point or another. I loved it.

Thank you for my Christmas present. The cat nip is great. They put some on my teddy and some on my cat scratching post from time to time to encourage me to play. I've taken up football too, I'm pretty good. I've not given up chasing my tail though, that's still loads of fun.

I don't go upstairs much. But I do like to follow Mo around the house, so I will follow him upstairs sometimes. I have no interest at all in going outside. What's the point with all that snow and cold? I'll stay in the warm and get some more hugs. Besides, if I went out I might get lost again!

Thank you very much for looking after me Angela. I had a lovely time and will always remember you. And thank you for finding me my new family. I know they love me very much and they look after me very well. Mo has taken a picture of me; in fact he takes quite a few. I hope you like it. Bye for now.

Love from Jack



Why are black cats unpopular?



This Branch has found in the recent past that black cats are usually the most difficult to rehome. As a black cat, Jack wasn't easy to rehome and his age didn't help either. However, his character has made him an ideal companion for his new owners, as is evident from Jack's letter! It is a shame that there seems to be an aversion to black cats by some potential owners. Whether superstition portraying them as bringers of bad luck has had a bearing on their lack of popularity is unclear, but black cats can also be seen to bring good luck.

One of the difficulties often faced by the RSPCA is dealing with potential adopters who don't want to consider perfectly ideal cats because they have decided they want a specific coloured cat. In actual fact, what should be of priority is considering the personality of the cat, with its colour a more minor consideration.



Cats, like any animal, are all different and not all cats make suitable pets for a family and the primary aim of the RSPCA is to find the right home for every animal.

This branch has a number of black cats and kittens needing good homes. If you are thinking of adopting a cat please visit our website and please be willing to consider a black cat as a companion.



Please don't give pets as Christmas presents

Donate Don't Dump!



Every year this branch relies hugely on the support of the local community to turn peoples' unwanted clothes and possessions into cash by donating them to one of our three charity shops. Each of our shops receives a vast assortment of donations and our managers and volunteers work tirelessly to maximise the income by selling what they can and recycling what they can't. Most of what is recycled also earns the branch money. So far this year we have been paid around £8,000 for all the items we have passed to our recycling provider. In addition, selected items donated that are of higher value or are collectors' items are passed to our Ebay volunteers whose job it is to research the values of these items and list them for sale on Ebay. Those that don't sell are returned to the shops for them to hopefully sell. We constantly strive to make every penny we can, because every penny does count!

The income generated through our three shops provides the main financial resources for this branch which, in turn, enables us to make a significant level of expenditure on local animal welfare. In the first six months of this year this Branch has spent over £35,000 on veterinary care and finding new homes for local animals.

Whatever you have that you no longer want, please remember us and bring it to one of our shops and help us do even more in the future for the many needy animals in our area. Opening times are 9.30am-4.30pm Mon to Sat.

**** Ash Vale Charity Shop ****
8 The Parade
Wharf Road
Ash Vale GU12 5AZ
01252 319970

**** North Camp Charity Shop ****
47 Camp Road
Farnborough GU14 6EN
01252 548758

**** Farnham Charity Shop ****
27 The Woolmead
East Street
Farnham GU9 7TT
01252 712050

Gift Aid your donations

...Coming soon...



Money doesn't grow on trees, but extra is there for the picking by us, if you are a UK tax payer.

Did you know that as a UK tax payer you can elect for us to claim back from the Government the tax you have paid, currently at the rate of 28p in every £1, for any items donated to our shops that we are able to sell?

So what's involved? Once our shops have the necessary till and paperwork systems in place, when you donate to one of them you will be asked, as a tax payer, if you are willing to complete a Gift Aid claim form. It takes 2 minutes and simply requires you to give your name, address and signature as consent for us to act as your "agent" in selling your possessions. You will then



be given a donor's card with a unique bar code number which will identify you to us for any future donations you make. All your donations will be sorted separately and each item that we put out for sale will have a unique bar code sticker attached. When a customer goes to purchase any of these items, the bar code will be scanned at the till and that will automatically allocate the amount of the sale to your personal record, held on our system's database. Remember, this will be 28 pence for every pound sold (25 pence from April 2011), so the amount of gift aid claimable could mount up quite quickly.



Thereafter, each time the amount of gift aid claimable reaches a certain predetermined amount, we will write to you to advise you of the amount, which we are required to do by law.



Once a year all the shops' gift aid claims will be processed through HMRC and we will receive our entitled payment.

If only 30% of all our donors were tax payers and agreed to allow us to claim gift aid, then this Branch could boost its annual income by more than £8,000. This has to be good news for local animals!



"Doggy Corner"

For all our dog lovers

Strutt your Mutt for the RSPCA

Last year's sponsored dog walk raised over £1,000 for this branch and due to its success, we are holding our second Mutt Strutt on Sunday 26 September at Frimley Lodge Park any time between 11am and 3pm. A sponsorship form is enclosed and further copies are available from our website www.rspca-hantsandsurrey.org.uk

Ask friends and family to sponsor you and your dog and help us to raise funds for this branch to enable us to do even more good work for local animals in need.

Hartley Wintney Festival Dog Show



Our Fun Dog Show at the Hartley Wintney Festival on Saturday 12 June was a great success with nearly 200 dogs entering the six classes.

This was the first year the Festival included a Dog Show and the Festival's organisers were very happy to allow our branch to organise and run the Dog Show, which turned out to be a popular additional attraction on the day. Many thanks to everyone who participated.



Thinking of adopting a dog?...

Then please consider a Staffie. The RSPCA has successfully rehomed more Staffies this year than any other dog. Much maligned, Staffies do make good pets and more details about them can be found at www.rspca.org.uk