

**MAY 2012**

**NEWSLETTER BY MERYL HARRISON AND THE VAWZ TEAM**

**“The love for all living creatures is the most noble attribute of man” – Charles Darwin.**

### **NEW STAFF.**

As VAWZ's animal work increases, so our staff have increased. We welcome Stella Killick onto our team. Stella is no stranger to the world of animals having been a hard-working, stalwart member of Harare SPCA for many more years than she cares to remember! Although a qualified Inspector who helped me through the difficult days of the Egyptian Circus, the transport of live cattle to Mauritius and many more issues, she will now be dealing mostly with administrative duties for VAWZ. We also welcome Charlene Laing who has joined us as a volunteer, but who seems to do as much work as a full time member of staff. She has been like a breathe of fresh air in the office – filing is totally up to date, long overdue emails sent out, and in between all that she has rescued a stray kitten, stopped two Labradors from committing undoubted suicide on the busy Alpes Road and managed to squeeze two well-fed little puppies back through a gate to their anxious Jack Russell mother.



*Happy pair seen at Scruffs Dog Show*

### **RURAL VISITS.**

These have not been as frequent as we would have liked them to be due to pressure of work in Harare, but recently we realized that folk there do know to come to the VAWZ office for help. Recently a Mr. Kazingi was sent by the community in Mtoko district to report that their cattle had not been dipped for many months. After a phone call to our good friend Simbarashe Choga who is the government Field Technical Supervisor, two of the rural cattle farmers returned to the office two weeks later with beaming smiles to thank VAWZ as dipping had started again.

### **EDUCATION.**

In the first term of this year Inspector Bernard Ndlovu spoke to 18 schools, their ages ranging from 5-12 years. The VAWZ Education programme will continue this term.

### **RECENT CASES.**

Amongst the many cases dealt by VAWZ have been the following:-

Four separate incidents of dogs being abandoned – this, sadly, is a fairly common occurrence. All the dogs were uplifted and taken to the SPCA.

A combined total of 24 dogs previously being confined in cages by their owners are now running free – it is a contravention of the Cruelty Act to unnecessarily tie up or confine an animal.

The number of dogs found outside the confines of their yard is a continual worry – too many dogs seize the opportunity to run out when the gates are opened and their absence goes unnoticed.

Cases of owners going on holiday (particularly over long weekends) and leaving their dogs locked up or simply not provided for is of major concern as perhaps only the lucky few have been reported.



*VAWZ Inspector feeds one group of abandoned dogs*

VAWZ Inspectors have also dealt with a number of cases concerning too many dogs on a property (legally only two are permitted on a property of less than 2000 sq metres or four on any other size). Cases of 15, 13 and 12 dogs have been dealt with and in one instance 3 adult dogs + 16 pups were found in a garage – the owner apparently “buying and selling” pups. He has since been into the office for 're-education'.

An adult male dog and young pup were found in the Greendale area with severe mange. On examination, it was stated by the veterinarian concerned that the adult was the worst case he had seen in his career. The dog was euthanased. The pup is still under treatment but responding well.

Complaints of stray dogs are regularly received, Catching them is difficult and time consuming. VAWZ is in the process of obtaining dog traps from South Africa which will greatly assist in capturing these often unsocialised nervous animals.

We are also very grateful to Donna O'Connell, the RSPCA'S Senior Programmes Manager (Africa), who on a recent visit to Zimbabwe gave us 4 dog catchers, of which we donated one to Harare SPCA and the other to the Government Vets.

Responding to a call one Sunday evening we found a young Great Dane X pup had been badly injured after having been hit by a car that did not stop. The dog was taken to Kamfinsa Vets where he was operated on and a steel pin put in his leg. He has since made a full recovery and been re-homed.

### **PROSECUTIONS.**

A Security Company pleaded guilty to a charge of neglect concerning their two dogs and four pups- VAWZ Inspectors found the dogs being kept inside an old canopy, without water and bedding, their food bowl was an old mining helmet. The Company was fined \$100.00.

A lady in Hatfield pleaded guilty to cruelty charges. One dog was found dead on her property and the remaining dogs were removed. She was fined \$180.00.

Another Security Company operating in Goromonzi was charged after their dog was found living in unacceptable conditions. They were fined \$100.00

Reacting to a report VAWZ Inspectors apprehended two men in possession of a rare pangolin. They pleaded guilty in court and were each fined \$100.00 (or 30 days).

### **RABBITS.**

VAWZ is currently engaged in discussions with Government Vets and an NGO regarding a proposed rabbit and guinea fowl breeding project – both admit that no provision for animal welfare had been included in the original proposal until VAWZ heard about it and brought it to their attention.

### **LIVESTOCK TRANSPORTATION.**

A number of broken down transport vehicles were again reported – cattle, pigs and goats all being the victims. In one incident 4 pigs fell off the lorry they were travelling in when one of the side panels unlatched itself. VAWZ assisted at the scene, fortunately there were no serious injuries but the pigs were grazed and very stressed.

A cattle truck was seen parked outside a beerhall in Marondera – the two animals inside were tied down and in the full sun. The driver was escorted by VAWZ to the ZRP where he was fined.

A vehicle on Seke Road was stopped by VAWZ Inspectors with the assistance of a passing Police Inspector – the back was grossly overcrowded with cattle, goats, sheep and passengers, plus several cages of chickens and guinea fowl were tied on top. The animals were off loaded safely, the guinea fowl released at a sanctuary and the owners taken to ZRP St Mary's where they pleaded guilty and were appropriately fined.

### **BIRDS AND BATS.**

Two owls brought into the VAWZ office and taken to a veterinary surgery sadly had to be euthanased – one from suspected poisoning and the other suffered serious injuries after having been hit by a car. It is very much appreciated when the public take the time and effort to pick up and bring in



injured birds – rather than driving on leaving them to suffer.

A 'grounded' crow was caught at a retirement home and after having been examined and treated taken to a new home where he now lives alongside another similarly injured crow and a cattle egret.

Birds in captivity, particularly the parrot family, have been brought to our attention and meeting with several experts have been very positive.

Three Bats hanging from the curtains in the lounge of an understandably nervous, elderly lady, were rescued and released that night.

## **MEETINGS.**

Discussions covering a wide range of topics have been held during the course of the last two months. These include meetings with Minister Nhema, Dr. Ushewokunze-Obatola, Dr. Majuru, Dr. Mukarati (UZ), the Harare Municipality and the Timber Producers Forum AGM in Mutare where baboon poisoning in plantations is still of major concern.

## **FUNDRAISING.**

The Scruffs Dog Show was a huge success. A wonderful crowd turned up, the weather was perfect, as for the dogs, they were all fabulous which made the judge's job very difficult. There was hardly a dry eye in the place when our 5 Special Rescue Dogs came into the ring – “Amy”, “Kayden”, “Sam”, “Kirby” and “Asher”, their stories were a reminder of man's inhumanity, not to people – but sadly to dogs.

We had great support from the Veterinary profession – Vets taking entries, judging and even cooking hamburgers! A Very Big Thank You to the VAWZ fundraising committee who worked so hard to make the show such a success and to all Companies and individuals who supported with donations and prizes. Finally – a Special 'Thank You' to the Committee of the Kennel Club of Harare for all their help and for getting the grounds looking so stunning.

## **IT'S NOT OVER!**

THE ANNUAL VAWZ GOLF DAY FUNDRAISER WILL BE TAKING PLACE AT WINGATE GOLF CLUB ON THE 29TH JULY – SO “LOCALS” BEWARE. You are about to be coerced into playing and/ or donating prizes. Your support will be greatly appreciated.

**THANK YOU'S.** COLD CHAIN, RAM PETROLEUM, VICKY WINDSOR(USA), MARIANNE JACOBS, JENNY GARDENER, KENNEL CLUB OF HARARE, GAEL VAUGHAN, SIGNS OF THE TIMES, LIZ VON SEIDEL, DI FYNN, JANE RAWSTHORNE & MICHELLE DELANEY, ROGER MAITLAND(UK), ALICE MANN, NICKY MARSH(AUSTR), NORMAN & MARGIE HAYLETT- PETTY(AUSTR), CHARLENE LAING, RIDGEBACK CLUB OF ZIMBABWE, EM COETZEE, NADIA MARABIN, LIN MACLEOD, LYN KAY, TOYOTA ZIMBABWE, JENNY FAASEN, VIC GIFFORD and to the Veterinary Practices that support VAWZ..

## **OUR ALL IMPORTANT “WISH” LIST:-**

Buddie Cards, Cotton Wool, small containers for our home-made fly smear, Fuel Coupons, Exit, and probably most importantly Hay for the 3 horses at the UZ whose welfare we are monitoring. If you are able to help with any of the above they can be dropped off at Chisi, Kamfinsa or Avondale Vets. Finally we are still needing old kennels and of course, we will collect.

The last two weeks have been a very tough for the VAWZ team who have had to deal with some extremely upsetting cases of animal cruelty. Whilst they are trained to handle such situations, the emotional strain weighs heavy.

**By donating to VAWZ you will have the satisfaction of knowing that you are saving and changing animals lives, undoing the damage caused by cruelty and helping in preventing future abuse.**

### **VAWZ Banking details:-**

Local: CABS Platinum The Veterinarians of Animal Welfare Trust”  
a/c No 9015153557.

External: Standard Bank Graaf-reinet "Veterinarians for Animal Welfare in Zimbabwe"  
a/c No 186623062; Swift No:SBZA.ZA.JJ; IBAN No: 051001.

Direct transfers may be made via [www.standardbank.co.zw](http://www.standardbank.co.zw)

