



Animal Welfare Act Amendments
Harsher penalties for animal abusers

Physiotherapist's Advice
Caring for the ageing dog

The Puppy Plan
Early learning for our dogs

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The SPCA - Society for the Protection and Care of Animals - is an associated organisation of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA). Its mission is to promote kindness and prevent cruelty to animals through education, advocacy and other activities. It runs the oldest home for dogs and cats in Malta and is officially recognised by the Maltese Government as the national animal welfare organisation.

THE SPCA COMMITTEE:

President: Barbara Cassar Torreggiani.

Vice President: Paul Busuttill.

Treasurer: Marisa Ciappara.

Hon. Secretary: Jane Bannister-Grech.

Committee Members: Simon Walker, Darryl Grima

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Home Manager: Miriam Casha.

Kennel Staff: Larry Agius, Mariola Prorok, Mary Caruana, Nathalie Diacono, Tessie Micallef, June LaFerla, Carol Sherman.

THE SPCA BOOK SHOP VOLUNTARY STAFF:

Joseph Mizzi, Sandra Vella, Tessie Micallef, Rosette Micallef, Joseph Calleja.

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SPCA HOME: *Mon to Fri: 10:30am - 2:00pm*

Sat: 10am - 12pm

SPCA BOOK SHOP: *Mon to Fri: 10am - 1:00pm,*
(Floriana) *Sat: 10am - 12pm*

SPCA CHARITY SHOP:

Paws 4 A Cause *Mon to Fri: 9:30am - 5:30pm,*
(Sliema) *Sat: 9:30am - 1:00pm*

Closed on Sundays & public holidays.

ISSUE 26



The Editorial Team (from left):
Michelle Grech, Sara Hazzard & Frances Cassar Torreggiani

Thank you for picking up this issue of AnimalWatch. We hope to bring you a taste of the many inspiring stories and activities of those who help raise awareness and much-needed financing. Everything we do is with the specific aim to return as many animals to loving homes as we can, plus provide opportunities to see people happy as they take that chance to nurture a unique bond with an animal. It is somehow irreplaceable.

The SPCA Home continues to work miracles as the animals under its many roofs flourish thanks to the unceasing care provided by the staff and volunteers. There's no doubt that without their constant dedication, the quality of care wouldn't bring the second chances all the cats and dogs deserve, neither would we as carers get the chance to share our homes with some very special characters. So thank you to the staff and volunteers.

We start the Summer, shaking off a rather damp and fairly breezy Winter, with hope of new fresh starts for the cats and dogs, kittens and puppies currently passing through the SPCA's doors. Our minds are on the young ones and the importance of schooling in an article about The Puppy Plan on page 5. At the other end of the age-scale, our guest animal physiotherapist, Sue Portelli Demajo explains how important it is to care for the physical well-being of our elderly dogs. She helps us keep them with us in good health for longer.

On a sombre note, the Animal Welfare Act is currently undergoing a rethink and the main changes are listed in this issue to bring us up to speed with the authorities' efforts to curb abuse suffered by animals in our communities.

We always include two pages for the younger generation, this time including a film review with a very important message. Blackfish tells the very black and white story of animal abuse that hides behind children's entertainment, and even education, in the marine parks around the world. It is shocking, but nonetheless invaluable. We believe that taking animals from the wild and keeping them in captivity is plainly wrong. Watch this docu-film and see what you think.

And so as we prepare our bathing suits for the beach, spare a few moments to think how the heat affects your four-legged friends, whether it be in the house when you're not there, or when they're out and about in the direct sun. Think hydration and fresh air!

All the best, and as always, share your views with us anytime.

The Editorial Team

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Education for Dogs

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ON THE COVER:

*Even our residents
are getting into the
spirit of the World
Cup!*

This quarterly newsletter is the official publication of the SPCA Malta.
Issue: 26

Contact us: AnimalWatch, SPCA, St. Francis Ravelin, Floriana FRN 1231
Telephone: 2123 4431 / 2123 0468

Email: spca@maltanet.net

Website: www.spcamalta.org

Editor: Frances Cassar Torreggiani

President: Barbara Cassar Torreggiani

Designed by: Mikhail Basmadjian

Printed by: Offset Press, Triq San Gwakkin, Mriehel.

THE PRODUCTION OF THIS PUBLICATION IS ENTIRELY
SPONSORED BY ADVERTISING.

Hello,

We are in the business of giving animals a better chance in life. If you are reading this magazine, we hope that you support us in promoting our cause.

Unfortunately, there is still an abundance of stray animals on our islands so there is still a lot of work to do and I hope we can reach out to you, to speak to those around you to encourage them to take that step forward to begin a relationship they won't regret.

At the SPCA we are extremely careful when homing our puppies. Too many find themselves abandoned yet again when their new owner experiences a fully grown dog but without the necessary training - "I didn't know it would grow this big!" "It's afraid of fireworks!" "It's afraid of people!" the list is endless.

Adopting a puppy is a commitment for the rest of its life. That shouldn't be

overwhelming and it won't be if you approach your new adventure in the correct manner, with ample planning right from the start. Read our article on 'The Puppy Plan' and you will see what I mean.

Summer is around the corner, the perfect season for you and your family to take in a new family member. The days are longer and the children are at home. Plenty of time to teach them the love, respect and responsibility that owning a pet requires and plenty of time for them to experience the joy and love a pet brings to our lives. Guide them well so that your new pet feels safe and happy at home.

The operative word is 'time'. Animals, especially dogs, are like clockwork. Give them what they require on time and you won't have a problem. (Rather like children!)

Of course, we have a greater collection of adult dogs in the Home and these of course will show you exactly what to expect! Don't forget, we will be able

to give you insight into their behavior as well as how they interact with other animals as well as people, their likes and dislikes and some tips on how to handle them..

We only want the best for our animals, be they dogs, puppies, cats or kittens so we will not let them go unless we feel happy with the home we have found. However making it work is then up to you. A large number of our residents have come from an unhappy start in life. We have given them as much love and support to raise their self-confidence again but this is work in progress until they feel secure with you and your family.

So if you or anyone you know is considering adopting a cat or dog from our Home do think about it carefully before you take the next step. A pet, like family, is a commitment. Treat it with care and love – what you give, you'll get back tenfold.

Have a lovely summer and thanks as always for your support.



*Barbara
Cassar
Torreggiani*

GROWTH IS A CRUCIAL STAGE IN HIS LIFE EVERY STEP MATTERS

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SPCA

The kitten's growth takes place in two key stages

At birth, the kitten is nourished by his mother's milk. During weaning (4th week), the kitten gradually moves from milk to solid food. His digestion is very sensitive and his tolerance to lactose is gradually reducing. Take care to choose a food which is digestible, easy to pick up (his teeth are only just coming through) and which will support his immune defences.

2nd age: as the kitten develops, so must the food :
At this stage it is a good idea to choose a food specially adapted for the second phase of growth, which contains ultra digestible proteins (because his digestive system is still immature) and helps meet all his needs (particularly protein, vitamins and minerals).



The Puppy's Delicate digestion and Fragile natural defences
During the first months of life, the puppy's digestive system is still maturing and therefore fragile. The puppy needs specific food which is really easy to digest and adapted to his age (too much food or the wrong food can lead to diarrhea).
Between the age of 4 and 12 weeks, the puppy goes through a period of reduced immunity.

The antibodies provided by the mother during the first feeds (colostrum) decline progressively, while the puppy's own defences have not been adequately stimulated by vaccination. This is known as the "immunity gap". A food containing essential nutrients, vitamins and antioxidants will help reinforce his natural defences.



we all want the chance to excel

PRIMARY SCHOOL EDUCATION...for DOGS

by Christina Pace



We send our children to school when they are still very young, and even during their pre-school years we select toys for them that engage their motor skills and their problem-solving skills, that develop their sense of language.

We do all this for our children early for a very good reason; the brain is an amazing organ that develops rapidly early in life. During this time, connections are being formed every second and useless connections discarded. For humans, connections that are not needed or used in the first six months are abandoned allowing more useful ones to flourish. If there is no exposure to language in that time the deficit will remain and affect a child later in life.

But here, of course, we are talking about dogs and not our children. Yet this golden learning period for our dogs is just as important, even though it is shorter. Known as the socialisation period, it lasts for up to only sixteen weeks on average. It is the perfect time to teach a puppy the skills it needs in later life. In those early weeks, the first eight are the most important. From the moment a puppy starts perceiving the world until it slowly starts feeling fear at around five weeks, the puppy is learning to accept every stimulus and experience as a normal part of life as well as those it meets in its social group.

Just think what a huge difference this can make to a dog's life and to your life living with a dog. Fear of fireworks, fear of visitors and children, reaction to moving objects, inability to walk over glossy surfaces are just a few of the things that can be avoided using 'The Puppy Plan', a plan developed to enable owners to socialise their puppies in such a way that behavioural problems can then be avoided. The Puppy Plan removes any doubt about when it is time to do something as it is all explained week by week.

This of course means nothing if we still fall for the cute puppy at the pet shop that we know very little or nothing about. The choice of where to get a puppy from carries more weight than you might first think. Adopting a dog from a shelter means that another dog will later take its place and have the opportunity to be cared for until its chance of a home comes along. When buying a dog from a breeder, be careful not be blind to the possibility that we are assisting the funding of breeding operations that could be harming dogs. In some cases, dogs are bred to be sold as pets that are not always easy to

live with or even as healthy as they should be, leading to future frequent visits to the vet that could have been avoided with better breeding practice. The law is clear about this. The breeder is responsible for the animal's health and temperament. No puppy can be sold before the age of eight weeks. Not only should puppies remain with their mothers and litter mates to learn appropriate behaviour, but you also want to ensure that they have been de-wormed, received their first vaccination, and ideally been micro-chipped. You want to see them with their mother and check that both she and the father are healthy dogs too. Good health is perhaps something the vet is better informed about, so it might be a good idea to take a vet with you when you are choosing your pooch.

Remember, when a dog becomes part of your family, good decisions start before you bring it home and then continue with balanced education. A healthy dog is both physically and mentally well-developed, just as our children are. Pay close attention to the informative years, your dog will reward you for it.

For details about The Puppy Plan and for some easy-to-follow videos and dog training advice go to www.dogtrainingmadeeasy.org



Sue Portelli Demajo

CARING FOR THE OLDER DOG

With the advancement, expansion and accessibility of veterinary care, responsible pet owners find themselves enjoying their dog for longer. Thanks to good care practice, regular exercise and proper nutrition, dogs are enjoying a longer and healthier life. Sue Portelli Demajo, veterinary physiotherapist, shares some tips on how we can make our ageing pets more comfortable.

With the ageing of a pet, changes to the body may happen gradually, sometimes without the owner even noticing. Depending on the breed, dogs age differently, developing problems of different types; giant breeds have a more common tendency to suffer from arthritis in the large weight-bearing joints, whilst smaller breeds show signs of heart failure and problems with exercise endurance.



Whatever the reason, a dog owner should always keep an eye out for changes in the dog's behaviour such as:

- a more sluggish lifestyle, having a dog that prefers to sleep rather than exercise
- difficulty standing up and moving after having been lying down for some time
- difficulty jumping onto the bed or finding a comfortable spot
- difficulty taking the first few steps, easing with time as the dog loosens up and starts to move
- more expressions of pain when the dog is touched
- the dog preferring to stay alone rather than socialise with its family.

These are all signs that the older dog is suffering from pain and has difficulty with its movements. As a veterinary physiotherapist I am able to give you some practical tips as to what to do in such cases.

First of all, seek veterinary advice. The veterinary professional is the person who will be able to confirm where the pain is coming from, and what can be done about it. He/she will let you know how the pain would be limiting the dog's daily activities. Once you are aware which area of the body the pain is coming from, one needs to investigate and ascertain whether it is due to arthritis or any other age related disease.

If it is confirmed that the problem is arthritis, one may first apply a heat pad over the area when the dog is at rest. Heat increases the circulation around the joint and so stimulates the healing process by providing a greater supply of 'raw materials' that are needed

for the repair process. Following this, one may massage the area slowly. The owner needs to rub the area of pain slowly, loosening the muscles around the joint so that the dog will be more supple to move. Following that, it would be a good idea to stretch the joint through its available range, stimulating synovial joint turnover and so boosting the joint repair process. There are also some electrotherapy machines that the physiotherapist may use in order to stimulate the joint to speed up the rate of recovery.

Finally, some gentle exercises may also help to stimulate the dog to limit the further development of arthritis in the affected joint. This can be done by performing specific exercises that will strengthen muscles around the joint, so limiting the amount of instability present around the affected joint. Joint supports are also available. These control the amount of joint movement and reduce the development of pain whilst the



dog is active. If the pain recurs once the dog increases his activity again, ice would be a better form of treatment to limit the amount of joint swelling that may develop after exercise.

Helping the dog lose weight is also important so that the weight taken on by that joint is lessened and as a result the pain upon movement is automatically decreased.

Arthritis is a common condition in dogs of all sizes; it is a chronic condition that needs close observation and constant care. Nonetheless, dedicated and well-versed owners have enjoyed a number of success stories in their battle against pain, enjoying a pain free pet for longer periods throughout their later years.



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Petlove - Malta

Home visit by our faithful volunteers

What a lovely morning we had, when a good number of our volunteers who help at the SPCA shop in Sliema, came to the Home in Floriana to visit our animals and the staff who work so hard for them!

For some it was a first visit even though they work so hard for the cause. Working in the shop is physically very cut-off from the Home but it's an essential form of income to support the Home and our dear residents. Visiting Floriana reminded them of why they so kindly find a few hours (some many more!) in their week to help out.

Fun was had by all when Carol opened three of the larger kennels (one has to be careful when mixing a number of dogs together). After that we toured the Home, both upstairs and downstairs, taking time to say hello to each and every dog and puppy.

The cats of course were wanting to mind their own business so we were careful

not to disturb them too much. We have a lot of adult cats (6 months and more) who are not in cages but have a little community of two rooms and a courtyard. In general they seemed to enjoy our visit too.

After refreshments of hot pastizzi, homemade cakes, homemade lemonade and a good natter, we all felt better about the world and where our animals fit in to it!



UPCOMING
EVENTS

7th JULY 2014

LEIGHTON SCHOOL CHOIR TO RAISE FUNDS FOR THE HOME

We feel very lucky to have been chosen by Leighton School (UK) to come and perform for us here in Malta to help us raise some much needed funds for the Home.

The event will take place on July 7th at Villa Bologna in Attard.... save the date!

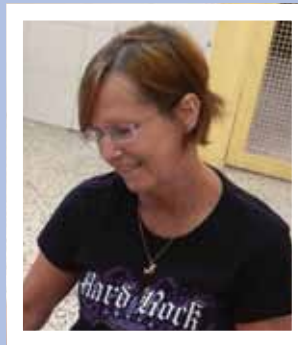
Anyone interested in booking a place (we will be advertising at a later date) and joining us for a lovely evening in the beautiful grounds of Villa Bologna, is asked to call 9982 9888.



Facts Speak Louder than Words

When Tex was rescued from the streets and brought to the Home he was in a very bad state - thin and shaggy, dirty and miserable. But what impressed us most was the sad look in his eyes. We checked for a microchip and found it but low and behold....it was unregistered. The vet came to check him over and told us that he was about 9 years old. Our hearts sank....homing was going to be difficult for this chap. As time went by and Tex began to grow accustomed to his new Home, he became a favourite with the dog walkers; he walked calmly and to heel making it relaxing for both Tex and the Volunteer. He became a new Tex with a serene look in his eyes and a calm nature and was soon loved by all.

Then one day a certain Mr Ray Fenech called to ask about Tex. We gave him a full profile leaving his age to the end. Mr Fenech expressed an interest in homing him saying he would come to see him the following day. We were sure these were empty words but low and behold Mr Fenech actually turned up the following morning. We took him to Tex and after a while he returned with a big smile on his face declaring 'That's the dog for me'. We were over the moon with joy. Mr Fenech came to the Home several times after that to familiarise himself with Tex before taking him home. They bonded so well....you could see it in their eyes. If only there were more people like Mr. Fenech, who choose a dog as a companion irrelevant of their age. To home an old dog/cat is an act of altruism.... an act of kindness..... an act of pure love for the animal.



The Adventures of Boris the Cat

When Boris, a white and ginger cat, came to the Home he was five months old. He had been in a foster home for catflu treatment before being homed but was then returned to the Home because his owner could no longer keep him. When Ms Heyselaar came to see if we had any kittens to home she immediately spotted Boris (or was it the other way around?). Boris used his charm to worm his way into Evelien's heart. She simply couldn't resist such an adorable cat. Of course when Ms Heyselaar explained that Boris would be living aboard a luxury yacht we were more than a little reluctant to let him go. But we were assured that he would never be alone both on land and at sea. So off he went with the Heyselaar family to start a new life - a life full of adventure and fun. On his first trip to Sicily he was sea sick but he soon got used to it and is now enjoying a lazy life sunbathing on the deck of his luxury home. Good Luck Boris....Sailor of the seven seas.

An Exception to the rule...

Presents make a birthday special; every young child looks forward to receiving his or her favorite toy. But there is always an exception to the rule. On the 23rd April Bradley Said turned six. He wanted to make this birthday special and he did. Instead of asking for toys he suggested monetary gifts so that he could donate it to our four legged friends at the Home. A very unusual and noble gesture for a six year old. He donated €147.00 which he used to sponsor two dogs. With the remaining €43.00 he bought beds for the big dogs and a scratch pole for the cats. On behalf of our four legged friends we thank for your generosity and support. Well done Bradley!

PUPPY PARTY AT VILLA BOLOGNA

Towards the end of last year, Dogs Trust Malta launched The Puppy Plan, a sixteen week socialisation and habituation plan that follows a puppies' natural physical and emotional development, exposing them to audio, visual, physical and social stimuli in a comprehensive, step-by-step and formalised way.

Many dogs at the SPCA Home are brought in due to behavioural problems such as fear of visitors, noise phobias and separation anxiety. Such problems can be avoided with the right socialisation in the first couple of weeks. SPCA fully supports the Puppy Plan and encourages all those who adopt a puppy to implement the socialisation plan in order to ensure a happy and healthy life for the new family member.

The success of the Puppy Plan was evident during the Puppy Party which was organised by Dogstrust and SPCA at Villa Bologna recently. All the puppies that participated in the Plan were sociable, relaxed and friendly towards other dogs.



LEGACIES

WE WOULD LIKE TO SAY A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL THOSE WHO HAVE ARRANGED TO MAKE THE SPCA A BENEFICIARY OF THEIR WILL.

WE HAVE HAD MANY PEOPLE MAKING THIS THOUGHTFUL COMMITMENT LATELY AND WOULD LIKE TO SAY HOW GRATEFUL WE ARE.

NO LONGER RECEIVING ANY GOVERNMENT SUPPORT, THE SPCA NOW RELIES TOTALLY ON MEMBERSHIP, DONATIONS, LEGACIES AND FUND RAISING TO SUPPORT THE HOME.

PLEASE CONTACT US SHOULD YOU LIKE FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE SUBJECT.



FUN TIMES AT THE HOME

'You must also give mental and physical fitness priority' Jim Otto

This is exactly what we do with our dogs at the Home. Although they get lots of nutrition, love and care, we also do our best to make their time with us fun. So everyday our dogs have their time for running, playing and socialising. Carol, our dog behaviourist, gives each dog its time to exercise in a fun way. With the rest of the staff, she plays with balls, tugs and other toys to help stimulate each dog. Their favourite game is called freebies which they love and it's especially loved by Spike and Zorro. Although both big dogs, they are strangely fast and agile. Here are a couple of our residents enjoying their recreation time...



A BIG Thank You...!



TO FACEBOOK FRIENDS: Through our appeal on facebook we have managed to raise enough funds to replace the old rusty gates. The next step is to paint them and they will look fantastic.

TO VODAFONE MALTA STAFF: On behalf of the staff and all our four legged friends we wish to say a big thank you to Roberta Pace - Vodafone Foundation Administrator, Vodafone Malta Limited and her colleagues who have been so generous as to finance our tiling project of the kennels in the courtyard. Tiling the kennels will help keep them cleaner and safer for our dogs. During their visit to the Home the volunteers also helped with maintenance and even took the dogs for a walk in the vicinity of the Home. The entire activity was a huge success and we look forward to welcoming them back to show them how their donation was put to good use.

TO EUGENIO BENETAZZO & CHARMAINE ATTARD: Their €100 donation was spent on beds and toys for our big dogs.

TO MS MIRIAM CUTAJAR: Her donation of cat blankets are used to keep our cats warm and our kittens also love snuggling up in their beds under the blankets.



TO THE SMARTSKINCLINIC: Their wonderful donation of 36 bags of dog food was presented to SPCA Malta home manager Miriam Casha by Michelle Degiorgio from Thesmartskinclinic.

FINALLY FROM ALL OF US AT THE HOME WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE GENEROUS SUPPORT WE RECEIVE FROM BOTH ORGANISATIONS AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC WHO HELP US MAKE ENDS MEET AND ENABLE US TO GIVE A BETTER LIFE TO OUR ANIMALS WHILST THEY ARE IN OUR CARE.

VODAFONE Malta Staff hard at work!



Eugenio Benetazzo & Charmaine Attard



New Gates



Michelle Degiorgio from Thesmartskinclinic



Director:
Gabriella Cowperthwaite

Running time:
83 min

Classification: **PG-13**









BLACKFISH The documentary 'Blackfish' tells the story of Tilikum, a performing killer whale involved in the death of three people while in captivity. Director-producer Gabriela Cowperthwaite explores Tilikum's nature and the cruel treatment he and his species suffer while in captivity, together with the lives and losses of the trainers and the pressures brought to bear by the multi-billion dollar sea-park industry. This emotionally wrenching story challenges us to consider our relationship to nature and reveals how little we humans have learned from these highly intelligent and enormously sentient fellow mammals.

<http://blackfishmovie.com>

It's
Summer
Time!

Have a go and decode
the words using the
symbols and letters
below...



- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
|  = N |  = E |  = F |  = T |
|  = U |  = H |  = I |  = S |

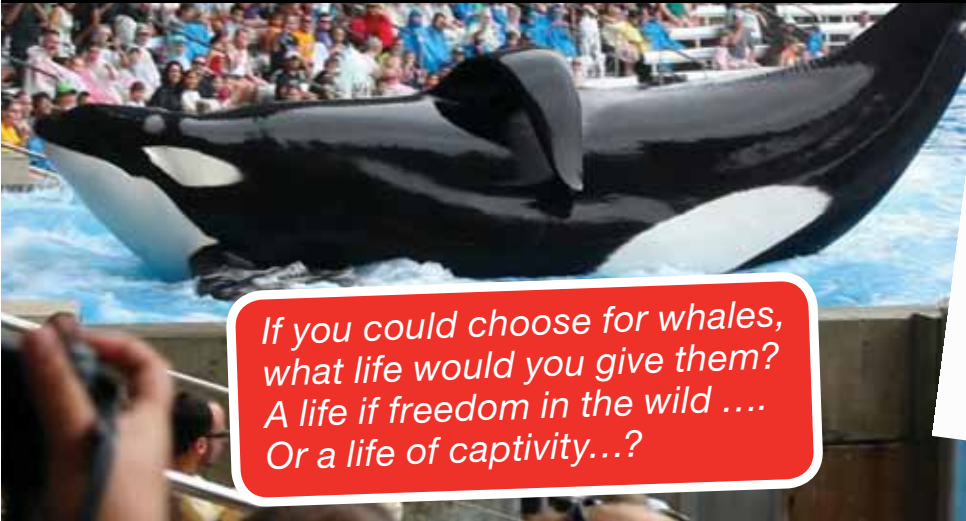


In the wild, whales...

- Travel long distances for fun and food
- Are always in motion, even when resting
- Are among the fastest animals in the sea
- Live in complex societies
(similar to life at school or at home)
- Can choose their friends and when they want to hang out
- Are intelligent and can solve problems
- Are self-aware and are aware of others
- Have culture i.e. they teach and learn things from their elders and each other
- Have different ways of communicating
(like trying a new language)

Once confined, whales...

- Lose their freedom and choice
- Have to undergo medical procedures and artificial diets
- Have to put up with unusual noises and strange smells
- Have to put up with other unfamiliar captive animals and people
- May suffer bullying from other pool mates more dominant than themselves
- Suffer from stress and aggression



*If you could choose for whales,
what life would you give them?
A life of freedom in the wild
Or a life of captivity...?*



LOOKING FOR LOVE



BUSTER
MALE
9 years old

This splendid dog is shy but so lovable. He loves to enjoy his morning run in the courtyard. An ideal pet for an elderly couple.



HEIDI
FEMALE
7 years old

She's calm and obedient and her favourite hobby is sunbathing! Where ever there's a sunny spot you'll find Heidi sitting watching her mates running around in the courtyard.



ZORRO
MALE
4-5 years old

He adores playing fetch and going out for walks with his kennel mate. Can be a little scared of traffic when on his own but gets on with all the animals at the Home including the staff and he's great with children. Loves toys and has a kind nature but can twist you round his little paw.



BEAUTY
FEMALE
3 years old

She's a charming girl who gets along with other dogs. Playing is her favourite hobby and fetch is her favourite game.

OUR ANIMALS HAVE A LOT TO GIVE TO A NEW OWNER AND THEY ALL DESERVE A WARM AND LOVING HOME. GIVE THEM A CHANCE!



KIA
MALE
2 years old

This handsome guy has a lovely character. He enjoys some one to one quality time but otherwise he is rather independent. The best way to get his attention is by showing him his treats.

RINGO
MALE
1 year old



A very friendly and playful young boy who gets on with everyone. He needs lots of space to run around as well as a companion who is as playful as he is.

SPIKE
MALE
3 ½ years old

He is a big softy and good with kids. He loves to be with people and adores his walks. He gets on with most other animals and will want to be near you when you're around. Greatly loved by all the Home staff, we call him our gentle giant.

JASMINE
FEMALE
4 years old

She's a timid lady and comes to you in her own good time. Once she gets to know you she is very friendly indeed.



TANYA
FEMALE
5 years old

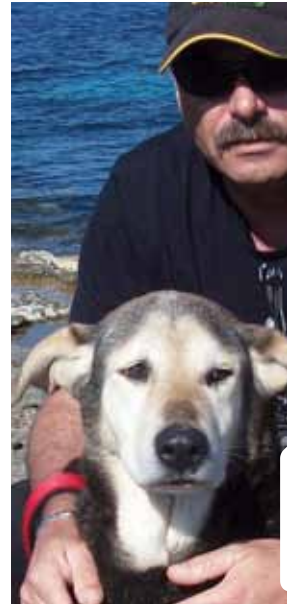
She's a happy girl always looking for attention and lots of cuddles. She doesn't get on with other cats and wouldn't mind a small apartment to live in.



Tracey off with the Salomone Family



Noah eager to meet his new mates at the Ragazzoni home



Boris off with Ms Heyselaa



A warm welcome home to **Jackson** from Ms Borg





Tex
with his owner
Ray Fenech



Brownie now
shadows Mrs
Bates around
everywhere



Mutley looking
forward to a
new life with
Augustyn couple



Faye
in the caring
arms of Ms Tanti



Max going
home with Alvin
Juninger Wiklund



Carla with the
Vassallo Family

Daya

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and healthy feline friend!



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Sponsor a Dog (or a Cat!)
Paw & Claws, 25 Gorg Borg Olivier Str., Sliema or call on 2724 2228 or email www.spcamalta.org to get up your sponsorship form!

The SPCA operates a Homebased pet care scheme for dogs and cats. This scheme allows you to sponsor a dog or cat for a minimum of 1 year for a minimum of €1.00 per week. The sponsored animal will be housed at the SPCA Homebased Centre, 25 Gorg Borg Olivier Str., Sliema. The sponsored animal will be cared for by SPCA staff and volunteers. For further information contact the SPCA Homebased Centre on 2724 2228 or email www.spcamalta.org.

facebook
The SPCA operates a Facebook page for pet sponsors. You can join the SPCA Facebook page and share your pet's progress with your friends. You can also share your pet's progress with your friends on Facebook. You can also share your pet's progress with your friends on Facebook. You can also share your pet's progress with your friends on Facebook.

Thank you from the SPCA (and cats!) at the SPCA

SPCA **Paws 4 A Cause** **SPCA**

You can also download the Membership Form for Sponsor a Dog (or a Cat!) via our website www.spcamalta.org

So by sponsoring one of these dogs or cats you are helping to maintain their keep. But you also acquire a new best friend for life and one you can visit on a regular basis. Ultimately you become their world.

When sponsoring a dog or cat, each sponsor is automatically entitled to:

- A wallet sized identity card of your new friend!**
- An exclusive SPCA car sticker so that everyone knows you have sponsored a Dog (or a Cat)!**
- Automatic membership to the SPCA.**
- A free copy of the informative SPCA 'AnimalWatch' magazine.**

Why not sponsor a dog or cat as a gift for someone else? It's the ideal way of bringing an animal into someone else's life without burdening them with a commitment they may not be able to take up on a full-time basis.

So how does one go about sponsoring an animal at the SPCA?

1. Firstly obtain an SADC sponsorship form using one of the following methods:

- Pick up a form from the Home.
- Download a form from the SPCA Facebook page or website www.spcamalta.org

2. Choose the pet you would like to sponsor.

3. Complete the form and send back together with payment details to:

**Sponsor a Dog (or a Cat!)
Paws 4 A Cause,
25, Gorg Borg Olivier Str.,
Sliema**

Alternatively call in at the SPCA Homing Centre, St. Francis Ravelin, Floriana or ring the Home manager on 21 230468 to set up your sponsorship today. Opening hours at the Home are from Mon to Fri 10.30am to 2.00pm and 10.30am to 12.00pm on Saturdays.

During the AGM held last October, a motion was passed to change the current SPCA membership scheme to the Sponsor a Dog (or a Cat!) (SADC) scheme. Under this new scheme, people are being asked to sponsor particular dogs or cats at the Home for a minimum of Euro 1.00 a week for a minimum duration of 1 year.

So why sponsor a dog or cat? Some of our dogs cannot be re-homed for various reasons and because we never put a healthy animal down, they become long term residents at the SPCA. They will live at the Home for the rest of their lives.

For further information on the SADC scheme as well as information on SPCA Malta, please visit www.spcamalta.org



ANIMAL WELFARE ACT Amendments

“The proposed amendments will also introduce a ban on the use of all species of animals in circuses, whether a circus is a travelling one or permanently established in Malta.”

A White Paper listing the proposed amendments to the Animal Welfare Act 2001 was published in March this year. Parliamentary Secretary for Animal Rights Roderick Galdes said that the government is proposing the appointment of a Commissioner for Animal Welfare who will be tasked with promoting animal welfare and empowered to audit and investigate the workings of the Animal Welfare Council and the Directorate for Animal Welfare and Veterinary Services. The amendments also aim to strengthen the role and functions of the council and to enhance representation from a wide range of sectors. The public was invited to comment on the proposed revisions via email up to 14 April 2014. The proposed amendments will also introduce a ban on the use of all species of animals in circuses, whether a circus is a travelling one or permanently established in Malta.

The aim of these amendments are primarily to:

- **establish the office of the Commissioner for Animal Welfare**
- **strengthen the role of the Animal Welfare Council and non-governmental organisations**
- **strengthen and clarify the functions of the Animal Welfare Director**
- **establish the enforcement powers of animal welfare officers**
- **ban the introduction and use of animals in circuses**
- **increase penalties associated with infringements of animal welfare legislation**

PENALTIES

The maximum penalty contemplated in the Animal Welfare Act is at present €30,000 for first time offenders found guilty of animal cruelty or ill treatment, whereas a maximum fine of €50,000 may be imposed on second time offenders it also provides for a maximum term of imprisonment of one year.

The White Paper is proposing an increase in both the penalties and the prison terms to render them more meaningful as a deterrent. The degree of harm, ill-treatment and gravity of the offence shall be the main factors in the determination of the quantum of the fine and/or prison terms. It is being recommended that on first conviction, the fine shall range from €1,000 to €55,000 and/or a term of imprisonment for a period of three years. On second



conviction, offenders shall be liable to a fine ranging between €5,000 to €80,000 and/or imprisonment to a term not exceeding three years. In addition to the proposed increments to fines and imprisonment terms, the draft proposals also provide for the revocation of licences, permits or authorisations that may be issued under the Animal Welfare Act or any regulations enacted thereunder. Notably, the proposed amendments contemplate for the possibility of a competent court to revoke any permits



issued for the operation of a regulated activity in the event a person is found guilty of an offence under the Animal Welfare Act. 8

REGULATION OF CIRCUSES IN THE MALTESE ISLANDS

Generally, circuses visiting the Maltese Islands would be en route from mainland Europe, particularly from Italy. At present, circuses employing animals in performances and exhibitions would require a permit granted by the Director of Veterinary Services to allow movement of animals into the Maltese Islands and inspections are carried out as soon as reasonably possible upon arrival of the circus animals in Malta or Gozo. Officers of the Veterinary Services are also responsible for the vetting of the relevant certificates confirming *inter alia* that the circus animals are in good health. Additional regular inspections are carried out by the officers of the Veterinary Services and of the Animal Welfare Departments. Inspections include visits to the site where a circus is set up or at the location where circus animals are kept. Circus operators or promoters need also apply for requisite permits from the Commissioner of Police, the Malta Environment and Planning Authority and the local council, to enable the circus to be set up and to operate from a particular town or village in Malta or Gozo.

In view of possible differing opinions, the Parliamentary Secretary for Agriculture, Fisheries and Animal Rights launched a consultation process on the proposed prohibition of the use of animals in circuses. The general public, NGOs and stakeholders, including circus promoters, were invited to participate in a consultation process that ran for two weeks starting from the 8th of July 2013. From the feedback received from interested stakeholders and the general public the majority were in favour of a ban on the use of wild animals in circuses, also proposing that such a ban should cover all species of animals (both wild and domesticated). Respondents in favour of the use of wild animals disagreed with the introduction of a ban and contended that current legislation and vigilance by the local enforcement authorities ensure compliance with the requisite animal welfare standards of the animals used in circuses visiting Malta.

SPCA Malta welcomes these amendments and eagerly awaits their inclusion in the Animal Welfare Act. We also hope that the relevant AW Officers will be adequately trained to fulfil their role within the network.

The full document can be viewed online by going to the following link:

www.msdec.gov.mt/en/Document%20Repository/white%20paper%20eng.pdf





COPENHAGEN ZOO MADE HEADLINES - Denmark, February 2014

In February, the Copenhagen Zoo killed a healthy two-year-old giraffe and fed its remains to lions as visitors watched, and despite much outcry later went on to kill four healthy lions in order to integrate a new lion as two females reached breeding age. The four lions were put down after the zoo failed to find alternative homes. Unlike the unfortunate fate of Marius the giraffe, the lions were not publicly chopped up. The public dissection and feeding of Marius' remains to the lions turned out to be popular with visitors to the zoo. Zoo spokesman Tobias Stenbaek Bro said it allowed parents to decide whether their children should watch what the zoo regards as an important display of scientific knowledge about animals. Officials said Marius was put down to prevent inbreeding. The organization Animal Rights Sweden said at the time the case highlights what it believes zoos do to animals regularly. "It is no secret that animals are killed when there is no longer space, or if the animals don't have genes that are interesting enough," it said in a statement. "The only way to stop this is to not visit zoos."



THE CRUCIFICTION OF CATS IN MOSTA - Malta, March 2014

On March 20th Nicholas Grech, 37 years old and from Mosta, was accused in court of animal cruelty following the discovery of 14 animals, mainly cats, found crucified in various locations of Mosta over the past two-and-a-half years. He was also accused of desecrating religious sites. The Magistrate read out details of the 11 cases when dead animals were found crucified. The police presented 15 keys which the accused allegedly used to access churches and crypts. Mr Grech made the keys himself. The police also presented two judgements in court cases where Mr Grech was accused of harassment and vandalism, where he was not found guilty because of mental illness. Mr Grech pleaded not guilty. Legal aid lawyer Martin Fenech asked for the accused to be examined by a psychiatrist upon which the court agreed wherein Mr Grech was remanded at Mt Carmel Hospital.



JAPAN WILL HUNT FEWER WHALES - Japan, April 2014

International Court of Justice (ICJ) ordered Japan on March 31st to suspend Antarctic whaling. The court said the program was commercial, not scientific as Japan had contended. Japan's whaling program in the northern Pacific was not challenged in the ruling. Fisheries Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi said that the the Pacific catch target was being slashed to about 210 from the current 380. Less than two weeks later, Japan's Institute of Cetacean Research filed briefs in the U.S. District Court in Seattle stating its intent to resume whale hunting in the Southern Ocean as early as fiscal 2015. The move immediately faced strong opposition from conservation group Sea Shepherd. The ICR and Sea Shepherd have been locked in a legal dispute in the United States, with the institute seeking an end to the anti-whaling group's interference in its hunt. "The statement that Japan issued that they would comply with the ICJ ruling was I believe insincere," said Sea Shepherd founder Paul Watson. "Japan has a history of duplicity with regard to whaling. I fully expect that Sea Shepherd Global will be prepared to return to the Southern Ocean in December 2015 to once again defend the integrity of the Southern Ocean Whale Sanctuary," Watson said.



MAN JAILED FOR 3 MONTHS FOR CUTTING OFF PUPPY'S TAIL WITH SHARP TOOL England, April 2014

An eight-week-old Jack Russell puppy was left in agony when 24-year-old Walter Doe used a sharp tool to remove its tail two inches from its base. The RSPCA removed the black and white puppy, called Jack, from Doe's care last July following a report of concern for the animal's welfare. They found Jack with a bandage around his tail and in obvious pain. The puppy was taken to a vet who removed the bandage and found a very raw wound, about two inches from the tail base, with the rest of the tail removed. The vet said it was a very clean-cut wound and must have been made with a sharp tool." Walter Doe was sentenced at Hastings Magistrates' Court to 12 weeks imprisonment for causing unnecessary suffering to the puppy and failing to seek veterinary treatment for his open wound. He was also banned from keeping all animals for 10 years. RSPCA Inspector Andrew Kirby said: "The prison sentence reflects how seriously the court took the suffering caused to the puppy. We have no proof about what was used to dock Jack's tail but, whether it was a knife or a pair of scissors, he would have been in agony. Cutting through the bone of the tail must have been excruciatingly painful and no attempt at all was made to relieve this pain. Tail docking is such a brutal way to treat a young animal in any case. As well as the pain it causes, it is just completely unnecessary and deprives the animal of their best means of expression and balance. We urge people to remember that it is against the law for a reason."



veterinary services

Contact details during office hours:

CLINICS	ADDRESS	VETERINARIAN	PHONE	MOBILE
ATTARD	Dr Trevor's Veterinary Clinic, Kananea Street	Dr Trevor ZAMMIT	2142 3100	7949 4714
BIRKIRKARA	128 Valley Road	Drs Louis & Annette BORG	2144 2843	
BIRKIRKARA	Blue Cross Veterinary Clinic, Msida Road	Dr Martin DEBATTISTA	2149 2174	9949 2462
		Dr Carm Lino VELLA	2149 2174	7922 5363
		Dr Mireille VELLA	2149 2174	9942 0381
GZIRA	Vetmedic Pharmacy, Edgar Bernard Street	Dr Zoran D JANKOVIC	2132 4444	9984 8689
HAMRUN	Animal Doctors, 20 Triq Guze Bajada	Dr Sammy BEZZINA	2123 3011	9989 8614
		Dr Ivan GALEA	2123 3011	7929 0667
MOSTA	St Simon's Veterinary Clinic	Dr Anthony GRUPPETTA	2143 2280	7947 2542
	53 Giorgio Grognet Street	Dr Mauro BUTTIGIEG	2143 2280	9947 8289
MSIDA	Animal Aid Veterinary Clinic, Triq Oscar Zammit	Dr Quentin LAWSON	2783 8838	9923 8394
		Dr Geoffrey SCHEMBRI ADAMI	2783 8838	7983 8838
QORMI	Qormi Veterinary Clinic, 3 St Roque Street	Dr Adrian VELLA	2148 0480	9942 6632
SAN GWANN	Vet Care Animal Clinic, Misrah Lourdes	Dr Euridyke KOVACS,	2137 3277	
		Dr Victor Vassallo	2137 3277	
TARXIEN	All Animal Clinic, Raheb Street	Dr Paul J PORTELLI	2169 3061	9942 0158
TARXIEN	Best Friends Veterinary Clinic, Luqa Road	Dr Charmaine XUEREB	2189 6949	9942 4337
TA' XBIEX	Highrise Vet Clinic, Triq l-Imradd	Dr Duncan CHETCUTI GANADO	2132 2150	9982 9646
VICTORIA, GOZO	Veterinary Clinic, Wied is-Seqer Street	Dr Frank GALEA	2155 4257	9949 4254
ZABBAR	Pets Veterinary Clinic, Marsascala Street	Dr Kevin CAMILLERI	2189 6897	9946 8939
ZURRIEQ	St Francis' Veterinary Clinic, Triq il-Kittenija	Dr Antoine VELLA	2164 1411	9947 1110
By Appointment	Large Animal Practitioner	Dr James AZZOPARDI		9924 0329
By Appointment		Dr Patrick CARUANA		7989 1494
By Appointment		Dr Nikol FALZON		9929 3949
By Appointment		Dr Alex SCHIRO	2145 9831	7929 6550
By Appointment		Dr Gareth GRECH		7934 7534
By Appointment		Dr Victoria BONDIN		7905 2015

VETERINARY PHYSIOTHERAPIST

By Appointment	Sue Portelli Demajo	7947 4433
By Appointment	Becky Gatt	7900 0569

PHARMACIES

BIRKIRKARA	AnimalPharm, Pope Pius XII Street	2144 9058
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SMALL ANIMAL VET EMERGENCY SERVICES - TEL: 5004 3888

For emergencies outside office hours. Calls cost €7.00 (per call) and cannot be made from a mobile phone. This service is managed by the Malta Veterinary Association.

ANIMAL AMBULANCE - TEL: 2122 4001

PAWS 4 A CAUSE



Old, new & recycled treasures

clothes, shoes, accessories, bric-a-brac & more...

■ Gorg Borg Olivier Str., Sliema

■ Mon-Fri: 9.30am - 5.30pm; Sat: 9.30am - 1.00pm