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Registered Charity
No. 1070330

Newsletter No 99

July 2011

Dear Supporters

Good News! We've been given another bag packing day at the Cadbury Garden and Leisure Centre in Congresbury. August 29th, Bank Holiday Monday we'll be there from 10am – 6pm. Please come along, maybe with a friend or a member or two of your family and give an hour's help and enjoy the day out.

We are absolutely flooded at the moment with beautiful kittens; please, please put a notice up in your place of work (or indeed anywhere else you can think of) seeking homes. We really need all our supporters to assist us at this time.

See you all at the Auction!

Christine

Apr 28

"My Mum has just died and she had two cats – I think they might be pregnant" I went straight away to a house in Southmead and found two heavily pregnant young cats by the front door. Grey Kate and tabby Pippa were admitted to our Brentry site.

Apr 30

We held a Plant and Book sale in beautiful weather. Supporter Maria's father had grown us tomato, courgette and pepper plants. Passers by were snapping them up because they were so healthy. We made £70 on the day and will make this a yearly event.

May 2

Bank Holiday Monday so the lorries were not working on the Chittering Estate in Avonmouth. A perfect day for trapping some more ferals I thought. I set two traps in different areas using fishy food as bait and waited. After an hour or so without sighting a cat I decided to visit a nearby friend and come back as darkness fell. At 8pm I arrived at the first trap and in the gloom I saw a small black and white shape. Hooray! One of the kittens I thought. No, it was a very cross magpie who had gone in after the tuna. I released him and drove round to the second trap. If I'd only caught *one* cat I reasoned then my day hadn't been wasted. However as I pulled up by the trap it also contained a cross magpie! I'm going back this weekend. If I set the traps on a Saturday night the lorries will be stationary and remain so on Sunday morning. Hopefully if I set them after dark the magpies/pigeons/seagulls will be roosting. I now have a checklist before leaving the house. Have I got both traps and crush cages in the car? Have I smelly pilchards and a spoon for

baiting? Is the car running well with enough petrol for the hour's round trip? Is it the night before a Sunday or bank holiday? Has the vet got pen space to hold any feral cats? Has the vet got operating time the next day? Is it late enough for greedy birds to be roosting? Perhaps next Saturday night I'll catch some cats – however at night I'll have to contend with hedgehogs and foxes!

May 3

A resident from Bradley Stoke rang for help with a stray very aggressive unneutered male cat who who had been terrorising the neighbourhood cats causing huge vet bills. I loaned a trap and luckily he was caught very quickly for processing tomorrow. I explained we have no room to admit him but once neutered his aggression will cease and he could be released back safely where several neighbours are feeding him.

May 4

Another marauding unneutered male, this time near Olveston. I loaned another trap and am awaiting results. This caller had just had her cat treated for a serious bite wound.

Kate gave birth in the early hours today. Being very young herself she had a small litter of just three plump kittens. Two dark tortie girls and a black boy. Being May 4th, I resorted to our Star Wars theme. Luke, Princess and Leia are being cared for by their proud Mum who rubs her head against the babies when you tell her how clever she is.

May 5

I loaned a third trap for a stray male in Lockleaze. The vet is on standby for all the cats being trapped.



May 6

"A stray cat has had five kittens under my Mum's television" This lunchtime call led to me collecting the little family from Southmead at teatime. The road begins CR so Mum can be Cressida and the babies Cranmer, Craig, Crumble, Crumpet and Cruella. Mum and babies are black with the two boys having white paws.

Tonight's call was very worrying so I left the house as soon as I had put the phone down. A Southmead resident had put an old settee in his front garden yesterday to be taken to the local tip. This afternoon as he loaded it onto a trailer a cat jumped out of a hole in the base. He looked inside to see new born kittens. He left the trailer and phoned me. Meanwhile mum cat had got back in with her family. The space the group were in was just wide enough for my arm but not wide enough for me to scruff the mother. I'd taken a fishy pouch of food with me and Mum put her head out to take some from my fingers. After two minutes of holding food further and further away Mum had her head and shoulders out which enabled me to grab her and transfer her to a basket. My arm wasn't long enough to reach in for the babies so the householder reached them out one at a time. I'd only brought one basket so the kittens were placed in a Tesco 'bag for life' and put next to Mum in the car. Fifteen minutes later the family were reunited on a soft towel in our Brentry site. Mum doesn't know what's hit her but she's settled in happily, feeding her kits and enjoying her choice of food.

May 7

Another Southmead resident rang today. "My granddaughter is allergic so I can't keep my cat or her four kittens". I collected Rinata and her babies Rina, Ringo, Rinstead and Rin-tin-tin. They are seven weeks

old and eating well so they can leave home soon.

I set the trap in Avonmouth tonight – no birds around but the heavy rain will keep the cats away too.

May 8

I checked the trap early this morning. The door was closed and it contained two large white snails having a hearty breakfast. The wind must have caused the trap to spring overnight so I set it again hopefully. Tonight a very large black and white cat was in the trap snarling as I approached. I couldn't get near enough to lift the trap into the car and resorted to sliding a plank of wood under the handle and lifting him by that. The vet will be scarred for life tomorrow if he isn't wearing welding gauntlets!

May 9

Vet Paul Gucklian of Companion care vets was still smiling at the end of the day after dealing with the 'killer cat'. I returned the cat to the industrial estate and released him into the bushes where he was caught. He was well fed so several warehouse staff must be feeding him. Hopefully he'll be less aggressive now he's neutered and if there are any unneutered females left on the site they won't 'catch' kittens from him. By his size and age I should think he was the grandfather of everything I've caught so far.

A Knowle West man rang and asked me to take in his four unneutered cats because he can't take them where he is moving this week. I have a very long waiting list already but I gave him priority as he admitted they were thin as he couldn't afford to feed them properly. Volunteer Sam collected the two females and I gave the caller other Bristol rescues to call to take on the males. I'll fatten them



up this week and spay them next week. I daren't delay their operations as with two unneutered males in the house they are probably both early pregnant. Tabby and white Davina and her daughter fluffy black Davira are very gentle little cats.

May 10

While I was puzzling where to put yet another mother cat and kitten (they are unwanted due to a new baby) there was a frantic knocking on the door. Two middle aged women came in with a young white cat in a cardboard box. she had been running into peoples' houses on their road, obviously lost and starving, I've put her in a convalescent pen in the Dayer suite. I noticed straight away she was breathing heavily – so straight to the vets with her tomorrow. She has a black smudge on her head as if she's been playing in the coal shed so Cinders seems an appropriate name.

May 12

I rang at 8am to remind a man in Knowle West that the animal ambulance from the local vet was coming for his two cats who had been booked in under our assisted neutering scheme. I had reminded him to keep them in overnight. "Yes" he said, "I kept them in overnight, I've just let them out now."

May 14

Our first collection of the year at Almondsbury Garden Centre. We raised £91 in the sunshine.

As I set the traps at the Avonmouth estate tonight (in the rain) I thought of the people who go to restaurants and cinemas on a Saturday evening – they don't know how to live!

May 15

Nothing trapped overnight but I reset the traps and went back early evening to find I'd caught a small black cat.

May 16

The black cat was spayed today and returned to the site with soluble stitches in her incision. I would have kept her in longer to recover but she became full of milk during the day. This meant that although she was still only a kitten herself she must have a nest of kittens somewhere. I watched her run off under the railings of a warehouse. I don't know how many more there are on site to catch.

May 17

Woken very early by the sound of the black kittens rolling wooden pegs over the floor. (These pegs hold the curtains together while they are having races in the night.) I took the carpet up several months ago in preparation for industrial lino being fitted and I didn't realise how wide the gaps were in the floorboards. Since then the kittens have rolled pens, pegs, cat biscuits and even my make-up tubes down through the holes. Somewhere under the house there are well fed rats with flawless complexions writing letters and pegging out the washing.

May 18

Pippa gave birth to four healthy kits today. She is very proud and rolls on her babies when she realises you are admiring them.

May 20

Sadly one of Cressida's kittens died today. It could be that she isn't producing enough milk for them. Occasionally a mother cat's milk dries up when the kittens are $\frac{3}{4}$



weeks old. Elaine and I are supplementing their diet by syringe feeding with mushy food.

May 23

When I returned a cat which had been spayed under our assisted scheme to Southmead tonight I was asked to take in her three tabby kittens. As there was the word 'Wig' in the road name I chose Syrup, Toupee and Peri for their Moggery names. Volunteer Maria collected them from me and took them home to join Albie and Ambrose, two pure white kittens collected from Lawrence Weston last week. Both are sites and all foster homes are now full to bursting and there are still cats on the waiting list for any available space.

May 25

I was horrified when I returned to HQ late this afternoon to discover that a new volunteer had left a window wide open on the ground floor and four kittens were missing! They had climbed from the table onto the windowsill and dropped down into the garden. There was only Steve, the smallest black kitten left in the room and he too was desperately trying to reach the open window. I decided my best option was to put a plastic table and chair outside the window to enable them to climb back in and for me to hold the window open whilst keeping Steve back with my foot. By 1.30am three kittens had returned – they had a quick snack and then turned round to go out again. I had to close the window leaving Ceres the little black and white kitten from Pilning still outside. I set a trap by the window for her and went to bed.

May 26

Coriander, one of the kitchen cats, was in the trap this morning so I released her and reset the trap. By

teatime Ceres was caught and brought back inside with her room mates. She was starving and headed straight for the food bowls.

May 28

Another Plant and Book sale held at HQ. Despite the rain people came from Hanham and Downend to buy the plants grown by Maria's father Terry Connor. We raised £40 in the first hour.

Tonight I took in a friendly black and white cat which had been zigzagging across the Gloucester Road.

May 30

The rain caused the Avonmouth Industrial estate cats to stay in hiding today. I had left copious food but I need good weather to trap anything. "I bought a kitten a few days ago from Trade-It and I'm very worried because it isn't well." This caller from Hartcliffe had been sold a kitten of only 4 weeks. I advised her to take it back to its mother for another 3 to 4 weeks but the kitten seller had already refused to take it back over the weekend. I then suggested that she should call at her local vets tomorrow and buy some kitten food and syringes to try to keep it alive.

A caller from Kingswood had found a cat and four kittens in her greenhouse but was happy to keep them in her attic conversion until we had room for them.

The saddest call today was a request to take in two cats who are not wanted due to the arrival of a new baby. Tomorrow I'll book them in to be neutered at their local vets but I don't know when we'll have space for them.

No response from the owners of the black and white cat taken in on Saturday night. I've left several messages on their answer phone. I presume they're on holiday and



perhaps neighbours were left to feed him. (The disc on his collar only carries a phone number and no indication of his address).

May 31

Admitted Henry, a very large black and white cat with an old eye injury. His owner had died last week and he had been left outside to fend for himself. He's friendly, but being black and white and with a suspect eye he'll find it hard to impress a new owner.

June 2

Supporters Maria and Sam have been trapping in a garden in Bedminster. Several years ago I trapped 27 cats over several many months from the same garden. I brought in 22 and returned 5 of the wildest after neutering. Thirteen were found lovely homes and nine are still in our care having been too timid to rehome. I really thought I had 'mopped up' the problem and was stunned to receive a phone call from the new occupants of the house informing me that there are now about 20 cats in the garden again. They are being caught one by one and neutered but the current group so far have been much too wild to rehome and therefore have had to be returned to the site. Today Sam caught a black and white cat and realised immediately she was heavily pregnant so instead of taking her to the vets Dee was admitted to our Brentry site.

June 3

Dee gave birth to five plump kittens this morning. She was only just admitted in time. All seems to be well.

June 4

Dee is much more relaxed today; she remained lying by her babies while I changed her food dishes. Hopefully she'll become tame in time.

June 6

An elderly local resident rang asking if we had any dogs. I gave her other rescue numbers who might be able to help. "But would they give me a dog?" "You see I'm 87 and need a dog in the house to protect me as I have a man hanging around. I know karate but would hate to have to use it." I hope I get a call if the lurker breaks in – I would love to see 87 year old Dorothy in action!

June 13

I took May to have a dental today. She had liver failure and wasn't expected to see last Christmas but as she was still going strong and had her head in the fridge looking for cheese several times a day I thought I'd have her teeth fixed so that her last few months would be more comfortable. Sadly vet Paul Gucklian rang to say he had found tumours in her mouth so we decided it was best not to wake her up. Last week I was defrosting a mozzarella and basil pizza (which was shrink-wrapped) and I left the kitchen for a few minutes. May had come in from the garden, smelled the cheese through the plastic and had managed to get through the packaging and by the time I returned was licking her lips having eaten half the topping!

