



Journal of the
Durban & Coast SPCA

animal angle

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2019 ISSUE





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Kevin's forever home

Rejoice in a happy story with us. We deal with so much sadness that we cherish and celebrate every happy story, and that is what Kevin's story has become. Kevin is on our cover this issue.

On 4 October 2018, we received a report about a neglected miniature horse in poor condition in the Sinembe area. Our Inspector Ngcobo responded to the report and found an underweight miniature Shetland pony in a filthy pen.

His hooves were overgrown and in desperate need of a farrier's attention. There were wounds and scabs over his neck and chest, and no sign of even basic grooming.

A notice was issued to the owner to rectify the situation immediately. Instead he offered to hand over the pony to us. Inspector Ngcobo wasted no time. Dominique, one of those kind people one finds in an emergency, assisted with getting appropriate transportation, and the pony was brought to our SPCA.

Our veterinarian, Dr Augustyn, got to work right away. The horse had affectionately been named Sergeant Pepper by the inspector. He received a great deal of loving attention, medical treatment and TLC from our staff until he was ready to be adopted.

On 19 December 2018, that happy day arrived for him. He was adopted by Leanne Cutting, who is an FEI International Coach Level 3, and competitor, so he is in very capable and horse-loving hands. Now re-named Kevin, he lives on a large plot in Shongweni with 23 other horses, is exercised daily, and receives private health care from Baker McVeigh Equine Hospital. He has the life he deserves.

We will keep in touch with Kevin, but are confident that he is in safe hands with a family that will love him and care for him for the rest of his life. If, for any reason, they were to find themselves no longer able to look after him as per the signed adoption agreement, he would need to be returned to us.

The owner's daughter, Lauren Cutting, had spent months in



Holland at Dressuursal Van Baalen training centre, where there was a miniature Shetland pony named Kevin. When Lauren saw Kevin, it was love at first sight. When she left Holland, she missed Kevin terribly. Now, a happy ending...rescued from Sinembe, our Kevin is part of a family who will adore him.

A happy home and endless love is what we wish for all our animals, and what they deserve. What we are able to do for helpless animals depends on donations from generous members of the public and companies. Thank you to all who donate. The happiness you bring to animals lucky enough to be adopted by caring people is immeasurable. Think of donations in terms of lives saved and know how much difference you are making.

Tanya Fleischer Marketing Manager

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Here is precious Ollie from the story in Inside the Inspectorate. After a life of serious neglect with brutal and immensely painful consequences for his health, Ollie was adopted by Fathima Mustapha and is now a happy, cared-for dog, loved by his new family.



Journal of the
Durban & Coast SPCA

THE **animal**
angle

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Love without boundaries

My precious little Bonnie is lying next to me as I write this editorial. She is about seventeen years old, beautiful as ever, and bright and loving beyond description, although she now has advanced kidney failure. Despite this, she still enthusiastically chases the vervet monkeys and hadedas that are daily in my garden, and still jumps onto the verandah table, leaps onto window ledges from the backs of armchairs to check on outside noises, and is ready to greet me excitedly from the window ledge of my bedroom as soon as she hears my car.

She chose me at the Durban & Coast SPCA when I decided to find two dogs after my Boerboel, Cadie, had died of a melanoma at the age of ten in 2004. As I walked into the kennels section, this lovely small creature hurled herself at the kennel railings, licked my fingers, and barked with excitement. I knew I had been chosen. Dog whisperer Richard had gone to find a second dog for me. I went to tell him I had found my perfect animal. Bonnie was devastated. She cried as if begging me to come back.

Richard arrived with Gaby, a stunning two-year-old Labrador. He told me these two dogs would be a perfect match, and he was to be proved absolutely right about that. I had to leave them to be sterilised, of course, but not before we had gone for a walk together. I fetched them a few days later, and from that moment we simply belonged together.

Bonnie is a miniature Border Collie/Papillon cross, and she, too, was estimated to be two years old at that time. Unless I go out without her, she has never left my side over the past fifteen years. She sleeps next to me, quietly and with perfect contentment. I adore her. Gaby always slept at the foot of my bed on his big padded cushion.

Gaby died of organ failure at fourteen, which is a great age for a Labrador. He died quietly at home where he was loved and nurtured to his final moment. I cannot bear to think of being without my Bonnie, but have had the privilege of this extraordinary animal's love for fifteen years. She has filled my life with love, which has been especially important to me since my children, grandchildren and three little grandchildren all live overseas. I am really close to them, but Bonnie has filled the inevitable gap in my life with her love and her extraordinary

intelligence. I miss my sweet-natured Gaby, but at least I still have Bonnie. The thought of soon being without her is hard to contemplate. She is irreplaceable. Her eyes are particularly beautiful. She communicates all the time and will come and put her head on my arm or leg, or climb onto my lap, and just look at me with eyes filled with love.

One of the greatest privileges a human being can have is the unconditional love of a devoted pet. Animals with hearts yearning for love await one at the SPCA.

The broad concerns of the SPCA

People tend to think of the SPCA as being only about dogs and cats, but many species of animals pass through our hands, and our concern is for all animals. We are *for* animals and *against* cruelty. Many situations involving wild animals are handled by the National SPCA, and they take action in cases of cruelty involving any species of animal. In many instances, they work to get laws made more protective. You might have noticed that our past issues have reflected our concern for all animal life, and this issue is no exception.

Animal telepathy studies

Despite the considerable research done into the nature of animal consciousness, especially by the distinguished pioneering biologist, Dr Rupert Sheldrake, it is surprising how many people still do not recognise that animals are sentient beings, and that many species are highly intelligent.

Dr Sheldrake has written several books, including *Dogs that know when their owners are coming home*. Through over five thousand experiments with dogs, he has shown that they have high intelligence and complex emotions, as well as an ability to pick up their owner's thoughts and intentions. There is much evidence that a strong telepathic force connects our animals to us.

The quantum theory of nonlocality, for which there is ample scientific evidence, indicates that intention does not necessarily diminish even across vast distances. Even when the experiments have been replicated by sceptics, results have shown that there are many ways in which dogs are able to pick up an owner's intentions. Experiments have also involved other animals, including cats and parrots.

We know that many animals, including wild animals, are able to sense the imminence of an earthquake, tsunami or volcanic eruption and will attempt to flee the area.

A great deal of material is available on the Internet, including excellent videos in which Dr Sheldrake describes his experiments. His theory of morphic resonance is something many readers might like to explore, as it adds a new dimension to the Darwinian theory of evolution.

Rupert Sheldrake was in the Top Hundred Thought Leaders for 2013, chosen by the Duttweiler Institute in Zurich. Educated at Cambridge and Harvard, he became Director of Studies in biochemistry and cell biology at Cambridge. Since 1981, he has continued his research on developmental and cell biology and has investigated unexplained animal behaviour, including how pigeons find their way home, the telepathic abilities of animals, and the apparent abilities of animals to anticipate natural disasters.

Keep in touch with us

Take a regular look at our website and Facebook. If you have animal stories you would like to share, e-mail them to me. We love sharing animal stories.

shirleybell@mweb.co.za

Visit our website



Bonnie

A recent case shook us to our core

Animal hoarding is a tragic disorder that ensures that those animals face the certainty of an unimaginably dreadful existence and death at the hands of the hoarder.

Our Inspectorate team, Controlling Veterinarian Dr Muchopa, and a support team of AWAs (animal welfare assistants) and drivers, were unprepared for what faced them when they arrived at a Clare Estate house to execute a Warrant of Seizure. The Warrant was obtained by our Senior Inspector Candice Sadayan because of concerns regarding the welfare of animals on the property, following a report from a member of the public. What they found was a house of horrors.

They were at first hit by an overwhelmingly putrid stench caused by rotting dog corpses, debris and filth, and dog faeces from corner to corner. Over eighty dogs were found living in a foul and disease-ridden environment, some barely clinging to life, and others riddled with parasites, disease and injuries. There was no trace of food or water for the animals. Only chicken carcasses covered in flies were found in crates outside the house.

More than 20 corpses of dogs were found inside the house, including in the owner's bedroom and *en suite* bathroom. The dogs were either completely decomposed and now skeletal, or in process of decomposition. Some had died recently.

Our Inspectors could not give a final count of the number of corpses. There were piles of dead animals in process of putrefaction throughout the house. Bathrooms seemed to serve as storerooms for corpses.

The animals' living conditions, their prolonged suffering and deaths, had a profound, traumatising effect on our team. Never in memory has any more horrific scene been dealt with by our Inspectorate.

The 80 living dogs were seized and admitted to our SPCA for individual assessment, and each one had to be euthanased to end its suffering. Contagious diseases, mange, dental deformities from inter-breeding, lameness, emaciation, foetid wounds on jutting out bones... the list continues. And even if, in the best case scenario, they had been healthy enough, they were not socialised enough to re-home. Aggression among them was evident in infected wounds from fighting.

Investigations revealed that the owner allegedly took in unwanted and stray animals from the community. Our message to members of the public who are simply handing over animals to people to care for and "rescue" is this: there is a fate much worse than humane euthanasia. This case illustrates it in no uncertain terms. Dogs were left to die slow, painful deaths without veterinary treatment.

The SPCA has the experience and expertise to take care of



animals. I implore people to hand over unwanted and stray animals to their local SPCA so that they can be dealt with in the best interest of the animal and to prevent prolonged suffering.

“ We are ensuring that the entire team receives trauma debriefing as a matter of urgency. Our most seasoned Inspectors were shaken and tearful – saddened, revolted and outraged; and of course tormented by the thought that they might have been able to do more, sooner. If they had known. ”

Animal Hoarding is a disorder which is defined by the following criteria:

An individual possesses more than the typical number of companion animals. The individual is unable to provide even minimal standards of nutrition, sanitation, shelter and veterinary care, with this neglect often resulting in starvation, illness and death. The individual is in denial of having the inability to provide this minimal care and of the impact of that failure on the animals and the household.

The Durban & Coast SPCA will be opening a docket in order to prosecute the owner in terms of the Animals Protection Act 71 of 1962.

See full story page 16



Here is a very special letter sent me by Gladys. I have known Gladys and George Ngwengwe for a great many years. George, now retired from the harbour for some years, was well trained in his youth as a tug maintenance man and has been my loyal and skilful home maintenance man for over forty years. When it comes to cherishing animals, Gladys and George are stars. *Editor*

The Story of my Cats

It was a Saturday morning about nine o'clock. I was going to town to buy sweets and chips that I sell at school and I saw a small cat sitting by my gate. I just passed by and went on my way.

When I came back, the cat was sitting by some small trees. I went inside and brought milk in a small saucer. She finished it like a hungry lion.

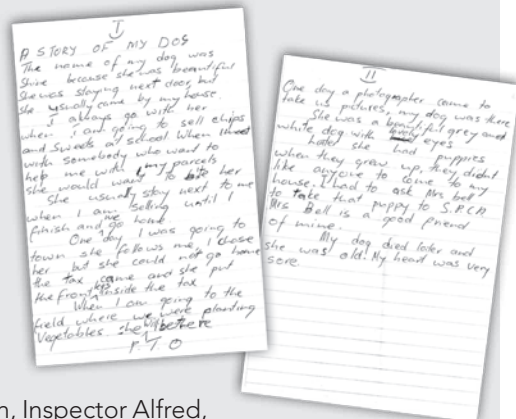
The second day, the cat was sitting in front of my house. I gave her milk. She came inside, and we started to be friends.

After a while, the cat had two beautiful kittens. Oh, I really love them. The names of my cats are Nonny (mother), an SABC actor, and Black Cat and Peanut Butter (the two kittens). They sleep outside the house, and at six o'clock they knock on the door. They want food. Every day I must brush them, even when I am tired.

Thank you to the SPCA for helping by sterilising my cats. Thank you to the SPCA man, Inspector Alfred, who came to fetch them. He was very kind. Thanks to my friend, Shirley Bell, by helping me feed my cats and paying for their sterilisation at the SPCA. God bless you all.

I am very sorry that I haven't got good English, and for bad handwriting, because I am old.

Gladys Tshabalala
Letter - Hand delivered



What is the context for this extraordinary move?

I am British, and we are generally known for our love of pets. I was therefore shocked to be sent a cutting from a UK newspaper that reported that the government wanted to reject the inclusion of animal sentience from the EU Withdrawal Bill. Animal rights activists are angry, upset and probably as flabbergasted as I am. Activists say that this vote undermines environment secretary Michael Gove's pledge to prioritise animal rights during Brexit.

Most of the animal welfare legislation comes from the EU. The UK government has the task of adopting EU laws directly after March 2019, but is apparently dismissing animal sentience. This is mind-boggling. Was the report out of context in the way that political reports often are? It just doesn't make sense. Joanna Lumley and 21 celebrities have demanded that the government recognise animal sentience and use Brexit to strengthen animal rights laws to "make the UK the safest place in Europe for animals".

Michael Gove warned the government not to water down animal protection laws. In a poll, over 80% of members of parliament across all parties wanted the laws strengthened, or at the very least maintained. Whew. Thank goodness. So why has the move not been abandoned? Why would a small minority be allowed to prevail?

Ethel Jane
By e-mail

Lonely and fearful dogs

It is so worrying that so many dogs are now being forced to live alone in isolated bushy areas. One can only imagine the hunger, thirst and suffering they undergo, uncared for and unloved. Dogs were surely created to be loved, because they are such devoted creatures. It breaks one's heart. Cats are more fortunate when forced to fend for themselves as they are natural hunters and can flee up trees or hide in confined places.

Never give your dog chocolate

It is not at all rare to see people giving their dogs pieces of chocolate. They obviously don't know that chocolate is poisonous to dogs. A large enough helping – and depending on your dog's size – can kill a dog.

Dark chocolate is more dangerous than milk chocolate. My friend's Husky ate the contents of a small box of Black Magic chocolates left open on a small table and had to have its stomach pumped.

The February NSPCA Newsletter had an article about the danger of chocolate for dogs: "The toxic component of chocolate is theobromine. Humans easily metabolise theobromine, but dogs process it much more slowly, allowing it to build up to toxic levels in their system."

A small amount might not do a big dog much harm and might just make him vomit or have stomach pain, but large amounts can cause "muscle tremors, seizures, an irregular heartbeat, internal bleeding or a heart attack". It usually starts off with hyperactivity.

The usual treatment, the article states, is to induce vomiting within two hours of ingestion. Immediate veterinary treatment is essential. If your dog has eaten chocolate and is a small breed, rush him to your vet immediately.

And while I think about it, go onsite and find the February 2019 NSPCA Newsletter and sign up for Operation Farm Animal. We just have to begin caring more about the lives of the animals that end up on dinner plates.

Lab owner and free-range addict

If you notice that a dog is appearing again and again on its own in a bushy area, please phone the SPCA.

Matt Hill
By e-mail

Our inspectors are skilled at the rescue of dogs living alone in bushy areas, Matt, and we feature some of their patient rescues in this issue. Ed.



Action against UK puppy traders

I saw online that the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs in the United Kingdom announced recently that "third-party" sales of dogs and cats are to be prohibited, so buyers will have to buy pets directly from legal breeders or adopt them from re-homing welfare centres or animal protection organisations. Dogs and cats will also not be permitted to be sold by pet shops.

There was apparently widespread public consultation, and 95% of those questioned favoured the new laws. Earlier, a petition supporting what was called the Lucy's Law campaign was signed by 150,000 people, and this resulted in a debate in Parliament.

The new laws will prevent dogs from being used as breeding machines and kept under appalling conditions by unscrupulous puppy dealers. A further good move was stronger licensing conditions for breeders, so the puppy trade was dealt a double blow.

The RSPCA's deputy chief executive, Chris Wainwright, is quoted as saying: "We believe that cracking down on unscrupulous traders who put profit ahead of animal welfare will provide much-needed protection for both prospective owners and animals."

Chris Wainwright has also called for the UK government to recognise animal sentience.

Watch our own For Sale newspaper columns for signs of this pernicious trade. Don't make yourself complicit by buying from an illicit puppy trader. Subjecting dogs to overbreeding is cruelty.

An interesting stat that I came across was that 68% of the RSPCA's inspectors are women.

Alma
Everton

Wild animals in cities

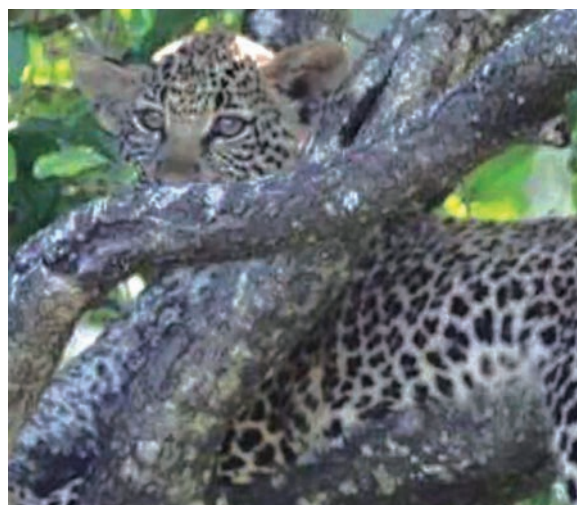
I was sitting at a window with my iPad and watching monkeys playing in my Johannesburg tree and then began reading the article I had accessed. It was about polar bears.

It talked about polar bear invasions into the fringes of cities and towns, and the human-wildlife conflicts that were resulting. It was really about human contributions to the period of climate change that we are entering and warned that, if we don't work much harder at reducing carbon emission, half the world's wildlife will be lost from the planet's most bio-diverse areas.

Icebergs are melting. Hunting grounds are being lost. Carnivores are losing their food sources. I read that 52 polar bears had invaded a Russian town a short while ago in a desperate search for food. Kangaroos are entering populated areas in Australia. Flying foxes are being hosed down by residents to stop their overheating. Thirsty African elephants raid villages looking for water. Crops are being destroyed, meaning that rural peoples are often driven to move to towns where there are no jobs.

I read that earth has about 8.7 million other species, even though we think it's all about us. I watched the little vervets, many of them with babies, and thought how people rage against them and often hurt them, even though they are just inhabiting the territories of their ancestors and following old traditional routes. We are a young species compared with them. How long is it going to take us to learn more kindness?

Doris
by e-mail



Rik and Sue Orts-Hansen sent us this picture of a baby leopard they saw at Pezulu a while back.

Visit our coffee shop and nursery



Meet for divine cappuccinos, lattes or espresso at our open-air coffee shop. You're sure to be welcomed by one or more of our yard cats who will be looking for a comfortable lap and some loving attention.

You can choose a delicious breakfast or tasty sandwiches, wraps and burgers. Muffins, lemon meringue pie and apple crumble are freshly baked for a tea-time treat.

Right next to our coffee shop is our small Ladybird nursery with its selection of healthy plants for your garden. Don't be surprised to find some friendly cats relaxing among the shrubs!

Shakira comes home after 19 months

Shirley Bell

I rang the bell and walked up a driveway to a gate that led onto an unusual long narrow garden that led in turn to a second garden area with a pool, and behind that one of Morningside's attractive old homes with a very large roofed verandah. Three magnificent large dogs with pale cream coats came down to meet me. These three Swiss Shepherds were Shaka and Leela, with Shakira, the dog who was home after spending nineteen months fending for herself on the Windsor Golf Course on the boundary of Durban North. I met Paula and Philip du Toit on the verandah.

The dogs were quiet, relaxed and friendly. There was no barking or feeling of guardedness. Handsome Shaka was larger than the two females, and I noticed at once what large and beautiful eyes he had. I also noticed that Shakira, only two days after rescue and recently home after an extended visit to the vet to be checked, was relaxed with the other two dogs. They moved around together like a family of three, and this was a dog that had spent nineteen months on a golf course, left entirely to her own resources, and apparently finding shelter in a big drainpipe.

She was seen on the golf course almost from the first day of her disappearance, but usually only at twilight and usually in the area of the seventeenth green. Many people had seen her during the nineteen months and had tried to get close to her, but she would not allow this. Perhaps the reason for this is to be found in her genetic background, because Shakira has a strong strain of wolf, about seventy-five per cent, crossed with malamute. A malamute looks rather like a husky. It is immensely strong and is known as a 'sled' dog, but is a different breed from a husky. Swiss Shepherds (Berger Blanc Suisse) are a different breed from German Shepherds and were recognised as the 219th pedigree dog breed by the Kennel Club in 2017.

Shakira was born in September 2012. Shaka is a year older. Leela is young, probably about eighteen months old. Since the Du Toits recently rescued her via the Durban & Coast SPCA, her exact age is not known. She had been found in Phoenix.

On Wednesday night, 10 April, Shaka, Shakira and Leela slept companionably. Shaka and Shakira slept nose to tail. Leela slept nearby, but separately.

The day it happened

On Saturday afternoon, 30 September 2017, there had been a heavy storm. Shakira was fearful of storms. She somehow got into the first section of garden and jumped over the 1.5 metre wall, but the drop onto the pavement is about 2.5 metres, too high for her to jump back. There had earlier been

a confrontation with vervet monkeys, and Shakira was still on edge. She panicked at finding herself isolated on the pavement and disappeared. Somehow she managed to get safely to the golf course through heavy traffic.

Juliet Nadarajan, Adoptions and Kennels manager of the Durban & Coast SPCA, told me of Philip du Toit's extraordinary efforts to find Shakira. He came to the SPCA in Springfield every day to search the kennels. This went on month after month, and even then he did not give up and phoned regularly.

A great deal of formal experimentation is going on these days into the nature and power of intention, and Philip's unwavering intention to find Shakira could well be seen as contributing to her rescue and to maintaining her well-being. This might seem unlikely to those who have not been following research

checked statistically by teams of scientists from leading American universities. The details of experiments are available to everyone. In fact, anyone can volunteer to become part of international intention experiments.

Ashleigh sees Shakira

Philip and Paula's son, Ashleigh, was driving past the Windsor Golf Course recently when he saw Shakira. Although it was dusk, he was 90% sure that it was Shakira. It was one of those moments one can only describe as coincidence... that he was driving past at that moment, that Shakira was visible, and that he noticed her.

We tend to regard coincidence lightly... "Oh, it was just coincidence." We see coincidence as things that happen

together or are accidentally connected in some way. The way we look at coincidence depends on the way we perceive it. In mathematics, for example, two angles that are said to coincide fit together perfectly. Sometimes incidents in everyday life also fit together perfectly. Ashleigh drives past Windsor Golf Course in the twilight and sees Shakira, who happens to be visible at that moment. Those two independent actions happen to fit together perfectly. Carl Jung would have had no problem with explaining this, nor would many quantum physicists. Whatever the nature of coincidence, it relates to events that fit together perfectly.

Philip and Paula went to the golf course, hoping to find their dog, although Philip strongly doubted that it was Shakira. Nineteen months had passed since her disappearance. She was at a distance and was nervous and reluctant to come to Philip when he approached her, but Paula quietly coaxed her to come out of hiding. She came slowly and nervously at first, but then she rolled over. It was an extraordinary moment.





LEELA, SHAKIRA AND SHAKA WITH OWNER, PHILIP DU TOIT

Photograph: Andreas Mathias

Her coat was dirty and tangled, but she seemed otherwise in reasonable shape. It was later found that she had lost only two kilograms during the nineteen months, and her vet described her as being well muscled without a vestige of fat.

I have been interested in the demeanour of wolves since I was young and interested in how they were portrayed in fiction, which led to much misunderstanding about these highly developed animals. They are very different from common public perception, which has been shaped largely by mythical stories from northern Europe and Siberia and from the way they were portrayed in classical Gothic nineteenth century novels that helped create a false and fearful mythology about werewolves and the ferocity of wolves. Wolves are highly socialised. Their personalities are very different from those of dogs. Inherited traits are perceptible even in this Berger Blanc Suisse (white Swiss Shepherd) breed that has been developed since the mid-eighteenth century.

What is noticeable about animals that have a strong wolf genetic makeup? They are skittish and prefer flight to fight in a confrontational situation. They are not the greatest guard dogs. They demand attention and see their human family as part of the pack. Social structure is really important to them, making Shakira's lone adventure all the more remarkable.

Swiss Shepherds were originally bred as herding dogs. They have more "toned down personalities" than German

Shepherds and are ready to accept any challenge in their work as herding dogs. Their formal classification sets them apart in the areas of demeanour, appearance and breed. They are highly intelligent animals. Because they are gentle and shy, they are not used for police work like the German Shepherd.

Swiss Shepherds have a high energy level and need space and action. They are sensitive by nature and respond to a quiet approach. They are ideal family dogs. It took decades of breeding to produce this distinct and remarkable breed type that is so protective both of people and of the pack.

Physically, Swiss Shepherds are always white or creamy-white. Their height is 55-65cms and weight 35-40kgs. Their lifespan is usually twelve to thirteen years. They are often described as timid animals who want to be near their owners. They do not like to be left alone for any length of time and are known to suffer from separation anxiety, which makes Shakira's nineteen-month lonely ordeal even more astonishing.

I looked at this beautiful dog, so at home and so secure in her being that she was already relaxed, friendly and happy to be stroked. No doubt there will be ways in which she will need to adjust. Nineteen months of lonely isolation with complete responsibility for her own physical existence represent an unimaginable feat for a dog that had been treasured in a loving home with a companion dog for her entire life.

I wished it were possible to interview her.

The Ladies' Breakfast was started last year as an additional event to honour Women's Day, and the first breakfast was held at the Rain Farm Lodge on 7 August.

One of the speakers was **Tanya Fleischer**, our Marketing Manager. Here are excerpts from her address.

A bird's eye view of our SPCA

I would like you to know how much your support is valued. The SPCA relies entirely on donations and support from the public to keep going. It is our mission to improve the welfare of animals and to do all we can to prevent cruelty, and it is our donors who enable us to make a difference to so many animal lives in the greater Durban and North Coast areas. We do this by responding to reports of animal cruelty and prosecuting those who are guilty of cruel acts, but our work involves so much more than that. We are a devoted team. We stand up for animals in a myriad ways.

Gunning down of a dog

Glasses is a small, friendly white-and-tan dog belonging to a woman in Hillary. The little animal was outside in the yard when a neighbour entered the property and shot her through the left shoulder. Inspector Ramsamy came to rescue her. He took her to the Sherwood veterinary organisation for emergency treatment. She was collected the following day and spent the weekend at our SPCA under the supervision of Dr Muchopa, as she required cage rest, pain medication and antibiotics. She recovered completely and went home to her relieved owner.

A charge of cruelty was laid against the shooter and, after 22 months, Inspector Ramsamy's perseverance and dedication were rewarded by a successful conviction. The accused was sentenced to a fine of R12,000, with an additional R2,000 to the SPCA.

Another manhole victim

Inspector Mntungwa received a report that a terrified dog was stuck in a manhole in the Bonela area on 21 June 2018. A member of the public, Sabelo, alerted us to this situation after he was walking by and heard the poor dog howling in distress.

Inspector Mntungwa was fortunately able to lift the dog out safely with a control pole. Our thanks go to Sabelo for alerting us to this dog's plight, and well done, Inspector Mntungwa. The dog, now healthy and happy, was adopted and is now called Ruby.

We're a kind of Noah's Ark!

We're not just about dogs and cats and have had our share of rescuing cows, goats and even a leguaan this year!

We shelter strays and unwanted animals until they are claimed by their owners, or we try to find new owners for them. We can shelter up to 250 puppies and dogs and 80 kittens and adult cats. Every day, these animals receive a fresh clean blanket to snuggle in and nutritious food twice a day. It costs us approximately R5 000 a day to feed the animals in our care. We found homes for 1 020 animals last year.



Tanya Fleischer with Amber, who was adopted shortly after this was taken.

Treating sick and injured rescued animals

An emergency call was received from the Newlands Grosdale Close area about a cow stuck in a manhole. The caller had heard the cow lowing pitifully for help. Inspector Mntungwa arrived at the scene and found the cow in a manhole. He could not retrieve it without help, so called the Fire Department for assistance.

With their help, the cow was lifted to safety and brought to our SPCA for treatment. Dr Muchopa assessed the cow and put her on a drip before transferring her to our farmyard for further treatment. We are happy to report that the owner did come forward, and that the cow is safely back home.

We provide subsidised veterinary services for pets of underprivileged and unemployed people and pensioners.

I remember Dr Muchopa, our senior veterinarian, telling the story of an elderly man, drenched in blood, rushing into our reception for urgent help. His dog, Tyson, had been stabbed repeatedly in an attempted house robbery and was bleeding profusely. Tyson was in the back seat of their car with family members pressing down on his wounds with sheets to try to stop the gushing blood.

Tyson was rushed into our theatre for surgery. He survived, and the family was relieved and deeply grateful that we had saved Tyson's life.

Education and encouraging caring

For many years, we have been interested in educating children and others regarding the rights of animals and the need for responsible pet ownership.

People don't always know that we offer affordable boarding kennels for dogs. Contact us for details.

We promote respect and concern for all living creatures. That is why we are here.

Homeless stray rescued

On 24 February, we received a call regarding a stray dog which had been living in a bushy area on the Bluff for some time. The call was allocated to Inspector Ramsamy, who went out almost daily trying to capture the dog. She was understandably extremely nervous and somewhat fearful of people after having to fend for herself and being exposed to the elements for a long time. Our inspector knew that we had to gain her trust, and he enlisted the help of a nearby resident. Food was provided and the kind gentleman, Charles, began to feed her on a daily basis.

On 16 March, our inspector seemed to be making progress and was able to give her some biscuits from his van, but each

time he tried to open his door, she fled back into the bushes. After weeks of effort, he was finally able to catch her on the 19 March and brought her to our SPCA.

She received treatment for a minor wound on her foot as well as plenty of nourishing food, love and attention from her rescuer and members of our staff. Inspector Ramsamy named this beautiful girl "Jess", (after Jock of the Bushveld's mother, as *Jock of the Bushveld* was one of his favourite movies). On 20 May, Jess went to a home where she will be loved forever.

How to help us do our vital work

These are the ways in which members of the public can help us:

- **Set up a monthly debit order**
- **Sponsor a yard cat** by providing care and shelter for one of the cats that live permanently at our SPCA because they cannot be re-homed. It costs a monthly sponsorship gift of R150 to sponsor a yard cat and know that it will live contentedly under excellent conditions.
- **Become a dedicated volunteer**
Volunteering is an enriching experience for anyone who has some free time on a regular basis and wants to make a difference. You need to be over 16 years of age, reliable, and have your own transport. Volunteering is limited to working with us at one of our events or on market days. Unfortunately, interaction with animals is not allowed.
- **Get a MySchool Card**
It costs you nothing, and you'll help animals every time you swipe the card or use your app at Woolworths and other participating stores. Be sure to nominate Durban & Coast SPCA as the beneficiary.
- **Donate in lieu of a gift**
Helping to make a better world for animals is the perfect way to honour a friend or loved one who prefers not to receive gifts for a birthday, anniversary or other celebration.
- **Include us in your Will**
If kindness to animals has been one of the guiding principles of your life, perhaps you would enjoy knowing that your voice against cruelty, neglect, greed and ignorance will continue to be effective beyond your lifetime.
- **Donate pet food or pet blankets**
- **Donate unwanted items**
Your unwanted furniture, clothing, household appliances, books, jewellery and a great many other things can be sold in our charity shops to raise funds towards the care of our furry orphans. We also appreciate gifts like pet food and blankets.
- **Collect small change for us**
If you own or manage a retail outlet or are a member of a club, perhaps you would care to keep one of our collection tins on your counter. Small change mounts up quickly and makes a big difference to the animals in our care.
- **Shop till you drop**
Our charity shops are filled with amazing bargains and also have a section of brand-new pet products like collars and leads, pet treats, grooming products, toys and pet food.
- **Participate in our events**
Throughout the year, we run a series of competitions and events. Keep an eye on our Facebook page for details of all our upcoming events.
- **Report cruelty**
This is of vital importance. Animals can't speak for themselves. They need compassionate people to speak for them. If you know an animal is being ill-treated or neglected, call us on (031) 579 6501 or on our emergency after hours number, 083 212 6103.

We have chosen just a few of our cases here to give our readers some idea of the range of work and the skill, dedication and courage of our inspectors. Theirs is noble work and needs to be honoured.

Introducing Inspector Ngcobo

We take pleasure in introducing Inspector Ngcobo, who recently joined our SPCA team. Inspector Ngcobo had been with the SPCA movement for three years and had qualified as an inspector. He was previously employed by the Lower South Coast SPCA.

When asked why he had wanted to become an inspector, he said: "I used to be in the animal farming environment, and the level of cruelty that I witnessed made me want to make a change, and so I joined the SPCA movement. I love animals and have always wanted to work with them. Every day in this job is a reward."

He enjoys rescuing animals and going out to conduct inspections of farm animals. Farm animals are his passion.

A rescue that he regards as one of his best involved saving a Beagle dog that had become lost in the bush and was trapped in a snare. Inspector Ngcobo searched through four kilometres of bush to save this dog.

From the past, he recalls the story of the heartless treatment of a stolen dog: "There was a dog called Zeus that we removed from a property where he was dying of starvation at the end of a chain. We found that Zeus was actually a stolen dog. He was rehabilitated and returned to his rightful owner."

Incidents like this are powerful victories, but the question that remains is: *What kind of people tie dogs up without food or water and deliberately let them die over weeks of torture?* We reported two ghastly cases in our last issue. In those cases, both dogs had died. Day by day, their owners and family members walked by them, presumably unmoved. If you have any suspicion of cruelty to animals, do not fail to report to us. You may do so anonymously if, for any reason, you do not wish to give your name.



Inspector Ngcobo with a rescued goat

Sterilisation Out

This successful sterilisation outreach in KwaMashu was organised by Lantrust Charitable Trust's Mrs Penny Nash. Mrs Nash is the widow of the late Mr George Stewart.



reach KwaMashu

was made possible by a generous donation from
sh made this distribution in memory of her brother,



Bluff rescue

When we received a call regarding a dog which had been living in a bushy area on the Bluff for some time, the call was allocated to Inspector Ramsamy. He went out almost daily to attempt to capture her. She was extremely nervous and fearful after having to fend for herself and endure being exposed to the elements, so it was clear that capture was not going to be easy.

Our inspector knew that he would have to gain her trust and he enlisted the help of a nearby resident. Food was provided, and Charles began to feed her on a daily basis.

Within a couple of weeks, Inspector Ramsamy felt he was beginning to make some progress and was able to give her some biscuits from his van, but if he made any movement towards her, she would rush off into the bushes. After weeks of patient effort, he was finally able to catch her and bring her into our SPCA.

She was treated for a small wound on her foot and given plenty of good food, love and attention by her rescuer and members of our SPCA staff, and she began to respond quite rapidly.

Inspector Ramsamy named this beautiful girl "Jess". She turned out to be a real sweetheart. She loved to run and play, and we could see that she would make a great companion for someone with a large garden and loads of love to shower on her. In the account of her talk on page 11, Tanya has told us that Jess has been adopted.

Dog caught in snare

Snares are much more prevalent than most people realise. In June, we received a report from a member of the public of a dog caught in bush in the Newlands area. Inspector Nkomo searched the area until he discovered the dog. This poor little boy had his foot caught in a snare. Consisting of a loop of wire or rope which pulls tightly around the animal, a snare is a trap for catching birds or small animals. This could mean a slow and cruel death as the trapped creature dies of hunger, thirst and exposure, as well as suffering great pain. But, thanks to Inspector Nkomo, this little dog was soon in our care.



Dogs desperately trying to survive in the bush

It is heartbreaking that abandoned or lost dogs are increasingly having to fend for themselves alone in isolated bushy areas. This kind of life is a tremendous hardship for them, especially since they will usually have been used to companionship of some kind. They will have become frightened and distrustful. Many will die, lonely and desperate for help. Let us know if you see a dog that is clearly having to fend for itself in the bush.

Manhole danger left uncovered

In March last year we received an after-hours call regarding a dog that had fallen into a manhole in a vacant lot in the Newlands area. Inspector Ramsamy was on duty and, despite the darkness and overgrown grass, he was able to locate and rescue the desperate dog. He brought it to the SPCA, where we are happy to report that it recovered from its ordeal.

A worrying point is that this was not the first rescue from this very same manhole, which had been left uncovered by the Municipality. The issue had to be addressed with eThekweni.

Abused Ollie finds a happy home

On 9 July 2018 we received a complaint regarding a dog in appalling condition in the Phoenix area. Inspector Nmutaduni investigated and found an adult cross-breed dog being kept in a filthy area. He had extensive hair-loss over his entire body. Written warnings were issued requiring the owner to provide veterinary treatment and a clean living area for the dog. The owner failed to comply, and an order to remove the dog from his premises was obtained.

The dog was brought to our SPCA. Not a word was received from the owner. A docket was compiled, requesting that the owner be charged for various contraventions of the Animals Protection Act 71/1962.

The following is from our vet's initial assessment:

The dog had a smelly, scaly coat all over its body. The skin was thick, scaly and very brittle, with pustules and abscesses. On the head and neck, the skin had cracked and was oozing pus. A massive flea infestation was noted. A skin scraping revealed that the dog had a severe *Demodex sp.* mite infestation, commonly called mange. A faecal examination revealed a severe roundworm infestation. A blood smear examination revealed elevated white blood cells.

The dog was immediately de-wormed using *Mediworm Plus* tablets, and treatment for the mange commenced, using weekly *Ivomec* injections. He was also sprayed with *Frontline* to treat the flea infestation.

We named him Ollie. It felt good to provide him with the treatment he so desperately needed. He made tremendous improvements over the following two months. Ollie is an absolute sweetheart. He has a delightful nature, and the day came when we were able to put him up for adoption. He was adopted by Fathima Mustapha.

From Ollie's photograph below, you can see the transformation for yourselves.



We applaud the dedication of our Inspectors

Showing his usual dedication, Inspector Ramsamy followed up on a complaint regarding an adult dog and a puppy held in very poor condition on a property. He found them in a sad state and infested with ticks. He issued a warning to the owner for both dogs.

On follow-up, he found that the adult dog had been given away, and that the owner had kept the puppy. He went to the new owner to check on the condition of the adult dog, and then continued to monitor the progress of both puppy and adult dog.

He found they were both being maintained in good condition. The puppy was free from ticks and fleas, had been de-wormed and was gaining weight nicely.

Dolphin Coast case

A member of the public called our Dolphin Coast branch in August to report cruel treatment of a dog on a property in Tongaat. The caller advised that the dog was underweight, unfed and without access to water.

Field Officer Nathi Ngisu attended to the call on the same day and found a seriously neglected young Boerboel female about two years old, along with her two puppies of about eight weeks old.

The mother dog, whom we named Lily, was severely underweight. Her ribs were clearly visible, and she was starving. The owner said that he could not afford to feed the dogs (which does not explain even lack of water) and signed them over to us. They were taken to our Dolphin Coast branch. She was immediately put on a special diet and within days was already beginning to pick up weight. We are happy to report that both her puppies found new homes. Lily was soon well enough to be adopted and soon eagerly went to her forever home.

We don't rescue only cats and dogs!

On 21 January 2018, we received a call from the Msthebeni SAPS requesting guidance on charges that could be laid in an animal cruelty case. A resident of the area had reported that a neighbour had stabbed two of his cattle when they had entered his property and had eaten some vegetables from his vegetable garden.

Inspector Nkomo went to assess the animals. As the owner had no transport and few resources for his animals' treatment, Inspector Nkomo arranged for the State Vet to examine and treat the cows.

We are happy to report that they were soon on their way to recovery. Wherever we go, we always stress that people need to be kind and compassionate towards all living creatures. It is hard to understand how anyone could have stabbed these cattle for merely grazing on private property. Their innocent intrusion was something he should have taken up with their owner instead of cruelly punishing the cattle. Arguments can always be settled amicably if people control their anger and can remain reasonable and kind.



A very happy Lily with her new family, the Van der Westhuysens

Lily is rescued from railroad bush area

We received a call from a member of the public on 5 November regarding a stray dog living in a hole she had dug near the railroad in Grimsby Road, Mobeni. Inspector Ramsamy found a very nervous little girl. It was clear that she had been living there for some time. She was too frightened for him to catch her on this first visit. He left food and water and gave additional food to nearby security guards who were willing to assist with feeding her on days when Inspector Ramsamy was not able to get there.

He slowly befriended this little girl and went back ten times before she felt able to trust him and could be safely brought to our SPCA with the assistance of Inspector Moloi on 23 November. We named this little angel Lily. She began to come out of her shell and soon revealed a soft and loving nature. We knew that she would make a wonderful addition to a home she could call her own. Well, Lily has found a forever home and will be loved and nurtured from now on. How happy it makes us to be able to report this.

Adoptions department on (031) 579 6524/6

Many calls involve manholes

Only weeks later, an emergency call was received from the Newlands Grosdale Close area about a cow stuck in a hole. The caller heard the cow lowing pitifully for help. Inspector Mntungwa found the cow trapped in a manhole, but could not retrieve her on his own and called the Fire Department for assistance. With their help, she was soon lifted to safety and brought to our SPCA for treatment. Our Dr Muchopa put her on a drip before transferring her to our farmyard. We are happy to report that the owner came forward and that the cow is back home.



Happily grazing



Some successful convictions

Some of you might recall reading a news report from July 2016 involving a dog owner who attempted to remove his dog's testicles by winding an elastic band tightly round them. By the time we were alerted, we estimated that this poor animal had been in extreme pain for some two weeks. He was in so much agony that he could barely walk, sit or stand, as the elastic band was deeply embedded in his flesh, causing massive swelling and severe infection. Sadly, this poor animal had to be euthanised owing to the extreme nature of the injury and the pain being suffered.

Inspector Moloi subsequently spent several days in court and personally appeared thirteen times over two years and two months. We are relieved that this owner was brought to justice on 2 October 2018 for this despicable cruelty.

He was charged under Section 2 (1) a, e, f, q and r of the Animals Protection Act 71 of 1962 and was convicted and sentenced to a fine of R3000 or three months' imprisonment. He was declared unfit to own or be in charge of any animal for a period of twelve months from the date of conviction.

(Most people would like the law to prevent people convicted of such cruelty to be prevented from owning animals forever. Editor)

This was our first case in which an accused has been convicted of contravening Section 2 (1) (f), among other charges, of the Animals' Protection Act 71/1962, and we are pleased that the sentence was not suspended in any way, as is usually the case, and that a request for deferment was denied by the presiding officer. This was unprecedented for us, and we are proud to have brought this perpetrator to justice.

In telling our readers of these cases, we want to say that we are immensely proud of all our inspectors who work tirelessly on each and every case to ensure that justice is served. No praise is too high for those who do such emotionally and physically demanding work.

This archaic and disgustingly cruel practice of neutering by way of elastic bands was commonly used in rural and farming areas in the past. Cases are rarely reported these days, but are still recurring.

Please do not fail to report all acts of cruelty – or even suspicions of cruelty - to the SPCA. Our number is (031) 579 6501.

Two cases on the same day involved a leguaan and a goat

Inspector Nkomo and Inspector Nemutaduni saved a leguaan from certain death after this large reptile had fallen into a six-metre deep tank at the eThekweni waste water in Verulam. Inspector Nemutaduni managed to use a catch pole to get the reptile out of the water. Luckily, it had sustained no injuries and was successfully released back into the bushy area where it lived.

Inspector Moloi was called out to Umlazi where a little goat was stuck in a 2.5-metre deep storm-water drain. Peter, the gentleman who called us, was waiting for Inspector Moloi's arrival with a stepladder for the rescue mission. Thank you, Peter. Inspector Moloi managed to catch the frightened, bleating goat, put him over his shoulders, and carry him up to safety. He said the drain contained a lot of water, and the little goat was starving. The relieved little animal was soon enjoying our farmyard area and well enough to be looking for a home to call his own.

Our inspectors wept at this horror

Hoarding can be a type of disorder, and that is something very different from accumulating without ever clearing out or habitually setting things aside for a future day as a precaution. A hoarding disorder involves an obsessive collecting of items or living creatures without a sense of responsibility or rational future planning.

Hoarding can develop into a compelling disorder that gives the hoarder an irrational sense of greater personal security. An animal hoarder will remain unmoved by the suffering of incarcerated untended animals.

It can involve health code violations, the spreading of disease, and neglect of all kinds, almost as though the perpetrators have lost all perception via the senses and are devoid of feeling for other living creatures while imagining that they themselves are being caring and kind. The hoarder is likely to experience excessive isolation and loneliness, but is unwilling to let anyone into the house or to make any effort to clean, make food or take responsibility for the consequences of blind, obsessive hoarding. When hoarding involves living creatures, tragedy is likely to result for the helpless incarcerated victims.

When inspectors and a support team from the Durban & Coast SPCA arrived at a Clare Estate house on Wednesday, 17 April 2019, to execute a Warrant of Seizure, they were totally unprepared for the ghastliness of the situation that they found there.

The warrant had been obtained by Durban & Coast SPCA Senior Inspector Candice Sadayan owing to concerns about animals on the property, following a report from a member of the public.

The female occupant of the property denied the SPCA inspectors access. This necessitated intervention by the SAPS, who had to use bolt cutters to allow the SPCA to gain entry in terms of the warrant. What they found was evidence for suffering so severe that it can hardly be imagined.

Caroline, our General Manager, has written about what was found in the House of Horrors in her "Paws for Thought" in this issue. She had commented in a note earlier that "our inspectors could not count the number of corpses, because there were piles of dead animals in process of putrefaction throughout the house. A bathroom appeared to have served as a storeroom for corpses".

The cruel living conditions of the dogs, and their prolonged suffering and deaths, had a profound and severely traumatising effect on our team. Never in living memory has a more horrific scene been dealt with by our Inspectorate. Such scenes are captured in memory and remain there forever, which is why being an inspector is so noble a role. They do what few of us are brave enough to do.

The eighty living dogs were taken to our SPCA for individual assessment by our Controlling Vet, Dr Muchopa. Blood smears were taken. The dogs had to be humanely euthanased to end their suffering.

Investigation revealed that the occupant allegedly took in unwanted and stray animals from the community. Our unequivocal message to the public is this: *Do not simply hand over animals to someone who will claim to 'rescue' unwanted animals and 'care' for them.* The SPCA is always deeply concerned about the number of animals that have to be euthanased. We would find a home for every animal if we could, but Caroline points out that "there is a fate that is much worse than humane euthanasia". The dogs in this so-called 'haven' were left to die slow, painful deaths.

The SPCA has the experience, expertise and skill to take care of animals. No living creature should be exposed to prolonged torture and suffering. We implore people to hand over unwanted and stray animals to their local SPCA. *Never hesitate to report any case of abuse that you might*

suspect. We will investigate, and you can remain anonymous if you wish.

The occupant had been residing in the house in the midst of this horror that she had created. She was strongly resistant to allowing her home to be checked, which is typical of animal hoarders, who continue to believe they are kind and caring despite the copious evidence for their mindless cruelty. They are completely detached from it.

The Durban & Coast SPCA will open a docket in order to prosecute the owner in terms of the Animals Protection Act 71 of 1962.

"There is a fate that is much worse than humane euthanasia".

The dogs in this so-called 'haven' were left to die slow, painful deaths."

*As a footnote, we want to say that our General Manager, Caroline, has made it clear that we also realise that the person responsible for these terrible consequences is in dire need of professional help, and that the SPCA supports that this be found for her. Hoarding animals with fatal consequences for them follows a well-known pattern in which the perpetrator goes on from day to day in a state of delusion, unable to see the reality. SPCA staff members are traumatised by the tragic events, but we are grateful to be able to say that compassion starts at the top with our General Manager who fully realises that the tragic aspect extends even to the perpetrator, whose actions appear to have developed out of her delusions. We are shaken to the core, but we know that compassion starts at the top and is a driving force in our organisation.

All aspects of this story are tragic. Our inspectors and everyone else who witnessed this horrifying scene will have it embedded in memory forever, and trauma debriefing was a matter of urgency for them. Caroline says that even the most experienced of the inspectors, who have all witnessed countless scenes of heartless cruelty, "were shaken and tearful – saddened, revolted and outraged" and "were tormented by the thought" that they might have saved many dogs from torture had they known earlier.

NSPCA'S powerful appeal to end lion bone trade

In the October/November issue of *NSPCA NEWSBITES*, the NSPCA reported that it had lodged an urgent interdict against the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) to suspend the DEA's authorisation of lion bone exports.

The NSPCA has been thwarted in its efforts to prevent the appalling cruelty in this 'industry' by lack of regulation within the industry itself. There are not only regulatory loopholes, but "generally a lack of cooperation and communication from both national and provincial authorities".

Following decisions taken at CITES CoP17, the Minister of Environmental Affairs established an export quota of 800 lion skeletons for 2017. Take a moment to imagine the realities involved in that. They are, in fact, worse than one might think.

The NSPCA requested a judicial review of the quota, but with the review process still "grinding through the Courts", the DEA announced a 1500 quota of lion skeletons for 2018... going East, of course. The NSPCA has launched an urgent interdict based on welfare concerns.



The NSPCA is of the view that cruelty to lions is an inevitable consequence of the DEA's misguided actions and is therefore committed to fighting this decision in court to protect lions.

Don't feel removed from this issue. There is real suffering going on, and we need to know who is responsible, why it is being officially condoned, and why the officialdom concerned is allowing our country to be tainted by condoning such a wantonly cruel 'industry'. When people put money above all else, human decency vanishes.

Speak out about the vileness of allowing a lion bone 'industry'. Things change for the better only when enough people care.

The NSPCA believes that:

- There is inadequate regulation of lions' conditions relating to captivity and slaughter.
- The study on which the decision is based is incomplete; the DEA failed to comply with its statutory duty to consult.
- Based on expert opinion and data available, they consider the decision to be scientifically irrational.

- The lion bone trade might threaten the viability of lion and other big cat populations globally, encouraging consumers to utilise lion bone as a replacement for tiger bone traditional medicines and might increase demand.
- This industry poses a risk to wild lion, tiger and other big cat populations globally.
- The trade has links to transnational wildlife crime syndicates and other wildlife crime.

Animal poisoning

The NSPCA included an article in their January newsletter on animal poisoning, which is a particularly cruel and cowardly way to kill an animal and is often used by criminals to rid a property of dogs before an intrusion.

A poison called Aldicarb (also known as Two-step or Temik) is the most commonly used poison. The number of animals killed by illegally obtained poisons in South Africa has increased considerably in recent years. Victims include wildlife, where mass poisoning is not uncommon, including of vervet monkeys.

All cases of poisoning must be reported to the SA police with a request that they investigate and also remove any vestiges of poison that might be left on your property.

How to identify the poison that looks almost like poppy seeds

It is equally dangerous to animals and humans. On no account touch a substance of this appearance with your bare hands, as Aldicarb can be absorbed through the skin. If you are in any doubt about whether poison is present, wear disposable gloves when removing it. Criminals usually hide it in meat in order to encourage dogs to consume it.



Aldicarb small black granules deadly to humans and animals

A poisoned dog will become convulsed and will vomit and drool. There is no antidote for Aldicarb, and it is very fast-acting, but if you get your pet to a vet without delay, it might be possible to neutralise the poison. *Time is of the essence. Don't delay for even a minute.*

Protecting your animal

Since most poisoning occurs during the night, it is wise to allow your pets to sleep inside. If you can't do this, or don't want to do so, shut the front garden off from the back yard and keep your dogs in the back yard so that it will be more difficult for intruders to get to them. Make sure your animals have proper shelter if they remain outside at night.

Keep your veterinarian's emergency details handy.
In cases of poisoning, not a moment must be lost before seeking help.

Treat yourself to reading Professor Mike Bruton's *The Fishy Smiths*

Because Professors JLB and Margaret Smith played such seminal roles in my own life, I was especially looking forward to reading Professor Mike Bruton's *The Fishy Smiths*, the biography of JLB and Margaret Smith.

Mike's attractive easy style and ability to create vivid scenes and capture personalities make this a book for everybody.

Mike is an extraordinary person himself and, when he decides on a personal work programme, he makes enormous demands on himself and somehow manages to fulfil them. This is so much what the Smiths were like.

When they entered my life, I was a young mother and the editor of *Field and Tide*, for which JLB wrote a monthly article.

I loved his forthright, entertaining style of writing, and he liked my writing and was soon sending me letters of warm encouragement. I little expected how he and Margaret would change my life and become dear friends and mentors.

Reading Mike's lively book, full of compelling images, has plunged me back into those entrancing years, and re-reading my file of JLB's letters has filled me with a sense of wonder. He believed in me so definitively that I found myself somehow growing to try to meet his certainty. When he died, Margaret simply took over. My two professors... they gave me my place in the sun.

The Fishy Smiths is a delight. Mike Bruton has been able to depict not just two outstanding scientists, but has captured the personalities of two people with rare qualities, extraordinary abilities, and a special sense of devotion to their work. They were both outspoken, but in very different ways. JLB had the clearest sense of mission I have ever encountered. He drove himself unmercifully, and yet he always made time to encourage others. He could be a hard taskmaster, but he never lost an opportunity of being supportive and encouraging when effort warranted this.

If one reads the messages sent after his death, one is struck by recurrent tributes to his kindness. He had a sharp, self-deprecating sense of humour. He was driven by a vision, and Margaret was the finest helpmate he could have found. He knew that from the time she sat in his lecture theatre as a student. She took a little longer to be convinced, but she was to become a partner without parallel.

Famously, when asked why she had not, as a brilliant student, pursued her own career, she replied: "I could have been independent or indispensable. I chose to be indispensable."

And now we come to Mike Bruton's very fine book, *The Fishy Smiths*, a biography of JLB and Margaret Smith. Mike had no intention of writing a formal eulogy about two top scientists, although he has given them full acknowledgement for their contributions. He wanted to show JLB and Margaret in their fullness as the vibrant human beings they were and also as the outstanding scientists who happened to take marauding lions, stabs by stonefish, precarious ocean voyages, and lonely East African outposts as part of the deal. JLB was not the least bit interested in securing a comfortable life. What he wanted was

a constant 'finding out' and a feeling of contribution. He was also a fine lecturer, who particularly acknowledged effort.

Mike's ability to reveal the world the Smiths chose to inhabit was possible because it is a world he knows well from his own illustrious career. He became director of the JLB Smith Institute of Ichthyology after JLB's death and later was director of the Two Oceans Environmental Education Trust at the Two Oceans Aquarium in Cape Town. Set aside a considerable period if you want to read about his other various achievements. In addition, he has had many scientific adventures of a dangerous and demanding kind, including sharing the extraordinary, claustrophobic experience of going down to alarming depths

in the *Jago* submersible, not only to search for coelacanths off our coastline, but also to document invertebrates and fish life down to a depth of 400 metres, six times deeper than previous scientific diving surveys off South Africa.

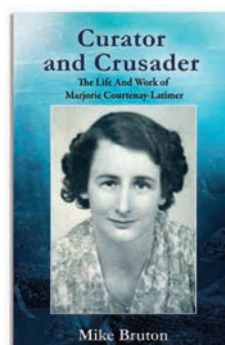
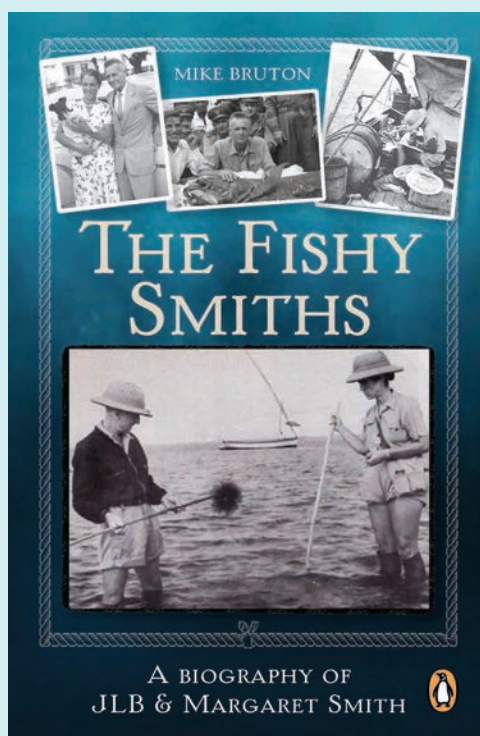
As a scientist, he has a natural fine eye for detail. He also seems to have a natural ability to attract danger in unusual situations that he himself has chosen and has survived hair-raising experiences. His writing takes one right into the very heart of adventures that most of us would rather read about than experience, but his books capture the essence of what it means to be a real scientist seeking firsthand experience. I think JLB and Margaret would have loved this book.

I was completely taken aback, and also moved, to find my own photograph in it, and with many references to things I had written. JLB used to refer to me as his 'literary daughter'. That means so much to me now all these years later.

Mike's mentioning this was a generous

act. It was so unexpected and brought back a privileged friendship with JLB and Margaret Smith that was one of the highlights of my life.

Mike has recently completed a book on Dr Marjorie Courtenay-Latimer, who sent the note with its rough drawing to JLB when he and Margaret were at their Knysna cottage over the end-of-year holiday period and virtually out of contact. From this rough drawing, JLB amazingly felt sure she had a coelacanth in her possession. Another enthralling book by Mike will shortly be available.



NEW BOOK from Mike Bruton

Curator and Crusader will be launched in June. Mike Bruton has a delightfully vivid style, and the inimitable Dr Marjorie Courtenay-Latimer will be presented in all her variety.

To purchase a copy online visit: www.hiltonbarber.co.za

Animals have emotions just as we do

Professor Jaak Panksepp was a neuroscientist whose research focused on revealing the emotional lives of animals. After decades at Bowling Green University, he became Head of Affective Neuroscience Research and Baily Endowed Chair of Animal Wellbeing Science for the Department of Veterinary and Comparative Anatomy, Pharmacology and Physiology at Washington State University's College of Veterinary Medicine.



Studies of laughter in animals

One of his famous experiments involved the tickling of rats and listening to their ultrasonic laughter. These experiments actually opened up possibilities for the treatment of depression and other forms of mental illness in humans.

In 1999 he made a documentary, *Why dogs smile and chimpanzees cry*. His findings were ignored by many colleagues who held the prevailing view that emotions are uniquely human. Pet owners are able to tell disbelievers differently.

His late-1990s experiments with his rats produced definitive findings. Panksepp understood laughter as illustrative of emotion in general, and joy in particular. His research was significant because he was challenging the idea that emotions come from the cerebral centre, which is the part of the brain that performs the level of thought that is characteristic of humans. His research supported that emotions originate in more primitive areas of the brain, such as the amygdala and hypothalamus. He came across certain built-in or inherited fears; for instance, rats that had never been near either cats or dogs responded with fear when brought into contact with cat hair, but showed no fear response to dog hair.

Importantly, his findings in animal emotions suggested possible further ways in which depression and other emotional conditions could be treated. In 1979 he suggested that opioid peptides could play a role in the etiology of autism and he proposed that autism might be "an emotional disturbance arising from an upset in the opiate systems in the brain".

Range of animal emotions

Professor Casey Cromwell, professor of psychology and neuroscience at Bowling Green State University, said the study of emotions had mostly been relegated to the study of philosophy until Panksepp brought it into the realm of science. Panksepp identified neural circuits for several positive and negative emotions that were commonly observed in mammals from humans to rats: from positive ones like love, lust and play to negative ones like rage, fear and panic.

He developed what he referred to as a cross-species friendship with his laboratory rats and said: "Tickling has to be done in a joyful way. It has to have the characteristics of play... Give an animal a good time, and it will become so fond of you that it is unbelievable."

Dr Panksepp's experiments have been credited with expanding knowledge about autism and attention deficit disorder. His textbook, *Affective Neuroscience: the Foundations of Human and Animal Emotions*, published in 1998, is recognised as a classic in the field. He emphasised the importance of unstructured play, not only for animals but also for humans.

In modern society, many parents have come to feel that life is too busy to spend much time playing spontaneously and creatively with their children and have tended rather to engage

them with 'things'. Although that situation has worsened in many homes, with television becoming too handy a distraction, we are nonetheless witnessing a discernible turn-around in that we are seeing an increasing number of young mothers and fathers interfacing in creative ways with their children, conversing with them, encouraging them, playing games with them, and really listening to them with attention. They do teach them how to use iPads and the television, but do not use such technology as a constant child-minder.

From displaced person to research scientist

Jaak Panksepp was born in Estonia. His parents were prosperous farmers who fled the advancing Soviet army in 1944, crossing the Baltic Sea to northern Germany where they lived as displaced persons. When he was seven, the family emigrated to the USA, where the father worked as a farmhand. Jaak went to a one-room school. In his teens they moved to a house in an Estonian community where his father worked as a mason.

He managed to support himself as a university student in psychology, psychobiology and neuroscience and earned his Bachelor's degree at the University of Pittsburgh in 1965, his Master's in 1967, and his PhD in 1969, the latter two at the University of Massachusetts. His major interest was always the mind. He worked nights as an orderly in a psychiatric hospital. That is the kind of thing that committed people do.

He then joined Bowling Green State University and remained there for decades until moving to teach at Washington State University in Pullman, Washington.

It was his belief that "the more we know about the emotions of other animals, the more we understand our own", and "the more we know about our animal emotions which support the rest of our mental apparatus, the more ideas we will have about how to be better people, and the more options we will have for being good to others and to the world".

He found many parallels between animal behaviour and the behaviour of children. Dogs, for instance, clearly read our emotions, so it is hardly surprising that they have highly developed emotions of their own that allow them to do this. Many mechanistic thinkers refuse to believe that animals are sentient, but such views can only be held if one ignores the weight of scientific evidence, plus the abundant proofs offered us in our everyday interchanges with animals.

There is something crucial that we have to acknowledge: cruelty to animals is more likely if the person believes that animals have no feelings. This is not at all to suggest that many mechanistic thinkers are not also animal lovers and kind to animals. But refusal to accept that animals are sentient beings, and therefore have feelings, allows some people to treat animals without any regard for the hurt being caused them. *There is plenty of proof for that.* S.B.

Can we be more accepting of pets in public places?

When I go to Australia - which is quite often since I have children, grandchildren and two little great-grandchildren there - I am always delighted that Australians so obviously love their pets. When my family hires a beach home in some beautiful area for a few days of relaxation, it has to be a place where dogs are welcome.

I was therefore more than a little surprised to read an article by Louise Grimmer of the University of Tasmania and Gary Mortimer of the Queensland University of Technology in the excellent online publication, *The Conversation*, under the heading: "Australians love their pets, so why don't more public places welcome them?"

Facilities for pets seemed to me to be abundant in Australia, at least on the Gold Coast. There are dedicated dog beaches where scores of dogs run with happy abandon, some of them daring to frolic in the surf. There are dog parks with secure entrances and exits and often with playthings for dogs, like tubes they can run through and things they can climb up and slide down. One frequently sees people sitting outside coffee shops and restaurants with dogs on leads. Some shops have hooks for dog leads outside and bowls of water for thirsty animals.

I have often wished that animals were made more welcome in public places in our own country. I love what I see in Australia.

The article stated that some 62% of Australian households have a pet, compared with about 65% in America and 40% in Britain and continental Europe, but commented, on the other hand, that animals were more welcome in public places in Britain and Europe.

There are estimated to be 4.8 million dogs, 3.9 million per cats, and 4.2 million pet birds in Australia, besides other less

usual pets. The ratio of pets to people in Australia is given as 101:100, so there are more pets than people. Spending on pet-related goods is high, reaching over twelve billion dollars in 2016. The market includes pet insurance, pet day care, pet taxis, grooming and even funeral services.

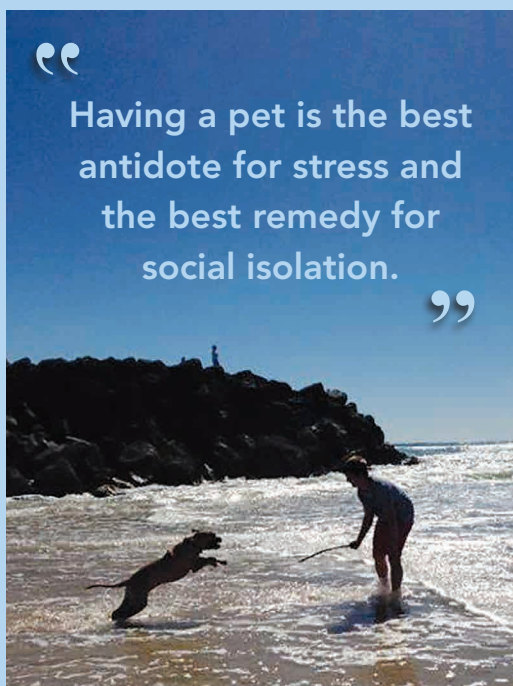
Since some people renting out their properties will not allow pets, the number of pet owners could probably be quite a bit higher. There are also other limiting factors like high-density apartments and housing developments with tiny gardens. In New York, however, one often sees even large dogs in flats, and owners walking their dogs are a common sight in city streets.

In Australia, dog beaches have containers, along with plastic bags, for dog faeces, so beaches remain clean despite the number of doggy visitors. There are fines for non-compliance.

Australian pet-owners feel that pets should be even more welcome in public places whereas, to us South Africans, pets in Australia seem to have a high level of acceptance, because one sees pets on leads everywhere, and the dog parks and dog beaches are such carefree meticulous places, because pet owners accept responsibility for

helping to keep them that way.

Having pets is really good for people. Research has confirmed that having a pet is the best antidote for stress and the best remedy for social isolation, but all pet-lovers know that anyway. What is better than being loved unconditionally and having a warm-hearted creature forever delighting in one's presence?



Lost and Found

If you have lost your dog or cat, please visit our SPCA in Springfield Park in case it has been handed in to us. While you are welcome to phone us, it can be difficult to describe animals in sufficient fine detail for them to be identified. It is far better to come and check for yourself.

Sterilised pets are far less likely to wander, and it is really important to have your pets micro-chipped. If you find a lost dog or cat and do not know the owner, please bring it to the SPCA or keep it safely in your home or garden and call us to come and collect it.

We keep a Lost and Found registry and will check to see if the animal has been micro-chipped so that we can try to trace the owner. You can assist by asking around the neighbourhood in which the animal was found in order to establish whether anyone is missing their pet. For security reasons, neighbourhoods are increasingly forming groups on mobile in order to keep in touch. If you belong to such a group and have seen or taken in a stray, put out a message at once.



By law, the SPCA must shelter a stray animal for seven days before offering it for adoption. We do our best to find new homes for all the cats and dogs in our centre, but the sad reality is that only a small percentage find new homes. This is why we ask you please to consider adopting a healthy animal from us rather than purchasing animals from breeders or pet shops. Every time an animal is adopted from us, space is freed to give another dog or cat a chance to have a happy life.

Subsidised care for people in need



Veterinary services are not provided free of charge by the SPCA, but we do offer subsidised veterinary care for underprivileged, unemployed or pensioned members of the public who would not be able to afford veterinary care. Our animal hospital provides essential surgery, and sterilisations are performed by a team of qualified veterinarians. Additional veterinary services are provided at our clinic: from simple health checks and vaccinations to dealing with severe illnesses. Most animals are sent home with the necessary drugs and treatment. Seriously ill animals are kept at the SPCA for further treatment.

Every animal admitted to the SPCA undergoes a stringent health check to ensure that contagious and potentially fatal diseases do not endanger the lives of other animals.

We only did one sterilisation outreach programme last July in KwaMashu. This was generously funded by the Lantrust Charitable Trust, who felt very passionate about preventing constant canine pregnancies, which can lead to much suffering when owners cannot feed unwanted puppies, or when dogs are feral and have to look after themselves.

Unfortunately, we do not always have the funding or the staff capacity to undertake outreach programmes that we would like to be able to offer.

The government mandate is to control rabies, and rabies injections have been provided in various areas, with the SPCA on stand-by during these campaigns to collect any strays or unwanted animals.

Funding for more sterilisation outreach programmes would obviously reduce the number of unwanted animals. It is our mission to protect animals and reduce animal suffering to the very best of our capacity, and our capacity depends on the generosity of donors. Thank you to all who donate. What is achieved for animals thanks to your donations is probably beyond what you imagine.

We respond to reports of cruelty, rescue animals in distress, and prosecute people who perpetrate cruelty. We shelter strays until they are claimed and try to find homes for unwanted or lost animals. Once people have experienced the love and devotion of a pet, they seldom want to be without one. We have beautiful animals needing homes and love.

We treat sick and injured rescued animals and provide subsidised veterinary services to the needy. We educate children and others regarding responsible pet ownership and the basic rights of animals. We offer good, affordable boarding kennels for dogs.

Animals are sentient beings and depend heavily on human kindness. It is our mission to promote respect and concern for all living creatures. Report cruelty to (031) 579 6501.



WE ALL HAVE TO GO!

This picture was sent us by Jenny Hoekstra, UK, who had received it from one of her clients who had just got back from visiting Zanzibar, where she took the photograph. The heading is hers. It is one of those once-in-a-lifetime pictures.



**READER'S
Precious Pet**

Dean says: "Here is Russ on his fourth birthday with his well-deserved birthday treat. He is such a sweet animal and blows me away with his love and loyalty. It is the precious, simple things like this that are really important in life, and Russ reminds me of that each day."

Driven by a dream

We would like to introduce you to one of our Bequest Society members, Michael Page, who has been involved in our SPCA for sixteen years. Michael was instrumental in providing funding that made it possible for us to establish our Dolphin Coast satellite branch.

These days he spends many hours volunteering at our Dog Box charity shop where he repairs donated electrical items that are then sold to raise funds for our work.

We all have dreams of what we would do were we suddenly to have a great deal of money. Michael dreams of being able to buy an island where all unwanted animals could be nurtured and live out their lives in safety. He imagines having trained vets to look after them.

It's just a dream of a situation that he would see as ideal, but dreams are important to those who are driven by their dreams to look passionately for situations in real life where they can make contributions that matter. What Michael does for the SPCA matters to him, and it certainly matters to us and the animals we do our best to protect.



Michael Page with his two beloved Pekingese, Emma and Eddie

National Wills Week

National Wills Week, which took place from 17-21 September last year, began in 2007 and has caught the attention of thousands of people around South Africa who had basic wills drawn up free of charge by qualified attorneys.

We were fortunate to be able to offer friends and supporters of our SPCA the expert services of Yvonne Boden of Garlicke & Bousfield. Yvonne heads the Estates and Trust department and is an expert in Estate planning and administration, and in Trust law. She is a member of the Durban & Coast SPCA Management Committee and deeply supports animal welfare. We greatly appreciate her generosity.

Having a few days every year when the focus is on the drawing up of Wills alerts many people to undertake the important duty of having a will drawn up. Don't forget to make provision for your pets in your Will.



We are sharing this photograph of Rainbow lorikeets sent to Jill Seldon of Berea by her brother-in-law Nigel Ashby, who lives in New South Wales, Australia. These beautiful little creatures frequent his bird table. Nigel is a bird-lover and says: "I feed them on a special lorikeet nectar powder mixed into mashed banana. These lorikeets are nectar feeders and also eat some soft fruit in the wild."

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