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MARCH 2011 NEWSLETTER

Mission: To improve the quality of life of underprivileged animals. We are concentrating on squatter camp animals and feral cats. Read more about both in our column **WHAT FOUR PAWS IS ABOUT** at the end of this newsletter. (Please also have a look at our current fundraising projects further down this letter).

Vision: To expand by obtaining more vehicles, employing more fieldworkers and operating from our own clinic.

SHELTER NEWS:

Our shelter is up and running, however, we have only been able to develop half of the land that was given to us, so far. Once again we have to ask for your help. We need to build more kennels and catteries to accommodate all our rescue animals! **Please help us raise funds to complete our shelter.** Any member of the public is welcome to visit our shelter between 9h00 to 14h00 weekdays and 10h00 to 13h00 on Saturdays. We also desperately need homes for all our homeless animals. Please consider giving a homeless animal a good home. **We are also in desperate need of (good quality) cat food.** Our animals come from the worst places and most of them suffer from severe malnutrition, so we need to nurse them to good health.

Below are some visuals of the cattery and dog kennels:



SQUATTER CAMP PROJECTS:

The main problem in these poor areas is that people simply do not have the means, transport or finances to provide their animals with basic health care and veterinary treatment. As a result, many animals suffer unnecessarily, while others die a slow, painful death. Ignorance plays a big role in animal cruelty. Overpopulation results in numbers no community can sustain, and many animals die from starvation.

We provide primary health care services, veterinary treatments and sterilisations, free of charge. We also educate pet owners about proper pet care.

Bapsfontein disaster update:

We recently shared the story with you about the disaster in Bapsfontein where a large section of Bapsfontein had been demolished and that the people forced to move away and leave their dogs behind! We managed to catch 16 dogs and puppies and took them to our shelter. Most of the dogs were very traumatized and bewildered, and we had to use our dog traps to trap them. The remaining residents told us that they were all informed that they have to move out soon.

We realized that we simply would not be able to accommodate all the Bapsfontein dogs and contacted **CLAW (Community Led Animal Welfare)** who in turn contacted **Wetnose**, and in a joint effort we went into Bapsfontein on 27 January, and managed to catch over 50 dogs and puppies! Our sincere thanks to **Wetnose** for taking the remaining dogs into their shelter. On another visit, we found 3 more abandoned adult dogs and 5 puppies. CLAW has continued working in the area and will keep Four Paws informed as they are monitoring the situation.

Our sincere thanks to each and every person who contributed to this project! We received donations from many people that we do not have contact details for. Please contact us if you have not received a personal thank you. **We desperately need homes for these dogs.** Please contact us if you can offer any of these dogs or puppies a good home.



Some of the abandoned dogs and puppies from Bapsfontein in our shelter

We previously shared with you the story of our **Brave Boy** that we discovered in Video Centre Township. We were not sure what had caused the severe wound on the dog, but it was confirmed by our vet, Dr Shelagh Hahn, that the dog had been SHOT! This poor dog had been in such severe pain and agony until we finally discovered him. His condition was really serious and we were not sure if he was going to survive.

Dr Hahn explained that the bullet had caused a huge amount of tissue damage, especially to the muscle and it kept on forming blood clots. The wound also kept on bleeding for many days before it eventually stopped. But, slowly but surely our brave boy started to heal.



He is STILL in desperate need of a loving home. Please contact us if you can offer him a home.

FERAL CAT PROJECTS: Feral cats are a direct result of humans, not sterilising their cats, starting many years ago. Cats and kittens ended up on the streets, multiplying even more. We trap, sterilise and release ferals and urge people to feed them. Ferals cannot be re-located due to their nature and adult ferals are almost impossible to tame.

We receive SEVERAL calls on a daily basis from people seeking assistance with ferals on their premises. The only humane way to deal with the feral problem is to trap, sterilise, release and feed them. (Read more about ferals at the bottom in **WHAT FOUR PAWS IS ABOUT.**)

We come across SO many sick or injured ferals and due to their nature, it is very difficult to catch them. **This black feral cat from Hillbrow**, in the picture below, had serious ringworm. **She had almost no hair left on her face.** Fortunately we managed to trap her and she is now recovering in our care.



After 2 weeks of treatment

The feral kitten (in the picture below), had only three legs when we found him. His right back leg is not even half a leg, (probably from a being caught in a snare) but fortunately it was already healed. He is indeed a lucky little cat, as serious wounds normally get infected with fatal results.



Unfortunately we have not been able to tame him yet, but as soon as we have succeeded, he will be looking for a good home!

Marley (in the picture below), was dumped on us as a *stray*, when in fact it was just another careless owner whose cat was not convenient anymore. **Marley is exceptionally affectionate and he is pining away in the shelter environment.** *Please, if anyone can offer him a home, contact us.*



These beauties (in the pictures below) **were left behind in a complex** when their owners moved away. They were ill-treated by other residents because they were entering peoples homes looking for food. Please, if you can offer a home to any of these cats, contact us.



CURRENT FUNDRAISING:

JUMBLE SALES:

Thank you to all who responded to our call for donations of jumble, a record amount was raised at the latest sale, due to the quality donations received, please contact us if you have jumble to donate (good condition ladies, mens (especially needed, clothing and shoes), childrens clothing, shoes, handbags, linen, curtains etc.).

T-SHIRTS:

Or why not support Four Paws by buying one of these colourful t-shirts:



Round necks, Lots of colours available, V Necks, Vests & kiddies shirts available. R105 adult shirts and R85 Kiddies. Can be collected at SAINTs book sales on 7 May, 28 May, 4 June (but only if ordered timeously beforehand, they are made to order not kept in stock) or can be posted anywhere in SA for an additional R25 (1 to 4 t-shirts). Email merinda@4ourpaws.org.za for an order form. **IMPORTANT:** please state in aid of Four Paws.

A very special thank you to ALL our donors: **You give us strength, courage and make it possible for us to continue our work! PLEASE, IF YOU HAVE NOT RECEIVED A PERSONAL THANK YOU, NOTIFY US.**

Many thanks to **Amy Groves** for doing our books free of charge, managing our Facebook, raising funds for us (as part of SAINTs), editing our newsletters and stories and being our personal advisor on many important issues.

Thank you to the ladies of **SAINTs** (Amy and Viv) for doing book and jumble sales, raffles and auctions and organizing events on a regular basis, for fundraising.

Thank you to **BWC** (Beauty without Cruelty), for sponsoring some of our sterilizations.

Thank you to **Alicia van Loggerenberg** for running our web site free of charge.

Thank you to **Ed Jackson** for auditing our books free of charge.

Thank you to **Pfizer** for their huge donation of dog and cat vaccines.

Thank you to our veterinarians, **Dr Shelagh Hahn (Blue Bush Animal Clinic)**, **Dr Grant Craig (Paulshof Veterinary Clinic)** and **Dr A S Leonard (Northriding Animal Clinic)** for doing sterilisations and treatments at reduced costs. Thank you also for re-homing some of our homeless animals.

WISH LIST:

- FINANCIAL SUPPORT
- Dog- and cat food (especially soft food for trapping ferals and de-worming dogs)
- Cat litter
- Carpets to cut up for blankets
- Cat litter trays
- Cleaning materials such as mops and brooms
- Medicines such as dip, de-worming, vaccines
- Sponsors for our dog kennels (plastic)
- Books for book sales
- Any item that can be used for raffles
- Jumble for jumble sales
- Another vehicle to transport animals

Please help us to help those who cannot speak for themselves by making a kind donation, supporting our fundraising initiatives and/or sharing this email with all your friends and family.

Banking details:

FOUR PAWS
Nedbank, Fourways
Branch code: 168405, Acc no: 1684110750

Many thanks to each and every supporter!
Kind regards

Merinda Brits
Founder and Chairperson

WHAT FOUR PAWS IS ABOUT:

Our aim is to improve the quality of life of underprivileged animals. In our urban surroundings there are two main categories: squatter camp animals and feral cats.

Squatter camp projects:

The problems with our underprivileged dogs and cats are:

- Malnutrition, insufficient shelter & a lack of food and water.
- Animals become sick and injured and there is no medical care available.
- Animals are knocked over by cars on the roads, because there are no fences.
- Dogs are put on chains mainly due to a lack of education and also because there are no fences.
- Animals are multiplying uncontrollably because there are no sterilisation programmes.
- Communicable diseases like distemper, parvo, snuffles, etc. are spreading, because animals are not vaccinated.
- Unwanted animals, especially litters of puppies and kittens, due to overpopulation.

What we do:

- Dipping and de-worming to prevent internal and external parasites.
- Intensive sterilisation campaigns to prevent overpopulation and straying of animals over the roads in mating seasons.
- Removal of unwanted animals and re-homing to suitable homes.
- Vaccination to prevent deadly diseases.
- Veterinary treatment for injuries and diseases.
- Education about proper pet care.
- Humane euthanasia of terminally ill animals.
- Instilling awareness and respect for animals and the environment.
- Confiscation of animals where intentional cruelty occurs.

Feral Projects :

Feral cats are a direct result of humans irresponsibility not to have their cats sterilised, starting many years ago. This has resulted in a huge overpopulation of cats and kittens living on the streets, multiplying even more.

The facts and problems with our underprivileged cats are:

- People want to get rid of ferals, when in fact it is impossible to get rid of them. There are many thousands of ferals living all over in our surroundings.
- Where ferals are removed, a void is created and ferals from other areas soon fill that void.
- A sterilised feral colony will not allow other ferals to move in
- Ferals keep the rat population under control, as rats are attracted to the same areas as ferals, normally where food is thrown away.
- Feeding ferals will ensure good health and minimize the spreading of diseases.
- Feeding ferals will not stop them from hunting rats, as hunting is a basic instinct.
- Ferals who are forced to live on rats, mice and left over food only, suffer from malnutrition and diseases.
- Ferals are being shot, poisoned and trapped & drowned all over by people.
- Ferals pose NO threat to humans
- Ferals cannot be re-located due to their nature, removing ferals therefore means killing them.

What we do:

- Trap, sterilise and release ferals.
- Educate people about ferals.
- Encourage people to take responsibility for ferals in their area and feed them.
- Trap as many feral kittens as we can, tame and re-home them, instead of letting them grow up on the streets. It is however, a very difficult and time-consuming process to tame feral cats.