

Friends of GAWT News Update

July 2009
Monsoon Days



Gawt Branches Out to Canacona

Goa Animal Welfare Trust - Canacona has developed very recently from a group of young dedicated animal welfare carers in Palolem. *International Animal Rescue* had been working for several years in Canacona but unfortunately had to close the facility. Now, after almost a two-year gap, with the commitment of a group of volunteers led by Janie O'Connor and Lana Croxon, this small but determined group has restarted the programme and begun tackling the stray dog problem. Already they have been raising funds, found premises for a Shelter, organised one permanent member of staff, Ramesh, who is the animal attendant, and they now have a small but effective working programme. Since January last with the help of our Cuchorim Care Centre vet and staff and our liaison volunteer, Radhika, they have been collecting and sterilising dogs from Palolem and Agonda beaches and working inland in the villages. As well as the Animal Birth Control (ABC) programme this dynamic team are running an adoption programme for puppies and dogs and also keeping a kennelling facility.

Particular thanks to Susan Singh who owns the Marbella Guest House in Sinquerim, north of Panjim, (www.marbellagoa.com) for her sustained interest in our work. She has sponsored Ramesh's salary for one year, and is helping out with feeding the dogs during the monsoon. Recently she offered Janie and Lana a night's stay and massage

Meantime, their fund-raising goes on, and thanks to the many people who have helped by giving prizes for raffles and donating time and services with the work of improving the Shelter. Thanks also to the large and smaller hotels, restaurants and

individual entrepreneurs and gift establishments. Congratulations to this great group, for their commitment to improving animal welfare and the environment for local people in Palolem and Agonda.

More good news! Recently GAWT signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Canacona Municipal Council and will actively pursue setting up a permanent project with the municipality after the monsoon.

Anthem for Goa's Stray Dogs

I'm a beach dog of Goa, I live on the sand
I eat when I can, my life's not too grand
I sleep all the day and I play in the sea
And nobody's master of me.

I'm a street dog of Goa, I live on the streets
I eat from the bins, no biscuity treats
I sleep by the roadside, in the dust and the sand
But I'm under nobody's command

I'm a puppy in Goa, I just want to play
I want someone to love me, but they walk away
My brothers are dead, so I'm all alone
Won't someone please take me home?

We are the dogs of Goa, we don't want too much
Just some water and food, and a friendly touch
We don't need pampering or too much fuss
So please be kind to us. .

We thank **Shelley Clarke** for sending us this lovely poem.



'Grandpa' - Recent arrival at the Canacona shelter. For more pictures see www.gawt.org

Check out our Website

www.gawt.org

We have recently updated the website to include video and photos of the Centre in action. In the 'Our Work' tab are last year's statistics on anti-rabies camps, adoptions, and sterilisations, all higher than previous years. And if you ever wondered what happens at an **anti-rabies camp**, (as well as up to 300 injections given each Sunday session), scroll down to the end of the article, and at: To *see lots more pictures from our camps click [here](#)*. Wonderful pictures of dogs with plenty of attitude. Also in our **Gallery** there is a new slideshow, *When Millie Met Velly* as well as **Marinetta's story**, the tale of a lovely pregnant stray who just couldn't cope when she went into labour. She gets a doula and it all ends happily.

In **Friends of GAWT** you will find the first of our series of recipes taken from our cookbook *A little taste of India*.

Fundraising

Fundraising during the holiday season took a different direction this time. To launch the season just before Christmas we organised a ticket only event at Tate Restaurant in Colva. There would be good food, good music, plenty of room to boogie the night away, raffles and the usual great buzz which is the hallmark of all our events. We were delighted when more than 100 friends and supporters came along all holding their tickets high and wanting to see, and buy, the new bags, diaries, caps and recipe books we had in the ad hoc shop we set up at Tate. Even by Goa norms it was a truly hot and humid night, and suddenly the whole room took up their tables and chairs and walked outside the restaurant where they arranged themselves comfortably in the lovely mild breeze (just inches from the passing traffic!) and settled in quickly for a great time!

We also ran a series of **Bring and Buy** Sales, again outside Tate Restaurant. We were supposed to 'open' for selling around 11 am but in fact the queues started to build at 9am and we brought forward the opening to 10am. We sold everything we were given, from new and nearly new clothes, spare washing machine parts, to a fax machine, old mobiles, curtains, clothes, old and new umbrellas, things we had no idea what they were for but the taxi drivers wanted. We had loads of GAWT volunteers on hand to keep the chaos orderly. As the day drew on the heat was relentless, and 'thank you' Tate for not only allowing us to use your outside area but also for keeping us well hydrated; indeed for all your help carrying tables and boxes when we were setting up. We stopped around 1 o'clock, and had very little left to carry back with us. We look forward to doing this again.

Join the Friends of GAWT/ 100+Club-it makes good sense.

We are heavily dependent on donations to carry out our work throughout the year. A relatively small amount of money in our terms goes a long way in Goa. Income from Friends of GAWT/ 100+ Club often makes the difference during the monsoon months, when we cannot fundraise, to take the vans out to feed and tend the strays. FOG also uses these funds to replace old and broken equipment for the Centre. Even in these recession times it is a very cost-efficient way to support us.

*For just Rs. 100/- per month (just over £1 / less than £1.5) you can become a member and you will also automatically be entered into the monthly prize draw.
1st Prize Rs. 750/- (€10) 2nd Prize Rs. 500/- (€6)
3rd Prize Rs. 300/- (€4)

Additionally, there is a grand year-end draw in December each year where the prizes are increased:

1st Prize Rs. 3,000/- (€40)

2nd Prize Rs. 1,500/- (€20)

3rd Prize Rs. 500/- (€6)

If you pay for 12 months in advance (about £15 sterling) you have two further months free of charge. It doesn't seem like a lot of money here, but it goes a long, way in Goa.

To complete an application form click www.gawt.org and go to the Friends of GAWT tab. Winners are posted on website and contacted by email. See also page 4 for latest winners.

When you have completed FOG form, save it and email to **UK Secretary Clodagh Corcoran** at: friendsofgawt@gawt.org

* Prize money is subject to currency fluctuations.



Keen interest in the Bring and Buy offers

Salsa

One of our most active volunteers, Radhika Wakharkar, tells us about the struggle to find help for her young dog, who suddenly lost all mobility in her hind legs.

"Salsa, our 18 months old Labrador, came to us when she was 9 weeks old. She loved the sea which was close-by. When she was about 8 months old, we had her spayed. Surgery went well and she was up and about in under 24 hours. We first noticed that she was dragging her right hind leg after about a week. The vet took a blood test which confirmed that she had a viral infection and an antibiotic was prescribed. The following day she started dragging her left hind leg as well and eventually was just collapsing on her hind legs - nearly totally paralysed. We were advised to take her for a second opinion, and she had more antibiotics plus other medication. We travelled back and forth for almost 7 weeks, and although there was a remarkable initial improvement, she suddenly relapsed overnight on two occasions. We were devastated. Because Salsa was still growing, and getting no exercise she was now putting on weight and getting heavier by the day. Lifting her every few hours to take her out to do her 'business' was taking a huge toll on Shrikant, my husband, and I. There was a point where we thought we may have to put her down, as it seemed like we'd come to the end of options for her.

"Our dear friend Grace Kare offered to keep Salsa at the GAWT Animal Care Centre at Curchorem for some time so that we could get a much-needed break, and catch up on our regular work. This also gave us an opportunity to sit back and think where we were going from here with our beautiful dog.

"Anup - one of the boys at the centre - was given responsibility for looking after her. He was with her the entire time, but whenever he left her room for even 5 minutes, she'd bring the entire place to a stop with her howls. Grace suggested putting one of the home dogs with her for company. So Kukur, a big friendly dog, joined her in her room. Salsa immediately grew attached to Kukur and in time they became best friends, unwilling to be separated from each other. Once she settled down, I began visiting her twice each week. She loved hanging out with all passers-by.

"During a visit to Bombay I met a senior veterinarian surgeon, who suggested I try acupuncture. And, as luck would have it, soon after I returned to Goa I met Dr. Johnathon Dao, a naturopath and acupuncture specialist, He'd never had a canine patient before and so he took a few days to study the anatomy before taking her on. He

visited the GAWT Centre and with their vet, Dr. Jairam, they figured out the points that needed to be stimulated. Johnathon trained Dr. Jairam to treat Salsa, on a regular basis' and he would make routine visits once a week. The treatment took a couple of weeks to show signs of improvement and it was really encouraging to see how she began to respond.

"Salsa stayed at the shelter for a couple more months. She was now full size and much too heavy for me to lift or move her about. I was lucky enough to find a young boy living close to our home, who initially went up to the shelter for a few weeks to get fully trained and comfortable with her and learn her routine. The two of them took to each other instantly and share a special bond. And so Salsa came home to us and we gradually increased her activities. She started swimming in the local river - initially she seemed to have forgotten what to do in the water - but she now swims on her own for 15-20 minutes. She is still unable to stand on her hind legs but we are working towards it, as her legs are definitely stronger than they have been in the last few months. We also have a custom-made doggie wheel cart which gives Salsa the required exercise and more freedom of movement and independence. She is very happy these days and continues to bring us such joy.

11th July Update on Salsa

"Salsa is going up to GAWT Centre at Curchorem tomorrow with her carer as we are visiting Bombay for a few days. We are not so stressed with her routine and needs now. She's improving but at a snail's pace. We have jumps and then plateaux with her healing process and I guess we must just ride the wave." Radhika.

We will keep you informed about Salsa's progress but if you want to write to Radhika you should contact her through friendsofgawt@gawt.org.



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