

Friends of GAWT News Update



Goodbye and Hello

Last year we had a very successful fund-raising season. Four events, well supported by Friends of GAWT and tourists, raised over Rs/118,000 in profit, all of which was put into our Building Fund.

As our lease on the current Shelter runs out soon we are anxious to purchase land and a new Shelter. The Trustees are currently looking at various properties to assess their suitability.

We really need help with this project and if you are interested in supporting us, we have placed a donation order form on our website for your consideration.

At the end of the season we all said a sad farewell after four years to Linda and Graeme Cree, who have worked so hard to give the Charity a cohesive and recognisable 'face'.

Linda took on the daunting task of organising all events and her great skills in planning and marketing meant that every single event raised substantial funds for our projects. Her branding skills also covered all design work, including our new logo above.

Graeme set up and continues to run our excellent website. His wit and clarity lightened many a tense and frustrating planning and policy meeting, and his ability to cut through 'committee fog' and refocus all those present was quite an experience. In addition he was responsible for organising the music at all our events and he gave us some fantastically enjoyable evenings of dancing.

Both Linda and Graeme always went the extra mile for GAWT, and when they returned to the UK they left us in very good shape indeed.

Excellence is the result of caring more than others think is wise, risking more than others think is safe, dreaming more than others think is practical, and expecting more than others think is possible

We also said goodbye to Tim and Julia Spotswood. Both have been very good friends to GAWT over many years. Tim spent several working holidays at the Shelter operating alongside our own vets, updating clinical practise, advising and helping the volunteers and donating much needed medicines and equipment for our work. When in the UK they undertook to raise funds for us including holding coffee mornings locally. We thank them for their enormous generosity and their gift of time.

Friends of GAWT

Early in April, we were contacted by Pauline Morgan a veterinary student at the Elmwood College in Scotland, who wanted information on our work. Linda Cree sent her off our specially designed information pack.

Then Pauline wanted to have a fundraising day for us, and her enthusiasm was so infectious that we arranged to import t-shirts, cookery books etc from Goa (brought in to UK by returning friends) for her to sell. The rest she and her team did themselves. Below is her story.

After researching the amazing work that GAWT does and feeling very positive about it, I realised that this was something the students in the Animal Care Department of Elmwood College could get involved in. In fact at the time, we were researching the affects of rabies and how it can be easily prevented with vaccinations and good education.

After great feedback from the other students we had no problem in forming a committee. We had meetings every week during lunch where we discussed various options for fundraising. It didn't take us long to decide to utilise the college open day which attracts several thousand visitors each year. This was the first time any of us had organised an event and it was certainly a learning curve. We learned to utilise our skills, overcome obstacles and most importantly - bang a few heads together!

From the middle of April to the end of May, we had formed a committee, contacted companies for raffle prizes, obtained a lottery license, designed posters, organised the printing of raffle tickets plus much more. We were positively amazed by the support we received from local businesses and companies who donated loads of prizes including family day out tickets, paintings, champagne, spirits, 'meals for two' vouchers, even designer dog jackets!

If we were ever feeling stressed or when things seemed to be going wrong it always picked us up when we received a prize for the raffle. An exceptional high came when we received a prize worth £400 for the 5-star Old Course Golf Resort and Spa Hotel in St Andrews. We decided to put it to auction to raise more money. It was also a big help receiving emails from Linda and Clodagh, the UK GAWT contacts, which gave us great encouragement (continued).

We had pride of place at the front of the college, where we even had two golden retrievers helping us attract the crowds. We had a cake and candy stall at the college farm, tombola at the main college along with an information stand selling charity goods and raffle tickets. By the end of a very busy day a lot more people knew about the excellent work that GAWT does. We exceeded our expectations and raised £1,600. This gave us the push to start thinking about what we can do for GAWT next time."

Our huge thanks to Pauline & the team

If any of our friends and supporters want to try fundraising for us, we have a new fundraiser's pack full of great ideas to help you. Just email info@gawt.org

News from the Shelter

The rains have come with a vengeance this year. They never stop. Feeding the stray dogs in Margao and on the beaches is a logistical merry-go-round, but our staff and volunteers just get on with it.



This is a good time to pick up stray pups and kittens and bring them back to the Shelter for sterilisation and some TLC. We run the puppy adoption camps throughout the year, so many of them find a good home.

The shelter itself looks as if it is turning into a refugee camp - which of course in some ways it is already - as we have protected all the kennels with blue heavy plastic sheeting to keep out the rain and cold.

Over the years we have found ourselves looking after sick cats and kittens who 'adopt' us. We sterilise them, return them to good health but they just won't leave. Last year Nanu Resort in Betalbatim donated a large enclosure for them - a huge cage which has cat-size airy shelves all round the walls at different levels so that the cats and kittens can sleep comfortably. In the morning we open their door and they wander out to see what's going on in the world outside, but, come the sunset, they all troop back in, have their food, and settle for the night on their beds. The extraordinary thing is that the dogs in the compound more or less ignore them and their imperious ways.

We reached a milestone

In March this year, when we hit our sterilisation target of 1500 stray dogs during the previous 12 months. We estimate that we have prevented the births of at least 75,000 unwanted puppies over the next two years. During this time we have also held 25 anti-rabies camps in villages near Margao and vaccinated more than 3,300 strays and private dogs.

Fun-Runs

Later this year the UK Friends of GAWT are putting together a team to run in the 2006 Hydro Active Women's Challenge 5K run on 3rd September. This event takes place simultaneously in London, Liverpool and Birmingham. If you are interested in either running or sponsoring someone to run, please contact me at press.office@gawt.org. I participated last Sunday in the All Women's Breakfast 5K mini-marathon along the London embankment. Because of a disability I cannot run, but with much huffing and puffing completed the 5K course in 58 minutes 10 seconds, walking. The course had to be completed within one hour.

If you are in Goa in early January we are having an early morning 5K Fun-Run along the beach starting from Benaolim and heading towards Majorda. Tickets and entry forms will be available from the Charity Shop in Colva from early December and local hotels, or from our web site. All monies raised will go towards the purchase of land and the building of the much-needed new Shelter. If you are in Goa, do please join us, or if you want to sponsor someone, please contact me as above.

We have had three articles published this year, two written by me and one by Grace Kare, Shelter Administrator and new GAWT Vice - President. They were all in the Goa Herald (www.Herald.com) which we have placed on the website (www.gawt.org).



The Good Life

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