

# NEWSLETTER: AUGUST 2011. VAWZ/MERYL HARRISON

**EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY OF MERYL HARRISON : APRIL 2010- END JUNE 2011**  
**(COMPILED BY MEL HOOD - VAWZ'S ANIMAL WELFARE OFFICER)**

**LIVESTOCK TRANSPORTATION (73 CASES) LIVESTOCK INVESTIGATIONS (40 CASES).**



The picture above says it all!! Sometimes, under these cattle are also goats/sheep. VAWZ stopped this truck recently going through Headlands. The owner was subsequently prosecuted, pleaded guilty, and was fined. Investigations consist of checking inhumane living conditions; health; feeding; dipping etc.

**ABATTOIR CHECKS (14 CASES).** Enforcement of the use of stun guns as opposed to ordinary rifles/more humane treatment prior to slaughter.

**SECURITY DOGS (53 CASES).**

Checks on Police, Private and Municipal security dogs. In some cases appalling living conditions with confines made out of old cars, scrap metal, fridge doors etc. Constant checks to ensure they comply with decent kennelling, feeding, exercise, and training methods

**PET SHOPS/DOG PARLOURS (21 CASES).**

Regular routine checks carried out to ensure correct welfare standards are maintained at all times.

**RESEARCH ANIMALS (14 CASES).**

Routine checks on the Animal House at the University Research department, and the Government Analysts to see that welfare standards are maintained in their housing and feeding, and experiments are being carried out according to strict standards, experiments are licensed and are carried out as humanely as possible.

**HORSES (35 CASES).**

Inspections of those kept on farms; tourist resorts, stud farms and riding schools.

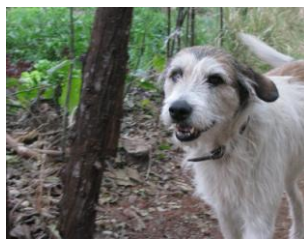
Checking for adequate grazing and feeding, stabling, health care, saddle sores, and tack. Prosecuting offenders.

**WILD ANIMALS IN CAPTIVITY (26 CASES)**

VAWZ has been involved recently in several investigations of suspected cruelty involving lions kept in captivity. Several lions were humanely destroyed. One owner is facing prosecution.

**DOMESTIC DOGS (150 CASES)**

Responding to numerous reports of cruelty; animals being neglected, kept in inhumane conditions, un-spayed bitches etc. Where possible owners are educated and warned, failing which the pets are confiscated and taken to the SPCA.



**This delightful dog is Basil** who was found tied up in a chicken run, with no food or water, on Christmas Eve, whilst the owners went away on holiday. On her return VAWZ prosecuted the owner, who admitted to the charge of Cruelty and paid a fine. Basil now shares his new home, as well as the mattress by the bed, with "Petunia" a very large Nubian goat!; loves going for long walks and has sort of taken over the place. His new owners are besotted with him – even the husband who professed "not to be too much of a dog lover"- was recently heard to say "you know- I cannot fault that dog"!!

**DONKEYS** – (one of the biggest on-going operations) –Meryl and Bernard can spend up to 5 days away from base confiscating illegal heavy wooden yokes, which leave the huge raw open sores on the back of the neck, and replacing them with donated harnesses. The wounds on the donkeys are treated, eye problems attended to, reflective strips put on the back of the carts and education pamphlets in the

vernacular distributed. Up to 70-80 donkeys can be attended to in any one day, sometimes in temperatures in the upper 30's and once recorded 46 degrees C at Ngundu Halt.

### **PRE AND POST HOMING CHECKS (45 CASES)**

Involving all animals that have been rescued or confiscated and taken to SPCA's. Prospective new homes are inspected and post homing checks carried out to ensure the animals are being correctly cared for.

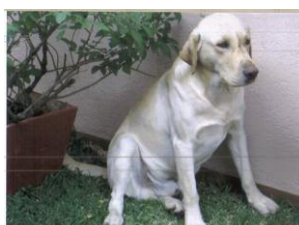
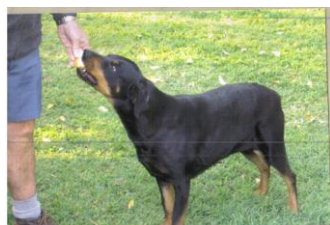
### **GENERAL.**

Every opportunity is taken to leave copies of the Cruelty Act at Police Stations throughout Zimbabwe – where often not even the Member in Charge Crime has a copy. Further liaison with the Police and Government Vet departments has resulted in Meryl being invited to address several workshops. In addition she works closely with the Police Anti Stock Theft Unit in a joint effort to raise awareness and deal with problems involving livestock transportation.

Prosecutions, which entail writing of dockets, recording statements, gathering evidence and attendance at court cases, continues to take up a lot of time as numerous follow-ups have to be conducted before a case goes to trial. To date 17 assorted cruelty cases have been successfully prosecuted, with 12 remaining.

SPCA branches throughout Zimbabwe have been assisted by VAWZ with donations of rice, mealie meal, meat, blankets, syringes & needles, medicines, latex gloves, bowls, leads, chicken food etc and through the generosity of Roger Maitland, a friend of hers in the UK, Meryl has distributed US\$3866 of his to various branches. She has also been instrumental in getting 3 2<sup>nd</sup> hand deep freezers donated to Harare, and one each for Gweru and Mutare SPCA's.

In many cases lack of education is to blame for welfare issues. Pamphlets and advice on “how to do it the right way” are given and most people are grateful for the assistance offered. On the flip side, aggression, racism, threats, verbal, and on occasion, physical abuse has to be dealt with.



“SANDY & BEANS”

“Dear Meryl,

These are the photo's of our two dogs (the ones that were axed by the settlers who were successfully prosecuted) and are now fine. Thank you very much for all your help.

Ann Martin”

### **MERYL.**

Somewhere in between all of this Meryl has found time to attend to various fund-raisers, collect donated items, judge dog shows, deal with publicity campaigns, give interviews and write articles for the press, do necessary paper work at the office, reply to a constant stream of e-mails and respond to numerous phone calls throughout the day. **Little wonder that she has very little time to herself and that the vehicle has clocked up 45000 kilometres in a year.**

### **THANK YOU'S.**

To the organisers of the Harare Bike show, Mike Engelbrecht and Brett Fisher, for the very generous donation of \$1000 from proceeds raised at the show. VAWZ stall raised a further \$900 and helped raise public awareness.

To all VAWZ Committee and helpers who assisted at the Fundraising Golf Day – a HUGE thankyou. Just over \$12000 was raised which was brilliant as VAWZ receives no funding and relies solely on the goodwill of donors. To all the players – a very big thank you.

For all donations, generosity and time – Big thank you's to:-

To Margie van Graan and Joey Friere who recently generously donated 2 second hand deep freezers.

Nicky Marsh (Australia); Cindy Griffith (UK); Sue Burr; Arnie and Cora Ross; Jenny McFadyen (SA); Big R Mica – Ronnie Coumbis; RSPCA International; Signs of the Times; Brian and Linda Townsend; Rudolph van der Merwe – Caltex garage Beit Bridge; Rosemary Dorward; Lindsay Davies; Mbizi Game Lodge; Roxy Dankwerts; Di Twiggs; Trevor Rumbles; Ram Petroleum.

**YOUR SUPPORT FOR VAWZ IS SO VERY MUCH APPRECIATED – WE HAVE SO MANY MORE ANIMALS TO HELP. FUNDING IS DESPERATELY NEEDED – WITHOUT IT WE CANNOT PREVENT CRUELTY.**

**Any Donations would be gratefully received and can be dropped off at Kamfinsa, Avondale or Chisipite surgeries – or contact Meryl on 0774168218.**

**Details of the local account is : CABS Platinum; The Veterinarians of Animal Welfare Trust; a/c No 9015153557.**

**External Account details: Standard Bank, Graaf -Reinet in name of Verinarians for Animal Welfare in Zimbabwe; a/c No 186623062; Swift No SBZA.ZA.JJ IBAN No 051001`.**

**Direct transfers may be made via [www.standardbank.co.za](http://www.standardbank.co.za)**