



# HERMANUS ANIMAL WELFARE SOCIETY

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## Chairperson Report 2023/2024

I really tried to keep my report short. However, there is so much to comment on so I ask for your patience and hope my report will be of interest to most.

Time flies when you are busy and the HAWS team has been kept very busy over the past year. In order to give you some idea how busy HAWS has been, here are some interesting facts:

- Surrendered, confiscated, lost, and animals brought in by Law Enforcement during the past financial year: 651
- Adoptions: 354 (cats and dogs)
- Total population of cats and dogs at HAWS during this year – 1190 which averages out to approximately 100 animals per month
- Sterilizations – 1022 - I would like to mention that for seven months of this financial year, we only had the services of a veterinarian for 3 mornings a week
- Vaccinations – 1428
- Visits to our clinic – 7572 which averages out to 631 visits per month
- Number of animals treated from our fund for “needy pets” – 444 plus 781 sterilizations which were done at no charge
- Community food purchased for the year – 28,459 kg

Our clinic has been hard pressed to cope with all the demands of the community. There are just not enough hours in the day and our clinic team work tirelessly to handle all the patients. We have been accused of not helping animals in need. I would like to again mention that although we do have a “Clinic for Needy Pets” fund, and this fund is for the truly needy pet owners, it is financially impossible for us to provide free treatment to all the animals. Our clinic expenses each month are on average over R190000.00 with an average clinic income of only R71000.00. This is not sustainable and owners of pets must therefore make some contribution, no matter how small, towards the cost of the treatment for their animals. All the animal welfares and NSPCA offices adopt this same policy. Pet owners need to understand it costs to own a pet and there are clinic fees which have to be paid.

Haws also has a policy that unless an animal is sterilized, we will not assist with any treatment. We have been severely criticized for this policy. Accused of not helping sick animals, despite owners refusing to sterilize their pets. Never mind the By-Laws which clearly state all female cats and dogs have to be sterilized. So, what do we do? We help the sick dog in need. Owner claims he has no money to pay for the immediate treatment and provides a false contact address and telephone number. The treated dog goes back to owner who then uses this poor dog as a puppy mill. Now what? Unless HAWS adopts our sterilization

policy, we are creating more problems and this we are not prepared to do.

Education regarding ownership of pets and pet care is vital. Teaching compassion for animals is also so necessary and, whilst we may not be able to change the attitude of some adults, we firmly believe education starts with the children. I am very pleased to report that our education project is well in hand under the leadership of Sheetal Gordhan in conjunction with Rinaldi Meyer and our staff member, Razah Takesure. During the period January – March, a period of only three months, we touched the lives of 156 children and hopefully they will be able to carry forward our teachings.

The past year has been a very successful one as far as fund raising is concerned. For the new member who mentioned on social media she sees no fund raising from HAWS, perhaps I can enlighten her in this regard.

- The collection boxes which you see at most retail outlets, all these funds are used towards our “sterilization” and “clinic for needy pets” projects
- Every Saturday, we are fortunate to be given the opportunity of show-casing our kittens and puppies at the Country Market. Not only do we achieve many adoptions from this platform, the public are also generous in donating money
- Our “Cat Café” where all the proceeds go towards fund raising
- Many members who celebrate their birthdays ask that in lieu of gifts, cash or animal food donations be made to HAWS
- Rotary and other businesses rallied together in order to raise funds to help HAWS on Mandela Day on 18 July. Money was donated which enabled HAWS to purchase food for the many needy animals in the community.
- In September, a very successful tea and cake morning was held.
- This was followed by our golf day in October.
- A bridge drive was held in November which too was successful.
- The organizer of the Long Table event arranged for a raffle to be held for HAWS, the draw being done in November. A large amount of money was raised from this raffle.
- Our street collection was held a few days before Christmas.
- Another mini street collection was again held in March

Our fund-raising efforts raised a staggering amount of over R335 540.00 and I am sure most will agree this is an admirable amount.

We have invited Inspector Gillion from Law Enforcement as a guest speaker tonight. He will impart valuable information on the role of Law Enforcement and HAWS.

To all those wonderful volunteers who help pamper the cats and walk the dogs, a huge thank you. I know it is not easy walking the dogs as most do not walk well on leashes. However, these dogs do love their daily walks and wait impatiently in their cages for you to arrive. A special thank you to Nick Kleynhans who not only collects and replaces the collection boxes at the retail outlets, he then also counts all the coins and notes and then banks the money. A huge task!

This is my last annual report for HAWS as I am stepping down as Chairperson. This is not because of a statement made on the 4<sup>th</sup> July to one of our committee members, and I quote:

"those old people in charge need to go". I am leaving because I choose to do so. I have done my time, given of my best and am very proud of what has been achieved over the past number of years.

I have been involved with HAWS for 9 years. Started off as a volunteer with the dogs and cats. In 2016 persuaded to take on the role as secretary on the committee. This was followed by a stint as Vice Chairperson and in 2018 elected as Chairperson.

Occupying this important position has been challenging, to say the very least. At times, it has been heart breaking with many sleepless nights. Having to face unfound criticism and insults against HAWS by a small group of people is so sad and unnecessary. Having to face threats being made by these cyber bullies against a staff member is also unacceptable. Sure, we may have dropped the ball on a few occasions. However, consider our limited resources and the fact that our staff have been extremely busy dealing with an intake of 1190 animals in the year. Our staff do their very best and, under the leadership of the general manager, we will continue to strive to give of our very best.

In saying all this, it has not been all doom and gloom. There has been happiness, joy, laughter, hope and, above all, gratefulness to our loyal supporters and regular donors who give us such hope for the future. A huge thank you to these people. We could not survive without your support.

I certainly could not have handled this post without the loyal support of my fellow committee members, in particular Marlene Deneeghere. I wish the new incoming committee all the very best for the future and trust they will keep HAWS in safe and reliable hands.

I also want to thank the HAWS staff for their loyalty, hard work and co-operation. It has been a pleasure working with you. I am going to miss you all and wish you the very best for the future.

Thomas Paine said that real men and women smile in times of trouble, gather strength from distress and grow braver by reflection.

Pamela Quinn  
AGM – 22 July 2024