

CARING *for* IRELAND'S CREATURES

THE IRISH SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS—RESCUES, REHABILITATES AND RE-HOMES IRELAND'S NEEDIEST ANIMALS.

“The worst sin towards our fellow creatures is not to hate them, but to be indifferent to them. That’s the essence of inhumanity.”

— George Bernard Shaw

Since 1949, the Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ISPICA) has worked across the island of Ireland assisting neglected and cruelly-treated animals. The organization is run by full-time staff and also benefits from the work of five animal welfare inspectors who respond to reports of neglect or abuse. Often, these inspectors can resolve issues with owners and educate them as well. But in many cases, the animals must be removed from neglectful owners and given a second chance at life through veterinary care and rehabilitation. The ISPICA also operates Ireland’s only confidential animal cruelty hotline which receives thousands of calls a month from concerned citizens.

Thanks in part to the generosity of an Ireland Funds’ donor with a keen interest in animal welfare, the ISPICA continues its much-needed work and valuable services in Ireland. *Connect* magazine spent the day in Keenagh, Co. Longford at the ISPICA National Animal Centre with horses, dogs, cats, pot-bellied pigs and other animals that have been lucky enough to find their way into the care and concern of this unique organization.

Anya



in April 2011



in June 2011



During the boom years in Ireland, many people bought horses. Today, in the economic downturn, the ISPCA receives numerous tips and calls about horses that are neglected by owners that can no longer afford to care for them. On the day Connect magazine visited, five horses were brought in from Co Offaly. ISPCA Inspector Brendan Hughes had responded to a confidential call made by a concerned member of public. The horses were in terrible condition, emaciated and covered in lice. But today, all five horses are in the care of the ISPCA's Victor Dowling Equine Rescue Centre in Co Cork and they are expected to recover with care.



Molly *the pony*

Overgrown equine hooves are an ongoing problem that the ISPCA encounters. Owners of horses and ponies neglect the care of the animal's feet and this can cause tremendous pain for the animal. At times, the resulting damage to their tendons and ligaments can be so severe the animal may need to be put down. But when the ISPCA can intervene early enough, the ending is much happier. These hooves were removed from a small pony named Molly. After many months of care she has been successfully re-homed with a family in Co Wexford where she is happy and healthy.



This is Brooke. The ISPCA learned that the young terrier was being used for "badger-baiting", an illegal practice of sending small dogs down badger holes in order to catch the badgers. The result is a violent encounter that results in harm, and sometimes death, to both the dog and the badger. When they found Brooke, she was being kept in a shed by her owner and severe injuries to her jaw and neck from the badger-baiting had been untreated. Once in the care of the ISPCA however, she healed beautifully. Despite the cruel treatment she once endured, her gentle and affectionate temperament has made an impression on those caring for her. Today, Brooke has found a new life serving as a therapy dog for the elderly residents of a nursing home in Roscommon.

Brooke *the dog*



Tibbles the kitten

At the ISPCA National Animal Centre, cats are housed in a sunny “cattery” building where up to 50 felines can enjoy both shelter and sunshine. After receiving needed veterinary care, the Centre works to match cats with loving homes.

Frankie the pig was found in Wexford. His previous owners had wrapped barbed wire around his snout to keep him from rooting around. Today, he is healed and happy in the care of the ISPCA.

Frankie the pig

THE UNIQUE CHALLENGE OF THE ISPCA

Because the ISPCA cares for all types of animals, but in particular animals that have experienced abuse or neglect, space at the National Centre in Co Longford and the Equine Rescue Centre in Co Cork is always at a premium. Many animals must remain in their care for extended periods of time while court proceedings are pursued against their former owners. Rehabilitation for these animals, particularly horses and ponies, can be expensive and lengthy. Yet the volunteers and staff of this organization bring compassion and dedication to their work with thousands of animals in need.

