

Editorial

Things have been very quiet at ECC since the last newsletter. We had a visit at the beginning of March from the out-going High Sheriff of Bedfordshire, Cynthia Gresham, who is very interested in our work. She gave us some useful contacts for fundraising which could prove important in the future. The new High Sheriff, Mr D Hanbury of Turvey, should be visiting us soon. His wife, Mrs Celia Hanbury is also very interested in our work and regularly holds fundraising events for RDA.

Our treasurer, Allan Bennett, and our solicitor, Anthony Northey, are still working hard towards changing the status of the Centre to a charitable company, rather than just a charity. If you want to find out more about this please come to the AGM on July 21st at Bromham village hall, 7.30 for 8.00. Anyone can come to the AGM, but only paid-up members can vote!

Some of you may have noticed a new pedestrian gate in our front fence. This will be part of the emergency evacuation route from the back of the indoor school. During the Summer holiday we hope to install the path which will lead to it.

At the end of February, the then Shadow Minister for Disability, Mark Harpur, and Richard Fuller, then prospective candidate for Bedford and Kempston, came on a fact finding visit. We told them some of the things that would make our lives easier - less red tape, no VAT, employers giving staff paid time off for volunteering; I wonder if any of these things will happen now that their party is in power, (sort of)?

We have had two successful ventures recently. One was the introduction of the little money boxes. We thought people would use these to collect their small change but some have been taken to various work places and one has been returned with over £17 in it! The first four boxes back made a donation of £33.33 to the Centre. Well done and many thanks to all of you who are participating in this scheme.

The second venture was to contact Bedfordshire on Sunday to ask them to help us recruit more volunteers. They sent reporter, Keeley Knowles and photographer, Keiran, to a Tuesday morning session. The resulting article brought about a response which far exceeded our expectations. For about ten days the phone didn't stop ringing with people wanting to help. We have probably spoken to 45 people who would like to join our splendid team. Welcome to all of you and we hope that your time with us will last for years and be a very happy and fulfilling experience.

Finally, a very big thank you to all those lovely people who have taken over some of the fundraising and management jobs - clothing, website, membership secretary, supplies and newsletter mail-outs. Your efforts are much appreciated.

Jan

Ponies

All of the ponies are well at the moment. Bonny has settled happily into her new home. Chunky is still on his "race horse" diet with lots of vitamins and supplements which he likes very much. What he doesn't like is that we now have to restrict his intake of grass to prevent him getting any fatter. He is in the back field with Silver, another one who gets fat on fresh air, to make sure neither of them end up with laminitis, a fatal condition in horses. We had a bit of a scare with Huggy with colic. He was very poorly for about a week but very considerately managed to be ill during half term. He is fine now.

We have also noticed a change in Muscadeu's behaviour. He has started nudging people with his nose and sniffing round pockets. Has some-one forgotten our very strict no titbits rule? Nudging is not a big problem for able bodied people, but you can imagine the result if he tried it with somebody who struggled with their balance. If you wish to give ponies a treat, it must be handed to the grooms to be included in their normal feeding regime though none of our ponies need extra food - quite the reverse in most cases. **Remember, strictly no titbits from the hand.**

Finally, Kirsty and Terri are running a training session for helpers at the start of the September term. It will probably be on Thursday 2nd or 9th of September 2010. This is open to volunteers from all sessions and Kirsty will be putting up a sign-up sheet before the end of term.

Centre Clothing

Some of you may have noticed that we have a new catalogue for Centre clothing, hanging in the school. This includes our usual sweatshirts, polo and t-shirts but has a new fleece jacket and a different style of rugby shirt. The new rugby shirt comes in lots more colours than previously, is slightly tailored and is of better quality material. It is also more accurately sized. There are samples of the fleece jacket and the rugby shirt in the tack room for you to look at. Ordering is now via Caroline, a Wednesday morning helper.

Fundraising

20th Feb Quiz night raised £97.20
18th April Table top sale at Bromham Village Hall raised £14.30
8th May Toy shop at Wootton Fun Day raised £122.20
23rd May Toy Shop at Shuttleworth College raised £110.10

Donations

Where would we be without the generosity of our supporters? This year we have had £50 from the Bromham Show Committee, £72.93 from Kyle Palmer, a regular donation of £500 from our friends the Harradines, £500 from June Miller in memory of her daughter which was used to buy a new saddle for Bonny, £500 from Mr. Caruso and a splendid £3,100 from the Bedford Lions. There have also been many small donations, mostly anonymous.

Forthcoming Events

12th June Collection at Sainsbury's, Clapham road, Bedford. Sign-up sheet in the school.

13th June Open Farm at Manor Farm, Stagsden. A super day out for the kids. We are doing pony rides from 10.00 - 12.00; sign up sheet for helpers in the school. We are also taking the Toy Shop for the whole day, 10.00 - 4.00, volunteer shop keepers welcomed.

19th June Collection in Olney town centre. Sign-up sheet in the school.

26th June Launch of Abbey Llamas at Turvey- therapeutic walking with llamas and alpacas. Taking Toy Shop, 10.00 - 2.00, volunteer shop keepers welcomed.

27th June Parklands Residents Association Open Gardens, starting from the Sensory Ride, 2.00 - 4.00. Plants and books for sale.

3rd July Open Day at ECC, 2.00 - 4.00, lots of stalls and pony rides, weather permitting. Look out for sign-up sheet for stalls.

11th July Bromham Show. Toy Shop in the Craft Tent.

21st July AGM at Bromham Village Hall 7.30 for 8.00 p.m. In the main hall at no extra cost, due to booking problems.

15th August Fete at St John's, Moggerhanger (Sue Ryder Care) Taking Toy Shop - 70/80's theme!

10th Sept Hunter Trials at Carlton. Sign-up sheet up before end of term!

9th Oct Quiz, Bromham Village Hall.

Term dates for Bedfordshire Schools

The Centre usually runs according to the school timetable but sessions may vary. Please check with individual instructors.

Summer term ends on Wednesday 21st July 2010

Autumn term will commence on Thursday, 2nd September. ECC will probably start on Monday 6th September 2010

Autumn Term ends on Friday 17th December

Half term is 25th - 29th October 2010

Wednesday 1st September and Monday 1st November are both Teacher Training days and may affect riding. Please check with Terri.