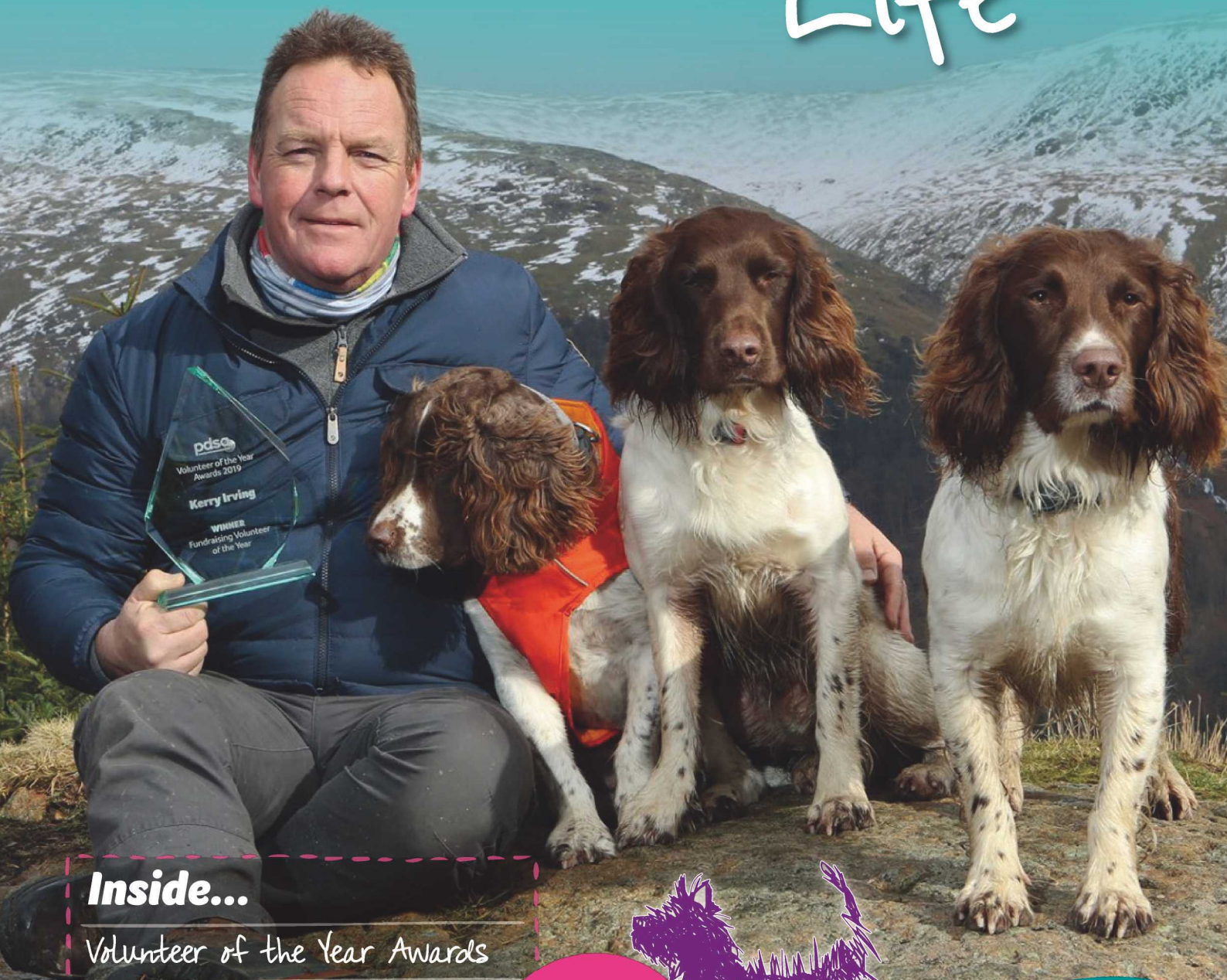


SPRING 2020

The magazine for PDSA volunteers

VOLUNTEER *Life*



Inside...

Volunteer of the Year Awards

Join us on Facebook

Volunteering can change
your life

PLUS
**Ask the
Vet** - Your
questions
answered



pdsa
SAVING PETS CHANGING LIVES

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WELCOME

Dear Volunteers

I hope you are all well and staying safe during these unprecedented times.

When I began writing this welcome column some time ago, who would have thought we'd find ourselves in this current situation? Being at home, self-isolation, social distancing – all providing us with many challenges in our daily lives.

Even though we've had to temporarily close some of our sites, that doesn't mean we've forgotten about you, our wonderful volunteers. Far from it. In fact, we want to keep in touch with you right through this crisis and beyond and see you back in our shops, Pet Hospitals, offices and Fundraising Groups very soon.

We couldn't do what we do without you and we'd like to give you something back in the form of your very own magazine – *Volunteer Life* – which takes over from *PDSA News*.

It's all about volunteers and volunteering, giving you a chance to read about each other and what everyone is doing for PDSA. I hope you enjoy it and don't forget to let



us know what you think too. We're happy to hear your ideas.

We don't know how long this situation will last, but once it's safe to re-start our volunteering activity, we really hope you'll decide to come and support us. Don't forget you can keep in touch with each other through our Facebook Volunteers Group.

**facebook.com/groups/
pdsavolunteers**

Look after yourselves and stay safe.

Jan

Jan McLoughlin | Director General



Sparkling in electrical

Our volunteers bring all kinds of skills to PDSA and in one shop we've even got a qualified electrician!

Not only has Chris Chapman been at Market Harborough for just over a year, his expertise has boosted sales of electrical items leading him to be nominated as one of our 2019 Retail Volunteers of the Year.

Initially, Chris helped with steaming and serving customers until it transpired that he's a qualified electrician and was willing to test any donated electrical items.

Shop Manager Sarah Hooper said, 'We've made almost £2,000 from sales of electrical items. Before Chris came along, we couldn't accept them. But since we've been able to sell these items, the donations have increased and kept Chris with a steady flow of stock.'

He's always happy to help in anyway he can, be it on the till, sorting stock or taking bulky items to the tip in his own time.'



Passion with a purpose is definitely something to say about Chris. He was determined to keep volunteering, in spite of working full-time, and takes great pride in his work. Chris's story is a great example of the value volunteers bring to our organisation. Initially, he came to steam and sort, but he's shown that volunteers can bring many other wonderful skills to benefit our work.

Chris added, 'I thoroughly enjoy my time as a PDSA volunteer, learning different skills and making new friends along the way as well as giving back to the community and helping the cause to raise valuable funds to treat sick and injured pets'.



Drum roll please...

Before our worlds all changed because of the coronavirus, our 2019 Volunteer of the Year Award winners were presented with their trophies.

Six outstanding individual volunteers and one team emerged as winners, with five Highly Commended certificates also being presented in the coveted awards.

It was Sandra Brazier, receptionist at Liverpool Kirkdale Pet Hospital, The Jeanne Marchig Centre, who generated the most votes amongst our colleagues at PDSA. Sandra has been a volunteer with us for 12 years and was nominated by Martin Peters, Vet Nurse Team Leader.

Martin said, 'Sandra is a very willing volunteer. She has helped in numerous ways, but she has been especially helpful during the past year. Sandra has willingly provided extra cover during a particularly challenging time within



SANDRA SAID,

“I'm really pleased to be voted for as The People's Choice. My family were really made up when they found out. I was originally volunteering in a library but wanted something more challenging and came to PDSA. I feel comfortable and safe and no two days are the same. It gives me a routine and something to get up for and now the biggest bonus is receiving this award.”

Award at Crufts

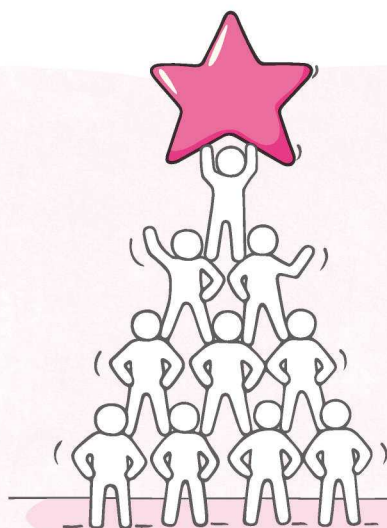
Sandra was presented with her award in March at Crufts in Birmingham.



the Kirkdale Reception team. She stepped in and volunteered to extend her working hours to cover during the early morning rush and during the lunchtime handover. She delivers a high quality of customer service and has a really strong knowledge base. More than that though, she is a vital member of the team.'

Our awards recognise the devotion and commitment of our volunteers who play vital roles in our PDSA Pet Hospitals, shops, offices and Fundraising Groups.

- 1. Retail Volunteer of the Year:** Amandeep Kaur, Leicester Shop
- 2. Volunteer Newcomer of the Year:** Daniel Lamb, Ilford Shop
- 3. Support Team Volunteer of the Year:** Dawn Whittaker (centre), Education Team
- 4. Young Volunteer of the Year:** Katie Sands, Romford Pet Hospital, The Julie and Robert Breckman Centre
- 5. Retail Volunteer Team of the Year:** Aberdeen Holburn Street Shop
- 6. Veterinary Volunteer of the Year:** Sandra Brazier, Kirkdale Pet Hospital, The Jeanne Marchig Centre
- 7. Fundraising Volunteer of the Year:** Kerry Irving
- 8. Volunteer Fundraising Team of the Year:** Belfast Fundraising Group



And here are our other Volunteer of the Year Award winners with their trophies:



Fundraising Volunteer of the Year,
Kerry Irving with Max,
Paddy and Harry





As I write this, we're in the middle of a very challenging situation due to the COVID-19 pandemic and all volunteering is on hold across PDSA.

We don't know when things will get back to normal, but we do know that our volunteers are vital to our future. I hope that you will continue to support us so that we can carry on supporting the pets and owners who need our help. Meanwhile, I hope that you will keep safe and stay in touch with each other through the PDSA Volunteers Facebook group and your own networks.

Whatever happens, volunteering has been and will continue to be a positive force for good. In my job, one of the things I'm most proud of, is how we've been able to help people to turn their lives around by giving them the opportunity to grow and develop while they are volunteering with PDSA.

Hearing Kirsty's story on page 7 brought this to life and reminded me that just as you never forget a good teacher, so you never forget the manager or teammate who gave you a chance, who believed in

you and gave you an opportunity to shine.

We know that not everyone has the best start in life and sometimes things don't go as we'd hoped. For whatever reason, many of us end up in a difficult spot and struggle to know how to change things. It's hard to get a job when you don't have any experience or references. It's hard to learn to trust people when you've been hurt or abused and it's hard to make the effort to get out there and do something when you've become lonely and isolated or lost your self confidence.

That's why volunteering can have such a big impact. It's a chance to show what you can do, to dip your toe in the water, increase your confidence, be part of a team and do something worthwhile – something that helps others and yourself.

I know we have volunteers in our shops and hospitals who have come to us at a difficult time in their lives and have used the opportunity to turn things around. Previous winners of our Volunteer of the Year award have talked about the anxiety and mental health issues they faced and how volunteering has helped them to progress. Sometimes that has meant taking on a paid role with PDSA, maybe leaving to take a job externally or perhaps taking on more responsibility within their volunteer role.

Not everyone is looking to take on more responsibility and sometimes being part of a team, having something to look forward to – and just being

Volunteering can change your life





Kirsty (centre) with the Port Talbot Team

Kirsty's Story

thanked for what you do, is enough to make a difference to someone's life.

Knowing the impact we can have on the lives of our volunteers makes me very proud and gets me out of bed of each morning, even when it's cold and dark!

Once the Coronavirus crisis is over we'll be recruiting new volunteers, so if you know someone who is out of work and looking to build their skill, or maybe you've got a family member who's a student or looking to get some experience of the world of work, we may have just the opportunity they're looking for. We're keeping our website updated so you can find out when we're recruiting again [PDSA.org.uk](https://pdsa.org.uk)

Stay safe everyone and thank you again for all that you do to support PDSA.

Volunteering really can change your life. But don't take our word for it, read this lovely story from Kirsty Waite who's now our Penarth Shop Manager in South Wales.

I was in the shop and I suddenly heard a voice I recognised shouting 'Kirst' from outside.

It was Richard, an ex-volunteer from our former Bridgend shop. One of the first volunteers I ever recruited and trained by myself. This volunteer was quite young, about 19 at the time and had a lot of personal problems which sent him a little off the rails and caused him to get into a bit of bother. However, he was probably one of my hardest

working volunteers and caused the shop and me no trouble at all.

We had countless talks about what he was doing with his life, where he would end up if he carried on the way he was and about what he wanted to do. But he didn't feel he could change.

Fast forward five years and he came to see if I was still in Port Talbot and to thank PDSA and me for giving him a chance; for having belief in him when no one else would, including his family.

He wanted to tell me how he had turned his life around and was now working full-time, was in a good relationship and had a two-year-old daughter with his partner – who he proudly provided for.

He said he truly believed if he had not volunteered for PDSA at that moment in his life he wouldn't be in the place he is now.

It just shows what a difference volunteering can make to people's lives in so many different ways. I am so proud to part of offering that to people.

Once we're past social distancing and our shops re-open, could you give someone the chance to change their life through volunteering?

If you know someone who would like to volunteer for PDSA in our shops, Pet Hospitals or offices, they can find out more at pdsa.org.uk/volunteer

recovery
ward



Toby was fortunate to be treated as part of our low cost scheme at Nottingham Pet Hospital and is now well on the road to recovery.

TOBY

makes a jaw-some recovery

Every day our vet teams across the UK are helping sick and injured pets get back on their paws to stay fit and healthy. This story reveals how a Nottingham cat was discovered with injuries so severe he had to undergo emergency surgery to wire his jaw back together.

Four-year-old Toby had multiple injuries following a suspected attack by an unknown animal near his home. Thankfully, he has survived due to the incredible care and dedication provided by our vets.

His distraught owner, Brian Staples, found Toby covered in blood, with bite marks to his ear and a painful and unstable jaw.

Brian said, *'I was absolutely devastated when I discovered Toby in such a distressing state. He lay there in my arms not moving and I feared the worst.'*

Our vet Joanne Trow said, *'Poor Toby was in bad shape when he came in. He had a broken jaw, numerous puncture wounds and was struggling with a nasty limp where his leg had been injured. Thankfully the leg wasn't fractured, but his jaw did need wiring back together. We come across our fair share of pets that have been in fights, but this was a particularly upsetting case.'*



OUR PET HOSPITAL SERVICE HAS BEEN GREATLY IMPACTED BY THE CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK.

We are only able to offer urgent life-saving treatment at this time. Our teams are doing their very best to treat as many critically ill pets as they can and thank you for your patience and support.

A Hill of Beans Wordsearch



Puzzle solutions on page 11.

Can you find the following words in the grid?

They may be read across, down or diagonally in any direction and may overlap.

RED

SOY

LIMA

NAVY

MUNG

AZUKI

PINTO

LENTIL

BROAD

KIDNEY

BUTTER

BLACK EYED PEA

CANNELLINI

CHICK PEA

SPLIT PEA

RUNNER

© Brainwarp

Add - a - Letter

Insert or add a letter to these words to make new words which fit the clues given. The added letters should spell out a popular summer sport

WILL

A fabric, woven so tough

CRAM

A colour not unlike buff

SLAT

A word that means to lean or list

SHUT

To push along bit by bit

CHAR

Provides you with something to sit on

PEAK

To talk or give an oration

© Brainwarp

JOIN US ON FACEBOOK



We've recently launched a new Facebook group for PDSA volunteers. As all volunteering is currently on hold, we wanted to create a place where our volunteers can keep in touch, share stories and stay connected to PDSA.

If you've got a computer or a smartphone and not signed up to Facebook yet, why not give it a try?

At a time when many people are isolated, it's a great way to keep in touch with people.

Over 400 volunteers have already joined the group and you can be part of the conversation by logging on to Facebook, searching for PDSA Volunteers and requesting to join.

facebook.com/groups/pdsavolunteers



“My 5 month old kitten ‘Petal’ has started meowing really loudly, acting strangely but she’s well in herself, why is she behaving like this?”

EVA

It’s likely Petal has come into season. You’ll notice loud meowing known as ‘calling’, she’ll seem affectionate, roll around the ground and may sit in a strange stance with her chest on the floor, back end in the air and tail to one side. Cats can be neutered from four months of age, so to prevent unwanted kittens and protect your cat from being exposed to some infectious diseases, we’d recommend you contact your vet to arrange neutering.

Ask the expert

Our PDSA vet expert **Nina Downing** answers some of your pet questions.

“My dog loves playing fetch but recently he’s been picking up sticks. My friend says this should be discouraged but, why?”

ELEANOR



Sadly, sticks can get lodged in dogs mouths. Splinters cause injuries and in the worst cases dogs can become impaled on thrown sticks resulting in terrible injuries which can be fatal. There are many dog safe toys available. It’s best to train your dog the ‘off’ or ‘leave’ command to make sure he stops picking these up.

“My dog ‘Deefor’ keeps getting a rash on his tummy whenever he walks across the grassy field. Should I be worried?”

SIMON

It’s possible Deefor is allergic or irritated by grass. Allergies to grasses can be common and difficult to avoid, so it’s best to seek advice from your vet. It may be that his rash is linked to something else altogether, **but** your vet will investigate this and treat him accordingly.



PDSA REMEMBERS

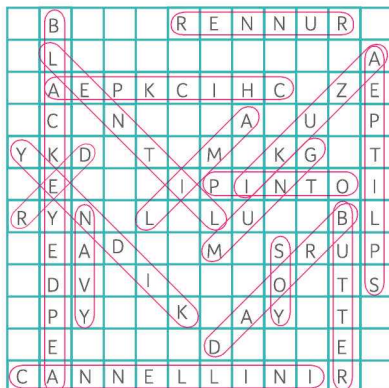
Jim Nolan



We're sorry to report the passing of one of our Scottish volunteering heroes – Jim Nolan.

Jim volunteered at our Kirkcaldy Shop and spent nearly thirty years volunteering with us. He was awarded Retail Volunteer of the Year in 2012 and right up until his death, volunteered for an average of 35 hours per week. Jim loved PDSA and it was important for him to help animals. More than twenty staff and volunteers attended Jim's funeral and he will be sadly missed by all who knew him.

A Hill of Beans Wordsearch Solution



Solution to Add-A-Letter

The complete words are shown with the bold letters spelling 'TENNIS'

TWILL - CREAM - SLANT - SHUNT - CHAIR - SPEAK

Thanks to our loyal volunteers

We always appreciate the hard work and commitment of all our volunteers. Our gratitude and congratulations go to these volunteering heroes who've been presented with their Long Service Awards from November 2019 to February 2020.

10 YEARS

Birmingham (Aston) Pet Hospital
Gillian Mander

Belfast Fundraising Group
Hanna Greer

Aldershot Rosy Edwards

Thornbury Jacqueline Gilpin

Erdington Valerie Turner

Glenrothes Sandra Towner

Norwich Margaret Wildman

Port Talbot Susan Harry

Port Talbot Lyn Morgan

Maidstone John Thilthorpe

Brighton New Corinne Nash

Wolverhampton Susan Jordan

Bournemouth Fundraising Group
Sue Heather

Staple Hill James Halhead

Radford Margaret Birch

Exeter Cowick St James Sotiriou

Grantham Penny Bott

Hanley Glenda Kurta

Havant Marion Coleman

Norwich Alan Barbour

Penarth Kay Larcombe

Port Talbot Pamela Jones

Wellington Sheilagh Gilder

Taunton Jeanette Whiteley

Orpington Debbie Laskier

15 YEARS

Callander Val Adie

Cheylesmore Margaret Button

Harrow Gillian Whitlock

Leigh-On-Sea Alayne Cohen

Lochee Sheila Davidson

Norwich Peter Baxter

York Kirsty Wensley

Kings Heath Maxine Severn

Maidstone Derek Beard

Wolverhampton Shaun Tranter

**Gillingham Pet Hospital
Fundraising Group** Liz Roberts

Aldeburgh Fundraising Group
Sally Swindells

Aberdeen Holburn Street
Constance Tough

Erdington Rosaline Quinney

Solihull Ian Moore

20 YEARS

Ayr Joy Hunter

Cheadle Norma Turner

Newhaven Roger Goring

Southampton Adrian Holdaway

Weston-Super-Mare Paul Statham

Bognor Regis Patricia Burke

Callander Lillian Ayre

Leigh-On-Sea Margaret Staines

25 YEARS

Stirling Kathleen Forrest



Kathleen Forrest receiving her long service award

30 YEARS

National Customer Service Centre
Cathy Robertson

Beeston Mary Chester

Brighton New Christine Meeten