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September Newsletter

Dear AML supporters,

It has been nearly 6 months since my last update letter to you all. I really hope that you have all kept safe and healthy over this coronavirus time.

Our welfare work took a bit of a dive in April just after the first lockdown was announced. We were not sure how much we were allowed to do, but knew that there must be animals out there in the community that needed help. Armed with essential service certificates, gloves and masks, we attended to a few emergency calls, but no sterilisations or primary health procedures were carried out. After about a month, we realized along with the many other community services, that residents in certain areas were simply not going to make it through the extended lockdown without help and nor were their pets. We had still been receiving great donations of pet food from Robertson Spar, and RAM also stepped in to donate. Packets of pet food were made up and we began distributing it to the community and checking up on pet health at the same time. External parasites were rife, and probably due to the fact that families were forced to stay at home, these were noticed and many calls for help came in. We began the "Fight the Mite, Ditch the Itch" campaign to address the zoonotic (transmissible to humans) problem of mange, ticks and fleas. Over 2000kg of pet food was distributed to needy homes. Well done to our field work team who spent hours decanting the food into smaller packs and monitoring and distributing the food fairly in the community. This was a huge task.

On the commencement of lockdown 4, we decided to continue with our sterilisations in earnest. From our recommencement in May, Dr. Yvonne has sterilized another 175 animals, bringing the total sterilized by AML since our inception to 435. On some very cold weeks, we had to postpone the sterilisations to the following week, because Dr. Yvonne was worried about the danger of post-operative hypothermia (a drop in body temperature). This is a common complication in patients that do not return to a warm home with vigilant owners. Many thanks must go to a loyal member Jenny Kennedy for allowing us to overnight a few patients at her home, to ensure safe recoveries. We also welcome 2 wonderful new field workers to our team – Ronell Spera and Toni van Houweninge, who are doing sterling work in the community. Also a big thank you to another new member Yvonne Eichorn for help in the clinic on our sterilisation days.

During lockdown, all fundraising projects had to be put on hold. However, we have continued to receive many wonderful donations from members and suppliers over the last 6 months. These include a gas anaesthetic machine from Lesley McLauchlan, monthly payment of the oxygen cylinder rental by Bruce Stewart, donation of carry crates by Valemount, Frans Maritz and Tracey Pace, further donations of pet food by Emerald Gold, Farhat Amod, Inner wheel Montagu, Frans Maritz and Tracey Pace, donations of blankets and drums for kennels by many members of the Montagu community, Zoetis for Simparica tablets, donation of a kennel, blankets and dog jerseys from Elaine Paton, beautiful handmade beanies from Eseltjierus, sponsored golf shirts from van Loveren Wines for our

field workers, many members for their donations of second hand items and books which we sell on FB marketplace and many monetary contributions. Also thanks to SAVA CVC for making some medicines available to Dr Yvonne at a much reduced cost including Broadline for cats and for their support with costs of sterilisations, and to Royal Canin for sponsoring sterilisations and donating frontline and deworming tablets via the CVC initiative. We are so very grateful to everyone. Every little bit helps.

Our application to last year's lotto was submitted too late as we had only just started our organisation and could not submit an application when they first called for submissions and we received notification that the funds were "depleted" for the year. We have submitted an application again, we hope timeously this time! A vehicle is still high on our list of needs.

Since my last update, we have received our PBO number, which now enables us to issue a tax exemption certificate for any donations. We have also got our website up and running. Please visit it at www.animalsmatterlangeberg.org

A short 6 minute DVD of our work in the Bonnievale "plakkerskamp" has been uploaded onto YouTube. The link is https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8rlhbnuz_YM. Please watch it and share as far as possible. We hope that a few overseas animal lovers will give financial support for our work here in South Africa.

Our first AGM is scheduled for Wednesday October 7th at 17.15 for 17.30 at the Montagu Golf club. Please attend if you are able to. We hope to make this a "meet and greet" social event in which the committee, volunteers and supporters can introduce themselves and discuss any suggestions as to the way forward. Snacks and wine will be provided and there will be a cash bar.

Once again thank you to each and everyone of you for your continued interest and support. We greatly appreciate it.