

Merseyside Police Dogs

Gift Life to Injured Canines

Merseyside Police Force has taken the generous step of signing up all of its police dogs as potential donors to help provide injured pets with the gift of life.

Now, all of the Force's dogs will carry donor cards and in the event of the sad demise of any one of the dogs, Veterinary Tissue Bank will be provided with soft tissue and bone from the donor to provide grafts to provide life-saving surgery to other injured pets.

Rusty – a registered search and rescue dog in the Dartmoor and Exmoor team – who suffered a fracture dislocation of his hock following a road traffic accident, is one of an increasing number of pets in the UK to so far benefit from a partial fusion using donor bone as part of his surgery.

This involved stripping the small joints of cartilage and putting a plate and screws in to align the bones which were then encouraged to fuse through the introduction of the demineralised bone matrix. Rusty has achieved a new lease of life thanks to the generous donation of donor dogs like the Merseyside Police Dog Section.

Inspector Matthew Boyle, Head of Merseyside Police Dog Section, said: *"Our officers enjoy a very close bond with their dogs and place great emphasis on the quality of life that these dogs experience. The entire Section is behind this initiative, understanding that their dog will go on to give new life to a canine patient in need."*



The Long Barn
Brynkinalt Business Centre
Chirk, Wrexham
LL14 5NS
Tel: **+44(0)1691 778769**
Email: **info@vtbank.org**
www.vtbank.org



DONOR TALES

December 2013



1000TH DONOR PROCEDURE SAVES THE LIFE OF KING CHARLES SPANIEL

Denzil – a four year-old Cavalier King Charles spaniel from Totton, Southampton – was recently diagnosed with compression on the lumbosacral nerve roots following a spell of pain related lameness earlier in the year but thanks to surgery involving donor bone supplied by Veterinary Tissue Bank, he is back on his feet again.

Following an MRI scan, Denzil was operated on by veterinary neurosurgeon, Harry Scott from Southern Counties Veterinary Specialists, who decompressed the nerve roots. However, sadly Denzil was back in pain again a few months later and had to undergo major surgery which involved stabilisation and fusion of the lumbosacral joint using pins and bone cement.

His owner, Ellen Martin, a student veterinary nurse, explains: *"Sadly, Denzil was diagnosed with lumbosacral degenerative stenosis associated with instability at the lumbosacral joint which is very unusual in this breed."*

Ellen continues: *"I was advised that Denzil would need major spinal surgery. Without this he would essentially be a disabled dog and would have to live with persistent lameness and pain or be put to sleep. Under those circumstances, despite the risks of surgery, it wasn't a difficult decision to make."*

Veterinary surgeon, Harry Scott, commented: *"Although decompres-*



Denzil - a four year old King Charles Spaniel

sive surgery in the lumbosacral area is not uncommon, Denzil's surgery was more complicated requiring stabilisation of the lumbosacral joint using multiple pins placed in the vertebrae embedded in bone cement. The joints between the vertebrae were fused using donor demineralised bone matrix to speed up the fusion process."

Denzil is the thousandth pet in the UK to benefit from a fusion using donor bone transplant as part of his surgery. Harry sourced the demineralised bone matrix –

a bone transplant which stimulates new bone formation and aids the healing process – from The Veterinary Tissue Bank.

Now, Denzil is up and about again and back to his old, active self.

Ellen concludes: *"Denzil was lucky to benefit from donor bone and I really appreciate the kindness of those people who could look past the sad loss of their pet and take the step to bequeath their deceased pet as a donor."*

DONOR SHORTAGE

Veterinary Tissue Bank is hoping more pet donors will come forward to aid its ground breaking operation which processes and banks bone and soft tissue to provide grafts for vets to help badly injured pets.

Pet owners can raise the issue of donation with their vets when the time comes or they can register their pets with VTB in advance via the website. They will then receive a donor card which helps to facilitate the donation process.

The tissue bank is desperately short of cat donors and is hoping that owners will respond positively by registering their pet cats as donors so that when they finally pass they can go on to help gift life to other cats.

This will enable specialist veterinary practices around the UK to access processed tissues, bone, tendon and ligament, which are often needed in orthopaedic surgery to repair injuries such as fractures and ligament ruptures.

For more information on becoming a donor contact VTB on **01691 778769** or visit the website at **www.vtbank.org**

I'd like to help other
pets after my death



Pet Donor Card

Veterinary Tissue Bank
The Long Barn
Bryncliffe Business Centre
Chirk, Wrexham LL14 5NS
Tel: 01691 778769
Fax: 01691 411520
Email: donor@vtbank.org

www.vtbank.org

Zippy Gives Life to Cats in Need



For Edwina Osborne from Enfield, the loss of her cat, Zippy, was eased by the ability to donate his bone and soft tissue to Veterinary Tissue Bank's donor scheme.

As a result, Zippy went on to help over 40 cats find a new lease of life through life-saving surgical procedures involving his donated bone and tissue.

Zippy had enjoyed a happy life with his owner, Edwina who took him on aged around five years from the local RSPCA rehoming centre in Enfield.

Edwina was devastated when he was diagnosed with renal failure and despite medication and special diets, sadly his days were numbered and he was put to sleep when his condition deteriorated to the extent that his quality of life was compromised.

Edwina took great comfort from the fact that Zippy was able to go on to help other pets in need. She said: *"It's hard at such times to think about how this loss might help other animals, but in some cases the knowledge that a beloved pet's departure has actually been able to help other pets find a new lease of life can make the grief more bearable. This was the case with Zippy."*

Edwina commented: *"Zippy was a great character he would follow me down the road and around the block whenever I was out and we miss him very much. However, when he finally died we were keen for him to go on to help other pets in need. So it was actually a relatively easy decision to sign him on as a donor."*

TOP DOG GETS NEW LEASE OF LIFE

One of the country's most successful search and rescue dogs – Rusty a seven year-old Border Collie from Cullompton in Devon – is back on track to resume his career thanks to pioneering surgery on his hock.

Rusty – one of seven registered search and rescue dogs in the Dartmoor and Exmoor team – suffered a fracture dislocation of his hock following a road traffic accident.

Rusty's vet referred him to Patrick Ridge from Devon based Ridge Referrals, a small animal orthopaedic referral service with expertise in biologic orthopaedic procedures, sourced the demineralised bone matrix – a bone transplant which stimulates new bone formation –

from The Veterinary Tissue Bank. The repair involved stripping the small joints of cartilage and putting a plate and screws in to align the bones which were then encouraged to fuse through the introduction of the demineralised bone matrix.



Veterinary surgeon, Patrick Ridge, commented: *"The use of demineralised bone aids the healing process and the ability to source*

this from donor bone, means that it isn't necessary to harvest bone graft from Rusty himself, thereby reducing surgery time and so minimising any post-operative pain."

Rusty's owner, Dave Humphrey, said: *"As well as being a much loved member of our family, Rusty is also a fantastically successful search and rescue dog and we were concerned that this injury might cut short his career finding lost and injured people in the county. But, thanks to the kind people who bequeathed their deceased pet as a donor, he is now back on track to continue his work. I had no idea about the donor scheme and intend to investigate the possibility of registering Rusty as a donor."*

CAT ON ROAD TO RECOVERY FOLLOWING RTA



Burt Reavy – a male two year-old grey tabby and white rescue cat – severely injured in a horrific road accident outside his home on the Wirral has been given a new lease of life thanks to pioneering surgery on his leg.

Burt had been out enjoying himself in woodland opposite his home and was scurrying back for his dinner when the Reavy's neighbour drove on to their driveway accidentally running him over.

Alison Reavy, Burt's owner, explains: *"Burt was dashing home up our neighbour's driveway. They didn't realise they had hit him but my neighbour on the other side witnessed the entire event and contacted me immediately."*

"We rushed him to the emergency vet – Chestergrates – who gave him pain relief and took x-rays. The damage was so severe that my vet, Matt Pope said it would need specialist surgery."

As a result, Burt was referred to the orthopaedic service at the University of Liverpool Small Animal Teaching Hospital for assessment

and treatment by Professor of Surgery, John Innes.

John Innes commented: *"Burt was suffering from five nasty fractures in his thigh bone."*

"I was able to repair the fractures with a bone plate and screws together with feline demineralised bone matrix graft supplied by Veterinary Tissue Bank. This is a processed form of bone from a donor cat which provides proteins called growth factors to stimulate the fracture to heal."

When Burt finally returned home he was confined to quarters and was put on cage rest for nine weeks. He is now making an excellent recovery and has had the staples removed.