

Kilimanjaro climb in aid of animal shelter

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By Peter Townson/Staff Reporter

Animal lovers in Qatar will be following the progress of one of their own next month, as QAWS member and fitness enthusiast Carl Roberts attempts to climb Mount Kilimanjaro to raise funds for the group’s new temporary shelter. With the summer months and the searing heat making life particularly uncomfortable for the dogs, cats and other animals at the Qatar Animal Welfare Society (QAWS) shelter, the society simply had to erect a temporary, air-conditioned facility to replace the kennels which burnt down last year.

However, the construction is not cheap, and is costing the group some QR125,000.

Currently QAWS is short of the money to construct outdoor runs and other facilities required.

When Roberts heard about this, he thought it would be a good idea to climb the mountain to raise funds for the rescued animals in Qatar.

He explained that climbing the Kilimanjaro is something he had always hoped to do, and when he was approached by an old school friend about the possibility of attempting the climb, he jumped at the chance.

As part of his training and general fitness regime, Roberts said he runs with dogs from QAWS for a number of hours every Saturday morning.

After arriving in Qatar last year, he looked up QAWS, found their shelter and began taking some of the larger, more energetic dogs out for weekly runs, taking one dog at a time and covering around 6-10km with a number of the animals each time.

The connection he has forged with the shelter and its inhabitants is what inspired Roberts to raise funds for the shelter, thus when he decided to attempt to reach Kilimanjaro’s summit, he immediately thought about raising sponsorship for QAWS.

“I enjoy working with QAWS and we have a relationship now,” said Roberts, adding that “this is the right thing to do – if my climb can benefit someone then why not?”

Roberts said that he grew up with dogs and that he finds training alongside a four-legged friend far more enjoyable than going it alone.

And there is no chance that he will find himself alone during his six-day quest to scale the 5,800m high mountain in July.

As well as his travelling companions, Roberts will be in constant contact with QAWS, who thanks to support from iloveqatar, have plans to equip Roberts with the necessary technology to keep them updated as to his progress on the climb.

He will be posting details of his experience, and hopes to be able to pass on good news when he reaches the summit.

“This is another example of great community support,” said QAWS chairperson Janet Berry, “Carl has been there on a consistent basis and knows what we need and what we are about.”

“Someone new to Qatar came and found us and offered to help ... we are really grateful,” she said, adding that “we will be with him every step of the way, and his donation will go a long way to finishing off this build for us.”

Roberts will be updating his progress via the QAWS group on Facebook, and will also be setting up a website dedicated to his trip, the details of which will be posted on Facebook as well.



Roberts with one of the dogs at the QAWS shelter

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