LOVEtails

ANIMAL WELFARE LEAGUE NSW • NEWSLETTER • MAY 2018



LEARN ABOUT GUINEA PIGS

And why they make awesome pets!

+ NEWS + ADVICE + UPDATES

PET CARE ADVICE FROM OUR BEHAVIOURIST AND VET

Meet our amazing Moree branch (and the 311 dogs they saved last year!)

Greyhounds: the perfect apartment dog!

ANIMAL WELFARE LEAGUE NSW

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

3 Meet our Moree branch

4 Pets get a first-class experience at Kemps Creek

5 Pet advice from our experts

6 Fostering Inca the Teddy Bear

7 Staff & Volunteer Profiles

8-9 Happy Tails: Letters from home & Adoption news

9-11 Branch Highlights

12 Health tips from our experts

Message from Editor-in-Chief Jersey



Welcome humans, to another edition of *LoveTails*, the magazine for supporters of Animal Welfare League NSW. We may be almost in the throes of winter, but it seems kitten season has no end this year...our branches have been working hard desexing animals and rehoming cats and kittens galore, as you will see on pages 10 and 11. Meanwhile, up north, our Moree branch is doing truly impressive work (and I rarely refer to anything as 'impressive' since I am rarely impressed) rescuing dogs. Although I may personally not be fond of the slobbery, noisy demeanour of canines, I believe all animal life has value and would like to congratulate the dedicated volunteers of Moree for their work. I hope that you are entertained and inspired by this magazine, and thank you for joining us on our mission to help animals across the state. Until next time....

Jersey



President Christine Richardson with adoptable dog Constantine, who placed first in the 'Doggy Olympics' training event at Kemps Creek shelter.

President's Message

CHRISTINE RICHARDSON, PRESIDENT

While I am always excited to read *LoveTails*, I was particularly proud of this edition, which showcases the many varied goings on of Animal Welfare League NSW. Both Head Office and our branches are moving full steam ahead in their quest to service the animals of this state in the best way they can.

Up north, our Moree branch is operating a rehoming program that is truly innovative and wonderful – I think we can all agree that rehoming 311 canines in one financial year is very impressive.

Our other branches have also done some amazing work, with everything from desexing drives to microchipping days and of course, kitten rescues galore!

Meanwhile, at our shelter in Kemps Creek, an upgrade to the vet clinic and the completion of dog agility yards has allowed us to provide even higher quality care to homeless animals.

These achievements would not have been possible at all without the good will of the public, and I would like to thank you (as always) for your support of our organisation. ●

About Animal Welfare League NSW

Animal Welfare League NSW is a registered charity that has been operating for 60 years. We provide expert care to surrendered, neglected and abandoned companion animals across New South Wales. Our vision is that all companion animals have a safe and loving home. We strive for this through our work in rehoming, education and discount desexing programs. AWL NSW also has inspectors who are authorised to investigate allegations of animal cruelty under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act (POCTAA). We rely heavily on the generous support of animal lovers like yourself to care for thousands of animals every year.

ANIMAL WELFARE LEAGUE NSW

LOVEtails

PUBLISHED BY NCP PRINTING

EDITORIAL CONTACT
Shannon Cochrane
shannoncochrane@awlnsw.com.au

ADVERTISING CONTACT
partnerships@awlnsw.com.au

CONTACT US

For more information on the difference you can make by getting involved with Animal Welfare League NSW, visit awlnsw.com.au or follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/AWLNSW

ANIMAL WELFARE LEAGUE NSW SUPPORT OFFICE
1605 Elizabeth Drive, Kemps Creek NSW 2178
POST: PO Box 308, Kemps Creek NSW 2178
PHONE: (02) 8899 3333
FAX: (02) 8777 4488
helpingpets@awlnsw.com.au

KEMPS CREEK SHELTER
1605 Elizabeth Drive,
Kemps Creek NSW 2178
PHONE: (02) 8777 4445
kempscreek@awlnsw.com.au

VETERINARY CLINIC
1605 Elizabeth Drive,
Kemps Creek NSW 2178
PHONE: (02) 8777 4424
vetclinic@awlnsw.com.au

WHY DOGS FROM MOREE ARE THE BEST-TRAVELLED IN AUSTRALIA

(and why it's ground-breaking for rescue)

The dusty plains of Moree, with its expansive blue sky and ancient hot springs, may seem like a small country town where tradition reigns supreme. In actual fact, it's the site of a new, innovative method of rehoming animals, led by the dog-loving duo who runs AWL NSW's Moree Branch: Carol Fulton-Kennedy and Denise Joiner.

The rescue partners, who claim they occasionally butt heads but more often inspire each other, began working together about 4 years ago, with Denise joining the branch six months prior to Carol.

Although AWL NSW had been operating in the area for some time, the arrival of Carol and Denise on the scene brought some radical changes, from attending markets to coordinating interstate adoptions.

This latter rehoming tactic may raise some more conservative eyebrows in the rescue community, but sceptics of the Moree method need only look at their animal statistics for proof that it works.

Throughout the last financial year, the Moree branch rehomed an astonishing 311 dogs and puppies, and 51 cats and kittens – quite an impressive figure, given that there are only 4 core women volunteering to achieve the result.

Carol, who acts as branch President and generally handles surrendered dogs from the public, said that she believes location is no barrier to adoption and successful matches can be coordinated via phone and email.

"It's a funny business, because when we first got involved and tried to use PetRescue and fly animals out to adopters, straight away people said, 'well how are you going to check the yard?'," she said.

"For me, that's not the most vital part of the procedure... some dogs need six foot fences so you say that on the profile.

"The more important things to me are questions like, how is the person going to care for the pup? If we're rehoming puppies then we don't want people who will be working all day. We ask for an email from a potential adopter first introducing themselves. We sit there, print the email out and think about it. We look at all the candidates.



Carol Fulton-Kennedy and Denise Joiner

"For me personally, it's very much about the person's lifestyle; what they're going to do with the dog, is the dog going to be inside or outside, is the puppy going to be able to be a family member? We want to know what they can offer the dog. By the time we advertise the dog, we know them well and what we want for them.



Denise in front of her boarding facility, where she quarantines rescue dogs before sending them into loving foster care.

An obvious retort to this argument would be questioning whether the dogs stay in their adoptive homes, however Carol said that the branch stays in touch with adopters and that the return rate is very low.

"For the few that have been returned, maybe 1 out of every 100 dogs, we find that it's a person who has given up on the first or second day... people often have problems in the first few days, but we give them advice, and if they hold on for a few weeks then it goes well," Carol said.

"Advertising online, we've found that we're getting the most terrific homes for these dogs... we're continually amazed when we get updates from people – sitting on a beach, in a city coffee shop, and these dogs have come from dusty plains to that life."



Denise's husband Ray with a rescue pony that the couple is caring for.

With such a small team dedicated to rehoming, the branch has formulated a way to split duties and balance the load between all branch members, to ensure that the process is smooth for both humans and canines involved.

Denise, who owns a popular boarding kennel in the area, regularly visits the pound and asks the ranger for recommendations on dogs who would be suitable for rehoming. From there, she takes the dogs to her boarding kennels for a quarantine period, where they also get vaccinated and vet checked, then go into a foster home as soon as one is available.

In the meantime, Carol generally handles dogs who are being surrendered directly to the branch, and tries to encourage the former owner to get the dog vet worked and

quarantined prior to handing them over.

This method removes the need for keeping surrendered dogs in kennels, freeing up more space for dogs from the pound, while also reducing stress and disease transmission risk.

Another key member of the branch, Jenny Smith, manages the cat intake and rehoming, while dedicated animal lover Jasmine is one of the foster carers who provides a temporary home to both cats and dogs.

Given Moree's remote location, and the branch's usage of the internet to facilitate adoptions, it isn't a surprise that many of their dogs are sent on flights to Sydney or even interstate, paid for by the adopter.

The flights also allow for an innovative method of fundraising: selling airline crates, an idea thought up by Denise that has been incredibly successful.

The branch simply purchases airline crates in bulk on eBay and offers them to any adopter who gets an animal flown to them. Many adopters are happy to buy the crate, as it saves them the trouble of having to rent one and then switch their new unsettled dog between carriers at the airport.

With such a small team, the idea has been an inventive way to avoid other labour-intensive forms of fundraising, and leave the volunteers to the task of working with animals.

"We don't get much in the way of donations from the general public around Moree, so most of our funds come from adopters being happy and donating to us, and the airline crates," Denise said.

"The airline crate idea has helped us raise money and focus less on fundraising in more time-intensive ways... I would much prefer to be working looking after the dogs than sitting selling books for fundraising."

After rehoming so many animals in the last financial year, you might think that the volunteers of Moree branch deserve a break, but they have no plans of slowing down.

"It's just come to pass that we've enjoyed being equally passionate about what we're doing, egging each other on so it's not just the one of us doing the work," Denise said.

"Once you get started rescuing, you just can't stop... if you've got a passion for what you do, you seem to get passionate the more you see.

"We spend virtually every waking moment doing this; we don't know why everyone doesn't do it — you know that if you stop, these dogs and puppies die."

To learn more about the AWL NSW Moree branch, or to view their adoptable animals, visit facebook.com/AWLMoree. ●

HOMELESS PETS AT Kemps Creek

GET A FIRST-CLASS EXPERIENCE IN OUR NEWLY RENOVATED HOSPITAL



As anyone who has been to the AWL NSW Kemps Creek vet hospital would know, our veterinarians and nurses are second-to-none in their passion for their patients - and now they finally have a high-quality isolation unit to help them care for animals in need. The vet hospital, which takes in both private clients and shelter animals, underwent a much-needed renovation in the beginning of 2018 and the results are impressing both staff and clients.

The renovation included a new expanded x-ray room, a brand new isolation ward, new equipment, and new more spacious cages for sick animals. The project ran smoothly, with the builders completing their work three weeks ahead of schedule and working hard to minimise disruption to clinic services.

Chief Veterinarian Dr Simone Maher said she was delighted with the vet clinic, which was desperately in need of an upgrade.

"The need for our services has been steadily increasing over the last few years and this has been a long-awaited expansion of our ability to care for homeless animals and private clients," Dr Maher said.

"Our staff have all been thrilled with the result, and it's really made the work environment more pleasant and reflective of the high quality of work we do here."

While the clinic may look nice and slick, Dr Maher said that the improvements extended beyond the aesthetics and made a huge difference to her team's ability to provide quality care to animals.

"We now have an extended x-ray room that can accommodate animal patients of almost any size, which has had a big impact on our work.

"As an example, we had a dog in today who weighs 57kg, more than some of our vets weigh, and we were able to extend him out appropriately on the x-ray table and configure the x-rays properly, which would have been very difficult to do previously with our smaller x-ray area.

But perhaps the most significant change of all is the brand new isolation ward, which has allowed the clinic staff to more efficiently control disease transmission. "Our clinic has had a spike in young, sick kittens over the past few years, and this is the population that most needs to be isolated properly," Dr Maher said.

"Having somewhere that we can keep these kittens and other sick animals has made a massive difference to their outcomes, especially since prior to the renovation our isolation room was basically the size of a storage cupboard.

"The new isolation ward is a lot quieter than the previous one, which reduces the stress levels in our kittens, allows them to recover from illness more quickly, and improves their behaviour."

The vet clinic refurbishment was generously funded by members of the public who donated to a fundraising campaign called Building the Love last year, and major donors have been invited to a grand opening morning tea.

"I would like to personally express my gratitude to anyone who donated to this campaign – whether it was five dollars or five thousand dollars, your contribution has made a huge, lasting impact on the lives of homeless animals," Dr Maher said.

Our vet clinic provides a range of services to private clients, and all profits go back to AWL NSW to help homeless animals. If you would like to make an appointment with our vets, please call 02 8777 4424 or email vetclinic@awlnsw.com.au ●

Pet Advice

BEHAVIOURAL ADVICE WITH **DOG TRAINER KAREN RIDDELL**

There are many myths surrounding the suitability of dogs in apartments, which is a shame when you consider the documented benefits of owning a dog.

The reality is that many breeds can do very well in apartments as long as their needs are met. Meeting a dog's needs means providing for that dog's welfare physically (daily exercise and appropriate veterinary care), emotionally (allocating dedicated time to spend with the dog each day) and mentally (enrichment and training). A healthy adult dog will sleep for up to 16 hours a day, and will usually choose to sleep at night or when nothing exciting is happening, typically when the owner is not home.

Dogs have been bred for more than 100 years for specific purposes. The advantage of us today is that it allows us to choose from a breed or mixed breed of dog that is likely to cope well with apartment living. Having said that, every dog is an individual and it is important to assess the dog in question before bringing it into your apartment.

Toy Breeds – Breeds in the Toy Breed Group are mostly small and don't require as much exercise as their larger companions. Some toy breeds were originally bred solely as companions and adore being close to their chosen human. It can be easier to set up enrichment opportunities for a small dog within an apartment and they can be easily carried in their owner's arms or a carrier in the common areas. Some toy breeds that manage particularly well in apartments include: Bichon Frise, Chihuahua, Cavalier King Charles Spaniel, Havanese, Italian Greyhound, Lowchen, Pug, Tibetan Spaniel, Shih Tzu.



Woof and *Ruski*, two senior Poodles who would be suitable for apartment living, with regular walks. These 10 year olds are available for adoption together at Kemps Creek shelter

Hound Breeds – Greyhounds make surprisingly great apartment dogs despite their large size. Sighthound in particular have been bred for brilliant short bursts of speed and are very happy to relax for the remainder of the day once they have had their exercise. They are typically not nuisance barkers and make a great choice for someone wanting a larger breed. Some hounds that manage particularly well in apartments include: Afghan Hound, Basenji, Borzoi, Greyhound, Whippet.

There are also breeds within the Non-Sporting and Utility Groups that can make good apartment dogs. They include but are not limited to Schnauzers, Japanese Spitz, Great Danes, Poodles (Toy and Miniature).

The Working Dog, Terrier and Gundog groups are least likely to have breeds suitable for apartment dwelling. The majority of these breeds have high energy levels and need a job to keep them happy. For example, Jack Russells can have high prey drive and are incredibly tenacious. This can translate to a dog spending hours hunting and possibly barking at a mouse they saw under the fridge, long after the mouse has gone.

It's possible to maximise the chances of things going well with an apartment dog through training the dog specifically for the apartment environment. Counter-conditioning the dog to everyday noises such as the elevator, door buzzer and neighbours is a great way to prevent nuisance barking. Management strategies such as leaving the TV on or using a white noise machine during the training process can also be of benefit.

There is a growing number of professional services available to meet the needs of apartment dogs during business hours including dog day-care, dog walking and pet sitting. Choosing the right dog, combined with having a responsible approach to pet ownership, means that everyone can enjoy the benefits of dog ownership regardless of the size of their accommodation. ●



Thank you!

A big thank you to our friends at Petbarn Penrith Homemaker Centre for their generous donation of $5,000! The wonderful Penrith staff raised the most money for the Petbarn Foundation's Tree of Hope campaign last year out of all stores in the country, and as a reward, they got to choose a charity to donate $5,000 to.

We are so grateful that they chose us, and were humbled to meet some of the team in person and receive a cheque from store manager Ali.

The money will go a long way in helping us care for homeless animals across the state, and we are very appreciative! ●

Greyhounds
THE PERFECT APARTMENT DOG!

While you may think of greyhounds as being high-energy racing dogs, they're actually one of the more suitable breeds for apartment living. These couch potatoes only need short bursts of exercise daily, and although every dog is individual, members of this breed are generally happy to laze around the house with their owners for most of the day. Their gentle temperaments also make them loving companions, and they will typically do well with a wide variety of owners including those with kids.



Helen and Dahlia

Given that there are so many ex-racing greyhounds in NSW available for adoption, this also makes them an easily accessible breed to adopt. We often get greyhounds at our shelters, and there are many greyhound-specific rescue groups to choose from.

One happy greyhound adopter is Helen Powderly, our very own Branch Liaison Officer and President of the Western Suburbs Branch, who introduced Dahlia the grey into her life in August last year.

Dahlia had come from a racing background, and had to get used to a family household living with Helen's menagerie of dachshunds, cats and the many wild pigeons who hang around her home. Luckily, it was a huge success and Helen is thrilled with her latest addition.

"I decided that I wanted to get a greyhound and then they told me about Dahlia, who was depressed and sad and needed a home," Helen said.

"Everyone told me she was a lounge lizard, which she's not! The dachshunds got a little intimidated. They said, oh my god, this is a huge dog! But they're not frightened of her now, and she just fits in with them.

Like many (although not all) ex-racing greyhounds, Dahlia has also happily adjusted to being around cats, and is able to interact with the felines at Helen's home with no troubles.

"She's a really easy dog to have and she doesn't bark much either... the dachshunds bark more than she does; she just loves everybody."

If you want to adopt a greyhound like Dahlia, visit our website at awlnsw.com.au to see who's available! ●

READER SUBMISSION

Darcy
The Inestimable Pleasures of a Pound Puppy

By Glenys Pacey

Although strictly speaking this is not a story about the NSW Animal Welfare League. It did, however, have its beginnings at the Hoxton Park Shelter, when I adopted a Maltese/Shih Tzu cross pup, who I named Winnie – short for Winston.

I was privileged enough to have him in my life for just over 14 years. He died, quietly and peacefully, and my world was left with a giant hole in it.

It didn't feel right to get another dog straight away – I needed time to grieve. However after a few months I really began to miss the joys of pet ownership. Things like sloppy nose kisses, head on lap times, and just the 'aren't we lucky to be together' times.

Enter Jackal! I had seen him advertised on a pet website, and he was a resident at Sutherland Pound. Even though it was almost 5pm on a Friday night, there was still someone there to take my call. And, best of all, yes he was still available.

Very very early the next day, Saturday, we left our home at Baulkham Hills and drove to Sutherland. The Pound opened at 9am, but we were there well before that. We asked to see 'Jackal'. As the girl from the pound led him out of the kennels, and out to meet us, that was it, I was in love! Fortunately, so was my partner.

Jackal is now 'Darcy', and he is still a red headed (and bodied) Irish rebel. It has not been smooth sailing, but oh how we love him, and what a different dog he is now, to the dog we brought home. He is a real homebody, and loves to lie on the good lounge with his head on my lap.

We did suffer for about 12 months. I have had several AWL dogs, and usually, by about six months they have settled. Not Darcy. My poor partner had several trips to various doctors to have wounds dressed, and I too have presented to my GP with various bits and pieces missing.

So, why do it. Why adopt a pound puppy? For the sheer love and joy of it. For the pleasure of seeing a frightened dog become a couch potato, who gives loving nose kisses, and who shares our world, with great delight.

Each and every animal is precious. Each little life should be cherished. But I think that when you have a pound puppy or rescue dog, you experience a little more love and joy.

Darc is now six, and our beautiful fur child. ●

Our Far South Coast Branch works hard to rescue many local dogs, but one of the more memorable of their charges in recent times has been Inca. Inca, a Husky cross with behavioural issues, was fostered by Brian who proved that hard work and love can make a huge difference. Both parties in the foster relationship chronicled their experience for us here.



By Inca, AKA Teddy Bear!

THE ALASKAN MALAMUTE X SIBERIAN HUSKY (10 HUMAN YEARS OLD)

Fostering Humans

Fostering humans is tough work. The trick is to get a routine going:

1. Wake them just as the sun is about to rise (whimper, bark, bang on the door and if necessary, howl).
2. Collar and lead them quickly so you can drag them out for a walk (ignore their excuses about a late night, it's too cold/hot or raining, more important things to do...rubbish).
3. Exercise them for a minimum 30 minutes (I find occasionally not picking up their tennis ball or running away from them works well).
4. Return them to their human kennel and encourage them to toilet and wash post exercise (let's not pretend that humans don't stink); now is also a good time to check your humans for any parasites such as ticks and fleas.
5. Feed them once they stop panting from their morning exercise; humans are obsessed with food and whine when they miss a meal (give them plenty of seasonal veg and fruit, fish, a little low fat dairy and occasional lean protein, all in moderation).
6. Keep them company throughout the day; it doesn't really matter what activities you let them do (housework, gardening, cooking, car trips to the shops or visiting other human packs...), just don't abandon them for too long.
7. When they show signs of anxiety or stress, interact with them through pawing, licks and cuddles until they calm down; an occasional food treat also works but don't give them junk (chocolate, lollies, chips and biscuits have no human nutritional value).
8. Get them out of their human kennels for an afternoon or early evening walk and play (they sleep better when exercised at least twice daily).
9. After an evening meal, give them a cuddle and kiss at bedtime, and forgive any of their daily growls (humans can sometimes be cantankerous for absolutely no discernible reason).

The key to fostering humans is consistency and perseverance (it can often take weeks or longer). You know you've succeeded as a foster carer when the humans are happy just spending time with you, can't imagine life without you and don't want to be rehomed or dumped at the local pound. This is the foster carers' reward and it's called 'unconditional love'.

Fostering Inca

Inca's last six months have been tough. 1 of 9 dogs (yes, 9) in the care of a minor found at a domestic home, an RSPCA Inspector transferred Inca to a council operated pound. When later rescued by an angel from the AWL Far South Coast branch, Inca was without breeder/registration/veterinary papers, nothing was known of her past and sadly as an older dog missing a tail, was homeless with uncertain prospects of rehoming. In the absence of an ear tattoo indicating she was spayed, and no desexing certificate nor record of desexing against out of date microchip records, Inca was off to a local vet and prepped for surgery. Frustratingly for staff at the veterinary hospital, ex-lap found Inca was previously spayed hence the pre-surgery shaving of coat and general anaesthetic were unnecessary. Growl, bark and howl...

Inca has since experienced two foster carers and two unsuccessful trial placements, attributable to:

- Feeding challenges, and the rejection of food
- Constant hair shedding and growling when brushed
- Lethargy throughout the day (especially on warmer days)
- Socialisation issues (aggression towards other dogs)
- Uncertainty as to how to keep her entertained, as she didn't like play like other dogs do
- Escaping (literally running away)



By Brian, AKA The Gardener

MUTT OF QUESTIONABLE PERENTAGE, (50+ HUMAN YEARS)

With the benefit of internet research, reading of reputable canine books and magazine articles, third party advice from a breeder of malamutes and previous owners of snow dogs, and a lengthy telephone session with the AWL animal behaviourist, Brian the mongrel and first time AWL foster carer learned all about 'displacement disorder' and the traits of malamutes. As to how to overcome these challenges, Inca knew — a consistent and predictable daily routine involving regular daily walks, careful planning of diet, gentle and progressive grooming from head to tail (or where the tail should be!), gradual introduction to other canines and most importantly, including her into activities involving the extended family. That is, don't dump and forget her into the backyard. Two months down the track, Inca is the loving fur child we were longing for but didn't know we were missing from our lives. And if you're interested in adopting Inca, you're too late – yep, we refuse to let Inca go to any further trial placements because we love her. ●

Foster Snapshot

INTERVIEW WITH LOUISE AND JOSHUA COOK

How long have you been a foster carer with AWL NSW?
We have been foster carers since the end of 2015, though have been actively fostering with other agencies since the beginning of 2013.

What inspired you to become a foster carer?
We have a great love of all animals great and small, though we are especially passionate about animal welfare. We wanted to contribute to the great work that welfare agencies do to enable animals to get a second chance at life, so we thought becoming foster parents was a great way to start.

How many foster animals have you cared for so far?
We have probably cared for approximately 50-70 animals from the Animal Welfare League alone.

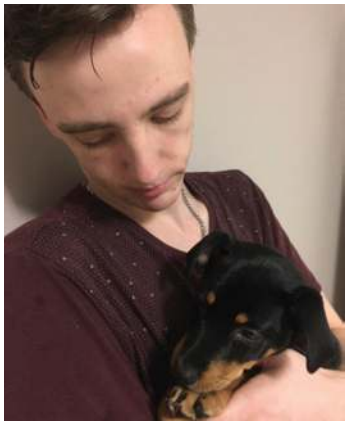
Do you have any of your own animals at home?
We have a menagerie of animals at home including 6 cats, 3 (soon to be 4) dogs, and 4 rabbits. Most of which are all rescue animals (including a couple of foster fails).

What's your favourite part of being a foster carer?
Our favourite part would have to be the overwhelming feeling of pride and joy we feel when we have raised a small neonatal kitten and have watched it grow into a confident kitty. This is especially satisfying when we have nursed ill animals from the brink of death and have been able to get them over the line in the end.

What is the hardest part about foster care?
The hardest part is always having to say goodbye to our foster babies, though we get through it knowing we enabled them to have a second chance at life to find their forever home.

Do you also work/volunteer/have any major hobbies when you're not fostering?
I am a veterinary nurse and practice manager of a vet clinic, while my husband is an animal behaviourist and animal attendant at a 5 star feline boarding facility. We also breed and show rare breeds of rabbits. So basically, our whole lives revolve around animals.

Any words of advice for people who want to become a foster carer?
One piece of advice we would give is for anyone thinking of becoming a foster carer, to carefully think about what they are signing up for. Often people think this is an easy commitment to make and do not completely understand the important responsibility they are taking on. As foster carers it is our job to ensure we maintain the animal's welfare and health, as well as providing them with an enriching environment where they can grow and learn. We mostly care for these animals during their critical socialisation periods, and therefore we have the important job to make sure they are socialised with as many people and animals as possible (within a safe environment) to give them the best chance of success in their new home. ●



Staff Snapshot

NAME: JAYDEN HAWKES-SABO
VETERINARY NURSE



How long have you been working at AWL NSW?
I volunteered at the Animal Welfare League NSW for three years, and have currently been working here for almost two years now.

What motivated you to work at Animal Welfare League NSW?
I've always had a great love and passion for animals, and the thought of being able to work with and help animals in need is very satisfying.

What does an average day on the job look like for you?
My average day consists of caring for sick and injured animals, ensuring they have a clean environment to live in, assisting during their necessary surgeries as well as caring for our own shelter patients. During our day we may have an unexpected emergency case come through, and when they do we need to place our full attention towards the patient, so that we may be able to save its life.

Do you have a favourite animal who you have worked with over your time here?
Personally, I'm drawn more towards the large breed dogs, with a whole lot of energy, but when you work with so many different animals, it's very hard to pick just one that you find special. They are all special, and all have great effects on us. If I had to choose just one of the many, it would have to be a puppy that was surrendered to us with a broken leg, and I became very fond of him and even fostered him for a while. Seeing him heal and go to his forever home was such a heartwarming moment.

What is your favourite part of your job?
There are so many good things about my job. The births of many baby animals is one thing that I enjoy greatly, and working with them until they are old enough to find a forever home. Also seeing the medical progress that sick animals make to get to good health.

What is your least favourite part of the job?
My least favourite part of the job would definitely have to be when medical intervention is unsuccessful. This is really quite upsetting because of the great love the staff and myself have towards each individual animal, and also because our goal is to get them to a greater health.

Do you have any pets?
I have a four month old American Staffy named Zayder. He is full of energy and will someday be able to start his own pool digging business as digging is his latest discovery!

What do you like to do in your spare time?
In my spare time I like to draw, go quad bike riding, and take Zayder to the park and to the beach.

Why do you think that AWL NSW is so important?
The Animal Welfare League NSW is so important because it provides a place and eventually a home for sick, injured and abandoned animals. We all do our best to tend to the needs of each one of them, big and small, giving our time and hearts towards them. The animals in care at the AWL no longer have to struggle through life, but actually live it and be the best of themselves. ●

Happytails

Milky and Caramel (formerly Maximillian and Magnus)



On the 4th October 2017, my 11 year old son and I went to AWL to adopt a kitten. We left there with 2 gorgeous chocolate tabby brothers, Maximillian (short haired) and Magnus (long haired). They were tiny 9 week old babies. My son renamed them Milky and Caramel. They fit into our home very quickly and soon loved their two older feline siblings. In this short time they have become very confident, loving and energetic bundles of love. My whole family adore them and can't imagine life without them. They have grown quickly into big boys and spend their days playing with their older feline siblings, BJ and Mittens (who were also adopted previously from AWL), eating lots, sleeping and snuggling with us. They get up to mischief a lot together and their confident, loving demeanour can be attributed to their foster carer before we adopted them. More people should adopt sibling kittens as they expend a lot of energy chasing each other and give double the love and snuggles to the family. ●

Jackio

We adopted Jackio from Kemps Creek shelter on the 26th January this year. When we first met her she was sweet, shy and affectionate and loved a good pat. For the first week she kept hiding but began to slowly come out for pats and scratches behind the ear. At first she was unsure of how to play, but she stole a face cloth from the laundry basket, and from then she has become a professional face cloth wrestler. Jackio's personality has blossomed and she now enjoys playing with pom poms, raiding knitting yarn and snuggling in bed. She doesn't let cat flu get her down and likes to entertain her followers on Instagram (@jackiothetuxedo). In almost three months, Jackio has transformed into a beautiful, curious and loving cat. ●



30 cats adopted on St Catty's Day!

Kemps Creek shelter cats had the luck of the Irish on St Patrick's Day this year, with our St Catty's Day adoption promotion attracting crowds.

The promotion, which was held on the weekend of March 17-18, featured $17 cat adoptions for all felines in the shelter, in a bid to make room in the crowded cattery and get the public thinking about adoption.

Despite the low price tag on the cats and kittens, normal adoption procedures applied and all animal lovers can be assured that staff did everything possible to ensure adopters were suitable.





Cat lovers lined up before the shelter opened on both days, keen to meet the felines available for adoption, and all up 30 cats and kittens went to new homes over the weekend – a fantastic result that included many long-term cattery residents.

Two of the cats who left the shelter during the promotion were Sweetie and Whitey, a pair of senior cats who came from the same home and were surrendered after their owner passed away.

Both golden oldies had issues settling into the shelter, and received months of behavioural modification, however they eventually warmed up to handling from staff who were all delighted to see them adopted!

Adopters are given information on how to care for their new pet when they take home an animal from Kemps Creek shelter, and our behaviourists offer free advice and support to ensure the adoption is a smooth transition. ●

Kemps Creeks packed to the rafters with chooks!

Do you have room for a feathered friend? Our Kemps Creek shelter currently has 17 chickens who need to find new homes – 10 males, and 7 females. Chooks make great pets, and can be quite easy to care for as long as you have an appropriate set up for them. A nice grassy backyard and a safe enclosure that is predator-proof is all they need to be happy, although many people allow their chickens to come inside too!

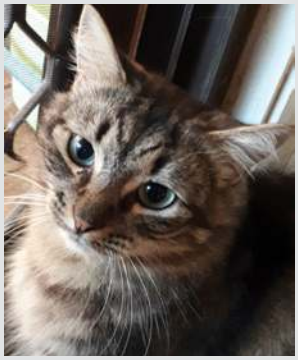
They require chicken feed, which can be purchased from pet or livestock stores, and would also do well with table scraps for nutrients and variety. They will eat almost anything, which is great when you have leftovers from your household meals! Although many people don't realise it, chickens are quite clever and many can be successfully trained in the same way a dog is, especially when given yummy treats as a motivator.

If you are interested in adopting a chicken, please contact us on phone 8899 3333 – we are particularly keen to hear from people who live in rural areas and would be happy adopting roosters. ●

HAWKESBURY VALLEY BRANCH



L: The new Hawkesbury Valley Branch fundraising calendar



R: Lewis the cat, who is finally happy as a 'foster fail'

After a short break from fundraising and community activities, during the recent spell of hot weather, Hawkesbury Valley Branch is now preparing for a busy few months ahead. This year, for the first time, we partnered with All Pets Pantry North Richmond and Hawkesbury District Independent to produce our first ever calendar. Locals were asked to send in pictures of their pets and 12 of the best were chosen to star in the calendar. 100 of the calendars were printed. They sold very quickly and we are looking forward to doing this again next year.

Early March saw us attending Penrith Council's Free Microchipping Day in an effort to promote more responsible pet ownership. A large percentage of cats and kittens impounded at Hawkesbury Companion Animal Shelter come from the Penrith area so there is definitely a need to get the desexing message to this community.

AWL Hawkesbury, Penrith Council, Cat Protection Society, RSPCA and Coreen Avenue Vets had a 'conga' line going for the morning. Pets turning up for the day were vet checked, sent for their free microchip and then people with undesexed pets were referred to us to talk about desexing options. In the four hours we were there, we wrote 40 desexing vouchers, including one for a ferret! We had the opportunity to chat with lots of people about their animals and pass on some tips and advice about general care. It was a wonderful effort by all groups involved and a lot of positive feedback was received on the day.

Kitten season this year has been much busier than expected and we have continued to take underage kittens and mums with bubs from Hawkesbury pound wherever possible. Requests to surrender pets and calls about abandoned pets have also been much higher than usual.

At one call to check out an abandoned cat, we met Lewis. Lewis' owner had been evicted from her rental property and had chosen to leave him behind. Lewis sat on the front doorstep to the only home he had ever known for almost two weeks, before he was noticed by a neighbour. He was a little unsure when we arrived but it only took a few minutes to convince him that we were there to help. Taken into care, he was desexed, vaccinated, microchipped and treated for his worm and flea burden. Lewis thrived in foster care, adapting well and befriending his carers dogs and cats. A few weeks later, Lewis got an adoption offer and this beautiful, gentle natured young cat was on his way to his new home. Unfortunately, the family's existing cat resented Lewis' intrusion and did his best to encourage him to leave! His new family were very sad to have to give him up but we all agreed it was for the best and Lewis was returned to his foster carer.

The search was on again for the perfect family for Lewis, and we found one. Parting with Lewis once had been hard for his foster carer and she decided not to do it twice. Lewis became a 'foster fail' and is now enjoying life with his buddies.





Abbie the dog with her owner Rosy, Branch Secretary Rhona, and happy volunteers

EUROBODALLA BRANCH

One of our biggest fundraisers is our Annual Garage Sale, and this year saw an enormous amount of quality goods donated. About 20 of our volunteers worked tirelessly over 3 days to set all the goods up and then, when it was all over, distribute them to other venues and charities. We raised approximately $2500 which we were all thrilled with. Sadly, we are still desperate for carers for medium and large dogs and can certainly take on more cat and kitten carers should they be available.

GREAT LAKES & MANNING BRANCH

Each year, the Great Lakes & Manning Branch is inundated with hundreds of unwanted kittens to rehome. With 'kitten season' showing no signs of slowing, the branch launched its first targeted desexing programme of the year to reduce the number of unwanted cats and kittens needing rescuing and rehoming.

In an effort to curb the trend of prolonged kitten season, a decision was made by the Branch to provide significantly reduced desexing rates for male cats (just $20 each) and female cats ($30) – well below our usual 'desexing drive' price of $50.

Our goal was to desex 200 cats and we well and truly passed that figure, with over 300 desexing applications received. A large number of dogs were also desexed. The phone and email ran hot hot hot keeping up with the demand!

It was a huge job and a huge success all round, thanks to the dedicated team of volunteers and vets in the area who supported the cause.

TAMWORTH BRANCH

Tamworth Branch has been 'kitty central' lately with seven 3-4 week old babies with no mothers needing a safe place to go. Our cat foster carers, as well as looking after the kittens very well, always send great photos of their little fosters – including these ones!

Our branch has been fortunate to have been given several Bunnings BBQ dates, which always add greatly to fundraising. Our BBQ volunteers give 100% on these busy days.





NAROOMA DOG TRAINING CLUB

We are happy to report that we had a wonderful time at our Family Fun Day in April at Nata Oval, Narooma. The day was a great opportunity for community members, and in particular, dog owners, to learn a bit more about canine behaviour and responsible pet ownership. It was also a chance for us to get our name out there and raise funds for the club! We had a variety of different attractions including games, information and expert advice, demonstrations, a dog agility course, equipment sales and food. We were pleased with the turnout and look forward to more successful events in the future.

WESTERN SUBURBS BRANCH

Western Suburbs Branch was invited along to help celebrate PetStock Rouse Hill's 3rd birthday. AWL hosted the BBQ for the day (with special thanks to our chef Ed), sold homemade cakes and slices made by Sharon and Marg, and raffled Easter baskets to raise money for the branch. Rouse Hill Vets desex many of the animals for our branch and it was a great day for AWL foster carers and members to meet the staff at the practice. The branch is still busy writing desexing vouchers for felines as each year kitten season seems to get bigger and longer. We continue to target staffy cross breeds as we see far too many dogs entering the pound system within our area.



Western Suburbs Branch volunteers with staff at PetStock Rouse Hill's 3rd birthday event.



Senior dogs Zedge and Pippa relaxing together in their home.

FAR SOUTH COAST BRANCH

Our first thought for this edition of LoveTails goes to the people of Tathra in the Bega Valley who had to deal with not only the loss of their homes but their stressed animals, some of whom were parted from their owners. All were found in the end safe and sound.

The Far South Coast branch had a number of older dogs surrendered recently, all of whom were rehomed relatively quickly and successfully to loving homes. There is a growing pool of potential adoptees in the community, interested in older dogs, as people become aware of the many benefits of adopting more mature animals. These pets usually come house trained, leash trained, used to car travel, and generally require less exercise and over the digging/chewing/jumping up stage. As a result these pets often fit well into a busy working household or adapt to the more sedate lifestyle of the retiree. As an example, when the eight year olds Zedge and her best friend monocular Pippa came into the care of our branch, we had several applications for their adoption. Pippa relied somewhat on Zedge for confidence in new situations and the two were quite bonded. Eventually the home chosen was one in which two little dogs could spend the rest of their years together, with their new adoptive mum, in an idyllic country setting. We were invited to open the Year of the Dog Event at Spiral Gallery in Bega which was well attended and held a successful Easter Raffle.

SHOALHAVEN BRANCH

We have had a large number of kittens come into care lately but we thought we would share the story of one special one that touched our hearts. The little kitten of around 3 weeks old was destined to be fed to a pet snake. Luckily for it, a horrified member of the public confronted the person involved and took it to the local vets for care. Calvin as it was named by the vet staff was dirty, anemic and covered in fleas and quite dehydrated. They cared for it over the weekend and then contacted us and we took it into our care.

Over the next few days Calvin put on weight and was doing quite well when suddenly he suffered from a mysterious seizure. He was in a lifeless comatose state for just on 3 hours before regaining consciousness and within an hour was wanting to play as if nothing had happened. Four days later he suffered a second seizure, this time remaining comatose for around 5 hours. He was a little slower to recover fully from the second but by the next day was again running around as if nothing had ever happened. There do not seem to have been any lasting effects from his catatonic states and even the vets were stumped as to their cause.



Calvin (now named Bellatrix) with her new owner!

A few weeks later little Calvin went along for his first vaccination only to discover that he was in fact not a little boy at all but rather a little girl and so she took on the temporary name of itty bitty kitty or Kitty for short. Kitty has now been adopted by a young lady and her family who have renamed her yet again to Bellatrix . She is full of energy and looking forward to spending her new life playing with their family dog (who has the patience of a saint luckily!) and just being loved. It's wonderful outcomes like this that keep us doing what we do!

CAN YOU LEND A PAW?

Our not-for-profit vet clinic in Kemps Creek is in need of towels and blankets to keep our animals warm while they undergo care! Since we have such a high volume of homeless pets come through our doors, especially during kitten season, we go through a lot of bedding and always require more. If you would like to make a donation, please feel free to drop by our shelter at 1605 Elizabeth Drive Kemps Creek or you can also mail items to AWL NSW Vet Clinic PO Box 308, Kemps Creek NSW 2178. We are happy to accept pre-owned items, as long as they are still in decent condition and clean!

Health tips

GUINEA PIGS AS PETS BY **DR SIMONE MAHER**

Pets

I have never really harboured more than a cursory interest in guinea pigs, and certainly never desired one as a pet. And then a funny little creature called Yenoe made his way into the clinic — and with his toupee-like coat, amenability to handling and adorable little paws, I finally understood the attraction.
Guinea pigs belong to the rodent family and are native to South America. Often considered a childrens' pet, they are frequently inexpensive to purchase and like many other "pocket pets" their true requirements are often not understood and they commonly suffer ailments secondary to poor husbandry.

Whilst guinea pigs are often social and inquisitive little creatures quite happy to be handled (if this is done gently and appropriately from a young age), they are fundamentally a prey species. They are always on high alert for danger, which elevates their stress hormones and heart rate – long term, this can be tough on their little bodies.



It is important to take this into consideration when designing their living spaces. They need to be able to retreat from noise and potential predatory animals. Whilst your dog may simply be thinking "a new playmate! Fun!", your guinea pig is probably thinking "eek! I'm about to be breakfast!". They are not well equipped to cope with extremes of temperature and humidity and generally speaking, if it's uncomfortable for you outside, it's uncomfortable for them. They should be kept in small groups – but remember, entire males may fight – and male/female pairs may get along a little too well. It's not recommended to mix guinea pigs and rabbits.

A guinea pig's teeth will grow continuously throughout its life. They need a high fibre diet; naturally they are grazing grass eaters. The major part of their diet should be grass or grass hay, with fresh leafy greens and herbs offered. Guinea pig pellets should be provided in small amounts only, and must be of a high quality. Avoid cereals, seeds, nuts, sweets, peas and chocolate. Early introduction to a wide variety of foods is important to avoid food aversions as they get older.

The life expectancy of a guinea pig is 5-8 years. Treat them well and they can be a delightful, pocket sized companion. And if they're anything like little Yenoe, their funny little quirks – and hairstyle – will bring you endless merriment. ●

Adopt

GIVE A SHELTER PET A HOME AND RECEIVE YEARS OF LOVE IN RETURN

Volunteer

WE ALWAYS NEED VOLUNTEERS TO WORK DIRECTLY WITH THE ANIMALS OR DO ADMINISTRATIVE TASKS

Foster

FOSTER CARERS TEMPORARILY LOOK AFTER SICK OR YOUNG ANIMALS, OR THOSE WHO NEED A BREAK FROM THE SHELTER

Donate

WE APPRECIATE FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO HELP WITH SHELTER COSTS, AND WELCOME ITEMS TO FEED AND ENRICH THE ANIMALS

Vet Clinic

WE PROVIDE EXCELLENT CARE AND SERVICE AT OUR VETERINARY CLINIC FOR ALL YOUR ANIMALS NEEDS AND HEALTH CONCERNS

ANIMAL WELFARE LEAGUE NSW

ANIMAL WELFARE LEAGUE NSW SUPPORT OFFICE

1605 Elizabeth Drive,
Kemps Creek NSW 2178
POST: PO Box 308,
Kemps Creek NSW 2178
PHONE: (02) 8899 3333
FAX: (02) 8777 4488
helpingpets@awlnsw.com.au