



# Victorian Dog Rescue &

Resource Group Inc.

Save Someone Special



Summer 2010

Victorian Dog Rescue & Resource Group (VicDRG) aims to decrease the unacceptably high number of companion animals killed in our pounds each year. We rescue and rehome deathrow pets and promote responsible pet ownership and the wellbeing of companion animals. We are staffed almost entirely by volunteers, receive no government funding and rely on supporter donations in order to survive.

## Barnaby: from death row to media sensation!

**After breaking hearts by appearing as 'Melbourne's Saddest Dog' in the *Herald Sun*, we received hundreds of adoption applications for Wolfhound Barnaby from caring animal lovers around the state.** He also featured on channels 7 and 10 news, the *Today Show*, and was even mentioned in the international media!

It was inspiring for us to discover that so many people out there truly care about homeless dogs and cats – particularly the four-leggeds who haven't had a good start in life.

Our first step, once we dusted ourselves off after the media frenzy, was to whittle down all the kind applicants to a small number that could fulfil Barnaby's numerous special needs. So many wonderful people applied that we had to decline, because they perhaps

weren't going to be home enough during the day, or didn't have another dog as four-legged company for Barnaby.



Photo: Craig Borrow, courtesy *Herald Sun*

Next, we arranged for our Barnaby to visit a handful of shortlisted applicants and see how he coped. Would he be frightened, and retreat to his crate (the only place he felt safe?) Or, worse, would he try to run away? We were as nervous as he was.

When Adoption Co-ordinator Lisa arrived with Barnaby at the first shortlisted home, our hairy friend went in and promptly lay down by the couple's fire. It was as if he knew he was home.

And he was!

The wonderful truth is *Barnaby himself* chose his forever home, which is exactly how we would wish it. We have seen this happen before when a foster dog seems to 'recognise' their new forever family – literally a case of love at first sight! In particular, we're reminded of foster dog Scudley, who was very withdrawn on his first meet-and-greet for no apparent reason. However, at another meeting with a different couple, he immediately attached himself to them! I suppose that's what we mean when we say our dog or cat 'chose us'. They often do!

Story cont. page 3

## Feature Dog for Adoption – Laurel!

Laurel, a Mastiff X Ridgeback, is five years young and great fun to have around. This affectionate girl would love to be your best friend and shower you with her love and devotion.

Laurel is great with other dogs and knows many com-

mands. We would love for Laurel to find a home to give her the love and attention she's missed out on. For more information about this lovely girl, please visit:

[www.victoriandogrescue.org.au/adoptions/laurel.html](http://www.victoriandogrescue.org.au/adoptions/laurel.html)





**Bellamy, a beautiful Heeler X puppy rescued recently from a country pound and now in his new home.**

*We believe that most dogs end up on death row due to no fault of their own... Many in our community regard pets as disposable items.*



**Just two of many kittens we rescued from Mildura Pound. Snooky (left) and Percy are special friends, and we were delighted to find them a home together.**

## How can you help Vic Dog Rescue?

**Our rescue pets need all sorts of assistance – not just financial.**

**Here are some ideas: Can you lend a hand?**

- ◆ Become a **foster carer** for a deserving dog or cat while we find them a loving new home. The more carers we have, the more lives we save! For more information see [www.victoriandogrescue.org.au/foster.html](http://www.victoriandogrescue.org.au/foster.html).
- ◆ Tell your family and friends to **adopt** from their local rescue group, pound or shelter rather than from a pet shop or puppy farm. A rescue pet is forever loyal and grateful to you for saving their life.
- ◆ Choose one of our rescue dogs to **sponsor** while we find them a new home – for more information see [www.victoriandogrescue.org.au/sponsor\\_a\\_dog.html](http://www.victoriandogrescue.org.au/sponsor_a_dog.html).
- ◆ Help us **transport** rescue dogs from rural Victoria to Melbourne on weekends.
- ◆ **Purchase** one of our T-shirts, shopping bags or stickers to help spread the word about our fabulous rescue pets: see pages 8-9.
- ◆ **Donate** goods that we're always in need of: animal crates, food, flea treatments, toys, rugs, collars, leads, beds, bowls, pet igloos, brushes, puppy pens.
- ◆ Offer us your **personal services**: are you a knitter, designer, lawyer, photographer, accountant, writer or have any other skills that we could use? Run them by us!
- ◆ Print out copies of this **Newsletter** or on-line posters and leave them at your local vets, groomers or pet shops (but only those that don't sell animals please).
- ◆ Help us perform **house checks** for prospective adopters and foster carers in your area.
- ◆ Support and promote our **fundraising events** among your family and friends.
- ◆ **Vote** with your feet – write a letter to your state and federal MP about the tragic numbers of healthy pets killed in pounds and shelters every year, and ask them to take action.

**Did you know? All donations over \$2 are now fully tax-deductible!**

**All funds received from adoption fees go towards the rescue and rehabilitation of other homeless pets.**

### How to Contact Us

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Elsternwick VIC 3185**

**Email:**

[vicdrg@optusnet.com.au](mailto:vicdrg@optusnet.com.au)

**Web:**

[www.victoriandogrescue.org.au](http://www.victoriandogrescue.org.au)

### Magazine Team

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**Any comments or suggestions for the next magazine? We'd like to hear from you. Please email Saskia at [saskia.vicdrg@gmail.com](mailto:saskia.vicdrg@gmail.com)**

# President's Corner

Trisha Taylor, President, VicDRG



## THEY ARE VOICELESS... WILL YOU SPEAK FOR THEM?

Community foster-care network, like ours – who have operated for a long time with high standards of care – have recently formed a new organisation: the Dog Rescue Association of Victoria Inc ([www.drav.org.au](http://www.drav.org.au)), in order to protect our right to save these defenceless animals. We are often their only chance.

We are waiting anxiously to see what changes will be in the draft new Code of Practice for Pounds & Shelters and legislation that will be presented for public comment shortly. We are very hopeful that some of the anomalies in this decade-old legislation will be addressed. For those of you who contacted politicians before the election to support these changes, we express, on behalf of the voiceless, our deepest thanks. Some animals may now live because you wrote a letter or made a telephone call.

However, some of the decision-making lies in the hands of your Council. What do they do with animals in *your* pound? What happens to the animals when the pounds shut at Christmas and in country areas, where the vet often closes too? Does your pound encourage rehoming? Are you welcome to walk through it? Does your pound release animals to community foster-care networks like ours? Do they welcome locals at your pounds to see how it operates?

Almost all animals in the pound are there through no fault of their own and deserve a second chance. They wait for their family to come back for them. Few do. We believe we should have the *right* to rescue any animal that would otherwise be killed. We simply want to save the lives of those who have been abandoned by others. Please let this be your Christmas present to the animals – contact the politicians below to express your desire for pound reform. If you would like a template for an email or letter, please get in touch with us via the contacts on page 2.

The Premier of Victoria, Mr Ted Baillieu  
Email: [ted.baillieu@parliament.vic.gov.au](mailto:ted.baillieu@parliament.vic.gov.au)  
Level 1, 1 Treasury Place, East Melbourne VIC 3001

The Minister for Agriculture, Mr Peter Walsh  
Email: [peter.walsh@parliament.vic.gov.au](mailto:peter.walsh@parliament.vic.gov.au)  
Level 1, 1 Treasury Place, East Melbourne VIC 3001

## Barnaby: from death row to media sensation!

### Cover story cont:

Barnaby's new mum and dad are a semi-retired couple on the Mornington Peninsula who live on an acreage, so Barnaby has room for long walks with his family without leaving the safety of their property. On the rare times that he is left alone, he has a dignified older sister-dog called 'Miss T' to keep him company – and last night she let him share the couch for the first time! Before that he was lying full-length in front of the fire, covered by a blanket, with his new mum getting up during the night to check on him. And of course his crate sits in the living room for him to retreat into when he feels the need. At the moment he only goes in there when his new family are out, which is a wonderful sign of how safe he is now feeling.

A big thank you goes to Rudducks for kindly donating not one but two new crates for Barnaby, so that he will always have his security blanket in sight (see right).

We're so glad we saved you, Barnaby. We're so glad a caring ranger asked us to help you, just in time. And thank you for letting us tell your story, and reach out to so many people who, next time they want a new companion, might just remember you and choose to save one of your kindred at their local pound or shelter.

We thank everyone who has supported us through our work with Barnaby and with our other foster dogs and cats. A foster-care network supported by our volunteers and our fantastic adopters is such a great community of compassionate people who care for our beloved four-legged friends. If we don't have a dog you would like to adopt– or if we say no because you are not an ideal match for that particular pet – please look at other



Above: Barnaby's proud adoptive mum Margaret with Brenton and Amy from Rudducks.

rescue groups such as [Rescued with Love](#), [Beagle Rescue](#), [Pug Rescue](#), [Greyhound Safety Net](#), [New Beginnings Animal Rescue](#) and [Peninsula Cat Rescue](#).

Thank you all again for caring about Barnaby, and all homeless dogs and cats like him. If you wish to help us continue our work, please visit the below link for the many ways you can assist: [victoriandogrescue.org.au/help.html](http://victoriandogrescue.org.au/help.html).

We are very grateful for your interest and kindness. and we do hope you'll consider saving another dog like Barnaby whose time has run out. *Almost all* dogs who end up in the pound are there through no fault of their own, and deserve a second chance. The most amazing thing of all, however, is that they are prepared to give us a second chance!



# PETS FOR ADOPTION

These are just some rescue pets currently available – please see our website for many others: [www.victoriandogrescue.org.au](http://www.victoriandogrescue.org.au).

## MORRIS

Shepherd X Terrier, 12 months



This affectionate little guy loves people. He's great with other dogs, and adores kids. House trained, Morris sleeps happily in his basket and will let you know when he's ready to go outside. Great on the lead, he'd be suited to someone looking for a walking pal. This fantastic boy is an absolute delight. Please see [www.victoriandogrescue.org.au/adoptions/morris\\_dog.html](http://www.victoriandogrescue.org.au/adoptions/morris_dog.html).

## FRIEDA

Terrier X, 2 years



This very affectionate little girl will do almost anything for a cuddle! She loves the company of children and other dogs. Frieda is housetrained and looks forward to her daily walks. This happy and sociable young girl would love another 4-legged companion to spend her days with. Please see [www.victoriandogrescue.org.au/adoptions/frieda.html](http://www.victoriandogrescue.org.au/adoptions/frieda.html).

## MERVYN

Terrier X, 12 months



Mervyn is a bright, boisterous little guy. He loves his Kong and making puppy mischief but is learning quickly too. He gets on well with other dogs and is crazy about his Great Dane X foster brother Linnie (see below)! They would love a home together. Please see [www.victoriandogrescue.org.au/adoptions/mervyn.html](http://www.victoriandogrescue.org.au/adoptions/mervyn.html).

## BOO

Staffy X Ridgeback, 4 months



Boo is a little sweetheart and his tail wags non-stop. He loves to play with a giant dog he is living with. Kind, affectionate and loving, Boo will need to go puppy school and then require ongoing obedience training to ensure that he grows into a well-mannered young man. Please see [www.victoriandogrescue.org.au/adoptions/boo.html](http://www.victoriandogrescue.org.au/adoptions/boo.html).

## FILOMENA

Terrier X, 5 years



Filomena is a treasure. She is sweet to everyone she meets and loves to have affection lavished on her. She understands commands and enjoys her daily walks. Filomena is friendly with all other dogs, just adores her cuddles and will make the most wonderful companion. Please see [www.victoriandogrescue.org.au/adoptions/filomena.html](http://www.victoriandogrescue.org.au/adoptions/filomena.html).

## LINNIE

Great Dane X, 18 months



This gorgeous boy is a great guard dog and adores cuddles. He loves the park and knows basic commands. A bit nervous around strangers initially, he soon relaxes and is even good around cats! He would do well in a family situation and would love to be rehomed with his foster brother Mervyn (above). Please see [www.victoriandogrescue.org.au/adoptions/linnie.html](http://www.victoriandogrescue.org.au/adoptions/linnie.html).

## ZENG

12 months



This beautiful girl is very cuddly and sociable. She's a delight to watch with her foster kitten siblings – snuggling up to them and grooming them back to health. This gentle soul adores people too and needs a loving home with another feline friend to care for.

## ISABELLE and her four kittens

12 months



Isabelle is a friendly girl who is being a good mum to her lovely brood of kittens: Jesse, Jacob, Julia and Jessica. Busy teaching them how to be good kitty citizens until they are ready for adoption, Isabelle also needs a loving home soon where she can enjoy some well-earned R&R!

## TEMPO

12 months

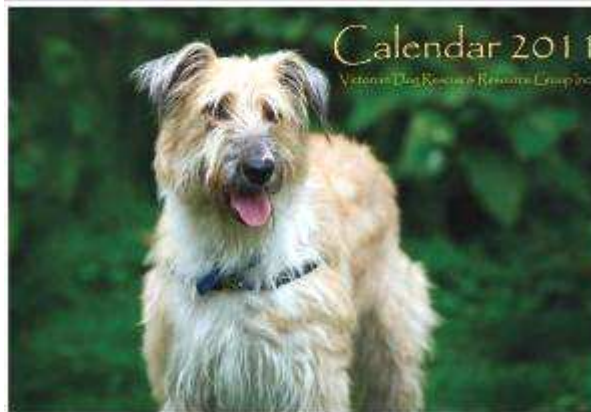


This beautiful, bouncy boy loves to play and is extremely social. He loves his tucker, adapts well to new environments and enjoys a big meal and sleep after a rough and tumble!

Can you give a loving home to any of these deserving pets? Each one is health-checked, desexed, microchipped and vaccinated. Our adoption fee is \$350 for dogs and \$150 for cats. This payment goes towards the rescue and rehabilitation of other pets. For more information, please visit [www.victoriandogrescue.org.au/adoptions](http://www.victoriandogrescue.org.au/adoptions).

# Victorian Dog Rescue & Resource Group Inc.

**OUR VERY OWN 2011 WALL CALENDAR! – ORDER NOW!**



Every month features our gorgeous rescue dogs, photographed by wonderful *Herald-Sun* photographer Manny Cifra. The calendars make great Christmas presents, and help to spread the word about our vital rescue work.

**Yes! Please put me down for \_\_\_\_\_ copies of the 2011 Calendar!**

## Prices

1 calendar: \$15    2 calendars: \$28

3 calendars: \$39    4 calendars and over: \$12 each

*PLUS – order 11 or more calendars and receive 1 free calendar!*

Postage: please add \$3 for the first calendar and \$1 for every calendar after that (e.g. if you are ordering 3 calendars = \$3 + \$1 + \$1 = \$5 total postage). For orders of 12 or more, please email [vicdogrescue@gmail.com](mailto:vicdogrescue@gmail.com) for a postage quote.

Name:

Email address:

Delivery address:

State:                      Post code:

Total cost including postage: \$

I am paying by: (tick one)

Credit card  Visa *or* Mastercard (circle) Card No.:

Expiry No:

Cheque/Money order

Please make out to Victorian Dog Rescue & Resource Group Inc. and post with this order form to: VicDRG, PO Box 5033, Camberwell VIC 3124.

Direct Credit

Please pay our Bendigo Bank account, BSB 633 000, Account 137 882 577. Be sure to list your last name in the reference box followed by 'calendar'. Please then also post or email this order form so we have your delivery address to: [vicdogrescue@gmail.com](mailto:vicdogrescue@gmail.com)

# The Quality of Life debate – what is our perspective?

by Trisha Taylor, VicDRG President

## How do you define what constitutes good quality of life for a beloved pet, and when, if ever, they should be euthanased?

We come across the occasional vet who believes that an older dog with the usual health challenges should be killed: for example, a dog with bad arthritis, deteriorating hearing, or the onset of cataracts. Arguing the dog's best days are behind them, such a vet views the pet's 'quality of life' as no longer sufficient for their ongoing care to be justified.

I disagree. When I see an older dog out on his short walk around the block, perhaps being wheeled back in a pram (as one of our adopters does with her rescue pet), his ears flying, enjoying the smells and the company, I see a dog still enjoying his life. He may not be able to do all the things he used to love doing, but pleasure is still derived from other things: for example, your company; a nice dinner; a knee by the fire, a gentle massage.

Fortunately, these days most modern, experienced vets have the compassion and

understanding to realise your pet's reduced abilities do not necessarily mean there is no quality of life, and understand that you, their devoted family, want to do what you can to continue their life for as long as they are not experiencing untreatable pain.

***'I have two large 11-year-old dogs that aren't as spritely as they once were... But we haven't disposed of them just because they are old.'***

My blind cat was eighteen when she died. For the previous three years she had ruled the roost in the kitchen, a heat pad on her chair nearly all year, yowling if the dogs came too near. She took herself outside for about thirty minutes each day and meandered over to my knee most nights. Did I think of ending her life? No. She couldn't sit on top of the wardrobe any more, or chase balls, but she enjoyed a

peaceful, happy existence.

I also have two large eleven-year-old dogs that certainly aren't as spritely as they once were. They are stiff when they get up, can't run on the beach at the same speed as they used to, their eyes not as clear – but that's okay. They love me and I love them. So we will build them a ramp to get in and out of the car, give them cartrophen injections, fish oil, glucosamine, water swims and encourage them to continue on as long as they have pleasure in their life.

When they can't get up, when they will no longer eat, we will ask our vet to sedate them at our house and send them on their final journey. But we haven't disposed of them just because they are old and frail. We have aged too, but they haven't disposed of us either!

For most of us, our pets are our family, and however long we have had them share our lives – whether from a puppy or adopted as a senior – we will respect their right to each and every day.

*A much-loved Duke has since died during emergency surgery.*

## Letty's story – an older dog enjoying every day

My family consists of myself, my husband, our two beautiful boys aged nine and ten, and two lovely older dogs. We have always had dogs, and when we lost our thirteen-year-old Labrador to cancer, we looked to adopt again. On the Victorian Dog Rescue website, we found Letty in February 2008. She was nine or ten years of age, black and tan, and a mixture of Labrador, German Shepherd and Kelpie. We soon fell in love with this beautiful, gentle giant and she joined our family.

Even though Letty is a bit older than your average family pet, there are many advantages to this: she is calmer, but still playful, and has lots of patience with our two boys and our six-year-old Labrador. She is happy to go on walks, but doesn't fuss if we are a bit late or forget. She loves a cuddle and sits quietly at our feet. Every day with her is precious and wonderful. Her vet bills are no different from our younger dog - they both have the same vaccinations and worming treatments. Remember, even a young puppy can get sick or have an accident - this isn't restricted to the older ones!



Letty eats the same food as our Labrador, sleeps in the same type of basket in our bedroom, and has the same beauty parlour treatment (shampoo, blow wave and nails trimmed). We have found that there is no extra cost involved in caring for her because of her age. She is a gentle, calm and affectionate girl, and very happy to be with a family who love her. And just because her hair and eyebrows may be a little grey, doesn't mean that she doesn't have a huge amount to offer!

– Letty's mum, Margaret



## Isabel's story – 'a little legend who gave more than she ever took'

Choosing to adopt a senior dog is a very rewarding experience for someone who is willing to accept the challenges of old age. Isabel spent her final chapter knowing that she was loved and appreciated, just as we would hope for ourselves one day.

Isabel melted my heart in every way possible. Sure, a senior dog may require extra effort to make sure that their quality of life is tops, but all of that extra effort in our case was returned three-fold.

Although our time together was short, we made the most of it. Isabel's will to live and the way in which she took all the challenges of old age in her stride taught me life lessons about just getting on with

it and making the best of what you are given: no matter if your body is not what it was.

Isabel's personality certainly made up for her physical challenges – I don't think her nature had changed one bit since she was a little pup. She was certainly one of the sharpest tools in the box and just because her body had slowed down, the moments we shared were not any less valuable. In fact, Isabel to me was a little legend who gave more than she ever took. I loved tucking her in at night, cooking special meals, carrying her up and down stairs, etc. I would be less of a person if it had not been for the care and nurturing that Isabel allowed me to give her. I have no doubt Isabel appreciated me as much as I appreciated her and I will never forget how blessed I was to have had her in my life.

– Isabel's mum, Dominique



## Puppy Farm Awareness Day: A triumph for Oscar's Law

Vic Dog Rescue had a proud presence at Australia's first Puppy Farm Awareness Day Rally recently, on Sunday September 19, organised by Oscar's Law. Two of our volunteers, Noelene and Saskia, were closely involved with ensuring the day was a great success, and we congratulate them on their efforts.

While Oscar's Law hoped for an attendance of 500 people, some reports had the crowd estimated at closer to 5000, including interstate visitors, clearly demonstrating just how important the issue is to animal lovers in this country.

Vic Dog Rescue's own foster carer Moira Rayner (right) gave an inspiring speech, accompanied by her Mildura rescue dog Bucket – herself a victim of



Foster carer Moira Rayner (right), pictured with Trix and Phil Wollen from Kindness House.



Our volunteers at the Rally. From left:: a supporter and furry friend, Lynda (at back), Sandra, Dan, Sarah and Ana.

too many litters in her former life. Other passionate speakers included longstanding anti-puppy factory campaigner Debra Tranter, Tamara Mulholland from Underdog Training and Derryn Hinch, who reminded the crowd to 'maintain the rage'.

Perhaps the greatest triumph of the day, however, is that over 60 organisations united for the first time on any one animal welfare issue. This show of strength alone is hugely encouraging. Politicians on all sides are beginning to listen: animal welfare for the first time is a state election issue this November.

Despite the great turn-out at the rally, the fact remains that many in the community do not know puppy factories exist. Please help spread the word to family and friends to *never* buy a puppy or kitten from a pet shop – adopt from your local pound, shelter or rescue group instead. We encourage you to also pledge your support for the campaign by visiting [oscarlaw.org](http://oscarlaw.org) and [closepuppyfactories.org](http://closepuppyfactories.org).

# VIC DOG RESCUE LAUNCHES ITS NEW MERCHANDISE RANGE!

The motto is  
**'Save Someone  
Special'**

Support a great  
cause and  
look good, too!



- ◆ Your purchase helps us help the animals
- ◆ All profits go directly to them
- ◆ Quality products
- ◆ Exclusive range!



Unisex: 100% cotton, premium quality

Colours: Teal (above); Maroon and Black.

Sizes: S, M, L, XL, XXL.

Pricing: 1 Tee for \$22; 2 Tees for \$40; 3 Tees for \$55.



Women's Sleeveless: 100% cotton, premium quality

Colours: Teal (above); Maroon and Black.

Sizes: S, M, L, XL, XXL.

Pricing: 1 Tee for \$22; 2 Tees for \$40; 3 Tees for \$55.



Women's Slim Fit: 100% cotton, premium quality

Colours: Blue (above); Charcoal and Black.

Sizes: S, M, L, XL, XXL.

Pricing: 1 Tee for \$22; 2 Tees for \$40; 3 Tees for \$55.



## Our Bumper Sticker!

Show your support for rescue pets on your car, window – anywhere! UV-resistant. **Only \$1.50 per sticker!**



## Christmas Cards – Spread the Rescue Message this Christmas!

These unique cards, designed exclusively for Vic Dog Rescue, feature our very own happy rescue dogs, safe and loved in their new homes. There are 6 different designs, and they come with matching envelopes. On the back of the card is a few lines about our work. A great way to help spread the word about how wonderful rescue dogs are to all your family and friends! Includes envelopes. **Only \$12 for a pack of 12, or \$22 for a pack of 24!**

### Our Shopping Bag!

This quality calico shopping bag measures 42.5cm x 39cm. Much more eco-friendly than petroleum-based supermarket 'green' bags, and a great way to give rescue dogs some free publicity while you're out and about!

**Only \$3.90 each or three for \$11.**



Order below or online! Visit [victoriandogrescue.org.au/shop.html](http://victoriandogrescue.org.au/shop.html)



### Victorian Dog Rescue Merchandise Order Form

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2.			
3.			
4.			
		Order total:	
		Postage:	
		Grand total:	

Name:

Address:

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Please post your order to: **Victorian Dog Rescue, PO Box 5033, Camberwell VIC 3124**, or scan and email your order to [saskia.vicdrg@gmail.com](mailto:saskia.vicdrg@gmail.com).

You can also order online! Visit [victoriandogrescue.org.au/shop.html](http://victoriandogrescue.org.au/shop.html)

#### Postage

Orders under \$5: free.  
Between \$5 and \$20: \$4.  
Between \$21 and \$30: \$6.  
Over \$30: \$8.

#### Method of Payment – please tick

Bank deposit: to Victorian Dog Rescue:  
BSB: 633 000 Account No: 13788 2577  
 I enclose a Cheque/Money Order  
 Please debit my credit card:  
Visa or Mastercard (pls circle)  
Card number:

Expiry date:

**All prices are inclusive of GST.**

# Thank you, Supporters – Ned can see again!

*By Carol Bamford,  
Ned's adoptive mum*



**Left: Ned in a playful mood shortly after his sight-restoring operation.**

**Many of you will remember from our Spring 2009 newsletter the heart-breaking story of young Ned, a Maltese X dumped at a country pound, almost blind, and in appalling condition.**

Vic Dog Rescue saved Ned, placed him in foster care with my family, and the group's President Trisha arranged to have his eyes assessed. We were given both good news and bad: one of Ned's eyes couldn't be saved, but there was a chance of restoring sight in the other. The only problem was that it would require an expensive operation.

Despite not having the funds, the decision was still an easy one for VicDRG – they decided to launch 'Ned's Sight Fund' and ask supporters to consider making a donation.

So what happened next? Well, there was a very generous response from many peo-

ple wanting to help this deserving fellow see again, and we were able to go ahead with the operation. All our fingers and paws were crossed for him!

Ned's eye specialist Robin Stanley soon after gave us the great news. The operation was a success: Ned had sight restored in one eye! He recovered quickly, and since that day he has had a new lease on life. For the first time, he enjoys looking out of the car window at everything going past, and can run and play.

Ned has won so many hearts with his outgoing, friendly nature. People just can't walk past him without stopping for a pat and this always gives me the opportunity to share the story about his sad beginnings. This helps us to promote the work of VicDRG, and listeners are always shocked to hear about the huge number of dogs on death-row in our pounds – dogs just like little Ned. Everyone's response is always the same: 'How could anyone give up such a beautiful boy?'

A very big thank you needs to go to Trisha for making the decision to go ahead with Ned's operation, and to the supporters who donated so generously to make it possible. It was a costly project to undertake, with no real guarantee that the out-

come would be successful, but we all knew that the difference it would make to Ned's life was invaluable.

Soon after, my husband and I realised we couldn't imagine life without Ned, so decided to adopt this special little man as a permanent member of our family.

I very much encourage all dog lovers to consider fostering in order to give other dogs like Ned a second chance. I believe all rescue pets know what you have done for them, and the love and gratitude they give to you in return is immeasurable.



**Below: Proud adoptive mum Carol with a transformed Ned today.**

## **Can you help us give other special dogs like Hughie and Ned a chance?**

**Yes! I want to make a contribution to the Hughie Special Dogs Fund.**

I would like to make a donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Post code: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I am paying by (please tick):  Bank deposit to: BSB 633 000 / Account no: 137 882 577.  Cheque / Money Order

Credit card. Visa/Mastercard (please circle). Card no.: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp: \_\_\_\_\_

Name on card: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please post this coupon to:** VicDRG, PO Box 5033, Camberwell VIC 3124, **OR** scan and email it to:

[rescue@victoriandogrescue.org.au](mailto:rescue@victoriandogrescue.org.au).

*On behalf of Hughie and Ned, thank you.*



# In loving memory of Hughie: a little dog with a big heart

Those who attended our film fundraiser evening in April had the honour of hearing foster carer Marcus Johnson speak about a very special dog called Hughie, who sadly passed away soon after rescue.

We were too late for Hughie, but rather than allowing ourselves to feel despair about his loss, we've decided to honour Hughie's brave, short life with the establishment of a **Special Dogs Fund** in his memory, to which we invite supporters to donate.

Below is an edited transcript from Marcus' speech.

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Above right is a picture I took of Hughie. For a little guy, he sure made a huge impact on us. He died yesterday and he took a big chunk of our hearts with him.

Hughie was a rescue dog and was brought into the house by my partner, Colette. What little we know about him is that he came from a pound and his immediate future was not looking too flash. The word had gone out through the usual channels and Colette put her hand up to take on the little bloke until he was able to get right and find a loving home.

We already have a rescue dog, Yota, so we know the deal. Yota is a beautiful young lady – an Australian Koolie – who came from the bush and had been mistreated. Today, she is strong, loves to run and goes 'Woo woo' when we take her to the park and her working-dog personality regains its natural place in the universe.



Photo: Rob Leeson, courtesy Herald Sun

I have to say it feels pretty damn good to rescue an animal from an untimely end or a

brutal existence at the hands of some uncaring bastard. I guess that's made it all the harder to lose Hughie. For a dog that weighed very little and had trouble standing upright, our Hughie had enough personality for ten big pooches. When Yota came near Hughie's food, the little bloke would let fly with a mouthful that made everyone within earshot freeze and take a step back – humans included.

Hughie was, as far as we knew, a mini Fox Terrier. It seems that plenty of attitude is hard-wired into them. He had more than most. He also had more issues than most: a laundry list of physical difficulties. Nonetheless, we fell in love with him and we knew it would be easy enough for somebody else to do the same.

**'I have to say it feels pretty damn good to rescue an animal from an untimely end or a brutal existence'**

After a few initial tough days, Hughie seemed to be finding his feet and getting about better. He would follow Yota around the house; his little toenails tick-tick-ticking on the floorboards as he found his rhythm and got going. Hughie was never a 4/4 sort of guy. His beat was irregular, like a jazz soloist flirting between time signatures. You could tell, though, that he had struggled to get this far. He was achingly thin. His legs were all out of whack. One obvious sign of neglect was that he had very hairy paws. Where normally, the hair between the pads would be worn away from walking, Hughie had a lot of fluff. Clearly, Hughie hadn't been doing much walking. Maybe he had been in a cage all his life? He had rickets, a bone-softening disease that comes from lack of sunlight. He would seek out a warm patch in the garden and soak up the sun, as if he was trying to cure himself.

When I saw Hughie, sometimes I would want to cry. But we thought we could fill that little body with our own hearts and pull him through. The plan was to foster him and pre-



pare him for somebody else. The plan wasn't to lose him.

Hughie went quickly. On Saturday night, he fell ill. Colette woke early and sat with him, cuddling him to make sure he was warm. We took him to the vet as early as possible and the diagnosis was serious. His breathing was irregular and crackly, indicating pneumonia. He needed urgent attention and some tests. How could this be happening so fast? We took him to a second clinic and then to an emergency vet. In what seemed like no time at all, we were faced with the worst possible outcome. To be told by the vet that he was in terrible shape and going quickly was a huge shock. To have to make the decision to let him go was achingly hard and something we will always remember. Even the vet was in tears. I had expected her to be detached and professional, but she was obviously affected by us, the situation, and the fading little life force in our arms.

I'm glad we were able to say goodbye and see our friend off. I'm also glad that we got to take him home and put him in the soil in our backyard. It keeps him close to our hearts and reminds us of who he was and what he meant.

Our pets give everything of themselves to us. They are never jealous or spiteful or arrogant or greedy or mean. They just want us to love them and to show us how much they love us.

I believe that Hughie taught us a lot in the short time he was here. He was brave, happy and loving, in spite of everything he had been through. He was a real survivor and he now survives in our memories.

Hughie was special. And I think that the people who help animals are special. On behalf of Colette and myself, thank you for giving our little friend a chance to live on by naming the Special Dogs Fund after him.



# From death-row to adored family members... Saved by Victorian Dog Rescue & Resource Group Inc.



Yota

I am no longer starving, and the rope marks around my neck have faded



Ned

I was blind but they gave me an operation and now I can see—and run!



Letty

I was left in the pound to die but Victorian Dog Rescue saved me

Just three of hundreds of dogs that Vic Dog Rescue has helped save from country pounds and given a second chance at life

**Can you help us save more deserving homeless pets like these?**

- All donations over \$2 are tax deductible
- Every dollar goes directly to the dogs' care

## Donation Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Post code: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please send me the VicDRG online newsletter  (please tick)

I would like to donate: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for the rescue and care of more homeless dogs.

Payment options:

I am paying by: Cheque/Money order. Please make out to **Victorian Dog Rescue & Resource Group Inc.**

and post to: VicDRG, PO Box 584, Elsternwick VIC 3185.

I am paying by: Direct Credit to our account at Bendigo Bank, BSB 633 000, Account number 137882577. Be sure to list your last name in the reference box. Please then also post or email this form to: [vicdrg@optusnet.com.au](mailto:vicdrg@optusnet.com.au).

I am paying by: Credit card. Visa/Mastercard (please circle). Card no.: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp: \_\_\_\_\_

On behalf of these special dogs, thank you!

