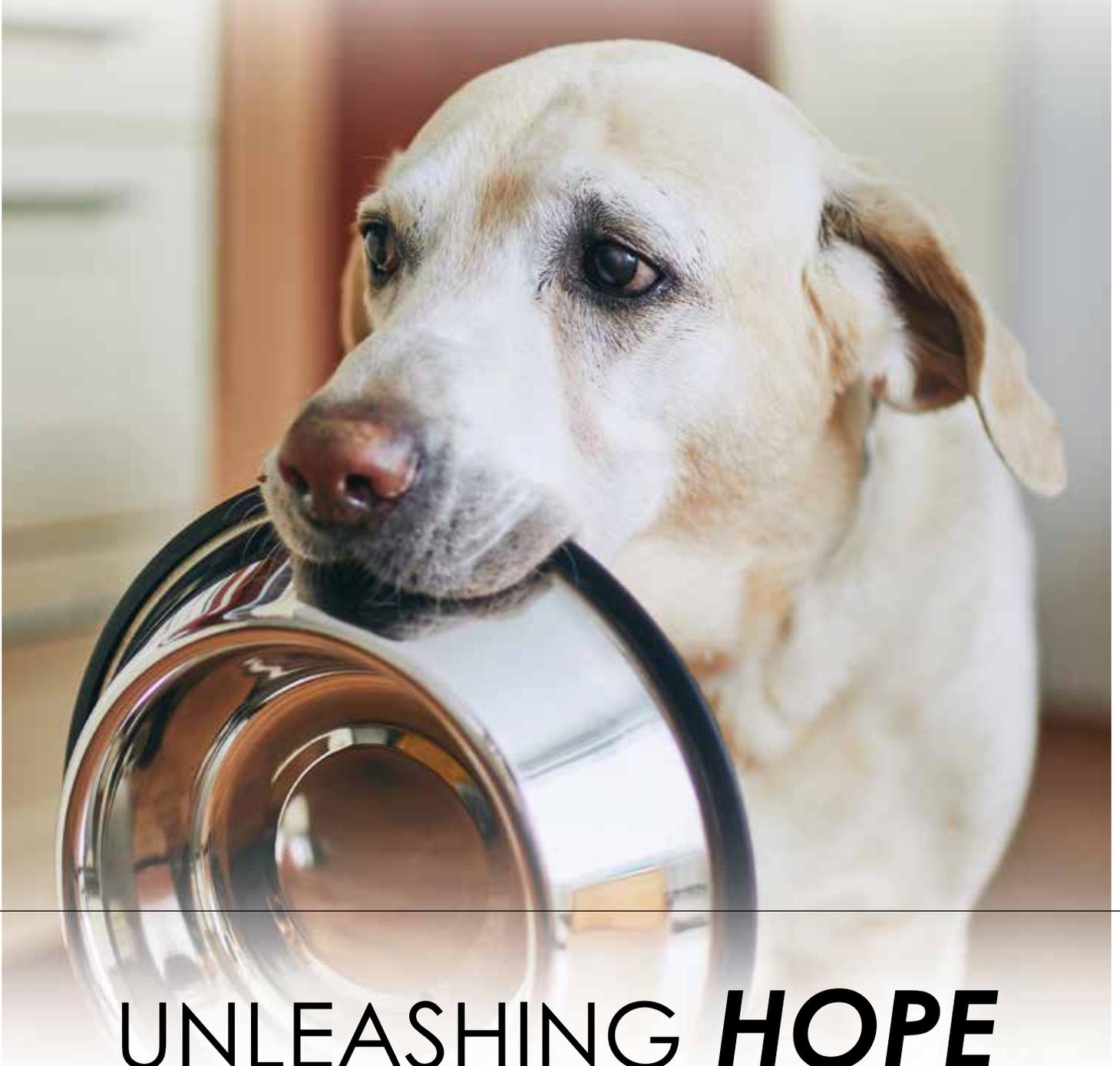


TAWL TAILS

Official Magazine of Animal Welfare League Queensland Est. 1959



Spring - Summer 2023

UNLEASHING **HOPE**
AND **COMPASSION**



Animal Welfare
League Qld
Est. 1959



In Loving Memory of **SUSI BARES** 1942 – 2023

With deep sadness, we announce the passing of Susi Bares, a devoted volunteer and Board Member of AWLQ. Susi has left a legacy of compassion, dedication, and unwavering support for the organisation she held dear.

Susi's journey with AWLQ began in 1997 when she joined as a volunteer, providing invaluable support to the organisation across many roles. Her passion for AWLQ's lifesaving work was evident from the start, as she wholeheartedly embraced their mission to improve the lives of animals in need. Susi's tireless efforts and commitment soon earned her a place on the Board, where she served as the organisation's treasurer for an astounding 25 years until 2022.

Susi's dedication extended beyond the numbers; she innately understood the importance of community veterinary clinics. She recognised that these clinics were instrumental in providing accessible and affordable care for animals

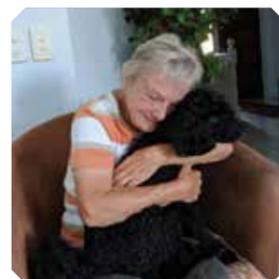
in underserved areas, and she tirelessly advocated for their need.

Susi spent countless hours spreading awareness and tirelessly championing the cause she held dear. Her infectious enthusiasm and passion touched the lives of numerous individuals, both within AWLQ and the wider community.

Her unwavering dedication to AWLQ's mission and tireless efforts to make a difference in the lives of animals will continue to inspire us all. Susi Bares will forever be remembered as a true champion of animal welfare.

As we bid farewell to Susi, let us honour her memory by continuing the work she held so dear. Let us strive to carry on her legacy of compassion, advocating for the welfare of animals and ensuring that AWLQ's lifesaving work thrives.

Susi, your unwavering passion and kindness will be deeply missed but never forgotten. May you rest in peace, knowing that your efforts have left an indelible mark on the lives of so many.



EDITOR'S WELCOME

I am delighted to welcome you to the latest edition of our magazine, Tawl Tails, dedicated to celebrating the incredible animals and the compassionate individuals who support our cause. It brings me great joy to share the stories, triumphs, and heart-warming moments that have shaped our journey towards a brighter future for animals.

First and foremost, I want to express my deepest gratitude to our dedicated team of volunteers, supporters, and staff members who work tirelessly daily, ensuring that every animal in our care receives the love, respect, and attention they deserve. Without their unwavering commitment, the Animal Welfare League Queensland would not be the thriving organisation it is today.

In this edition, we've put together a collection of inspiring tales highlighting the transformative power of love and compassion. Each narrative is a testament to the resilience and strength within these beautiful creatures, reminding us of the profound impact we can have when we extend a helping hand.

Tawl Tails is more than just a magazine; it is a platform that allows us to share knowledge, inspire change, and foster a sense of community. We encourage you to engage with our content, submit your own stories, and participate in the conversations that unfold within these pages. Your support, whether through volunteering, donations, or advocacy, is invaluable and deeply appreciated.

I invite you to immerse yourself in the stories of love, compassion and hope that fill these pages. Let us continue to work hand in paw, striving for a future where every animal is treated with the dignity and respect they deserve. We can make a difference, one paw print at a time.

With heartfelt gratitude,
Denise Bradley
Chief Executive Officer

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AWLQ OP SHOPS
Please see the listing of all op shops on page 30.

FEEDBACK
Please send any feedback, photos or story ideas to communications@awlqld.com.au

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Animal Home DNA Tests Surge to Help Identify Breeds and Genetics



AROUND THE WORLD, pet owners have readily embraced the chance to learn more about their pet's breed and genetics with animal DNA tests that can be done at home. Whether your companion animal is a rescue or a pure-bred, DNA testing can help to identify its heritage and can also help to give indicators of potential health issues that are breed-specific, and aid in training.

Vets and breeders have used animal DNA testing for decades, more specifically for breed and heritage verification in horses and cattle. The commercialisation of in-home pet DNA kits has really taken off in the last five years. It has been accelerated during the pandemic due to the amount of time people spent with their pets at home, and the increased rate of pet adoptions from shelters and rescue centres.

The global dog DNA test market size alone is estimated to be worth \$242m in 2022 and is forecast to be worth \$724m by 2028 – a huge growth. This demonstrates how much we want to discover about our pets, with cat DNA testing also on the rise thanks to the development of kits specifically for them.

HOW DOES DNA TESTING WORK?

Dog and cat owners can purchase a basic DNA test kit. Many are online and most of them have the same process. The kit will contain a swab which you'll use on the inside of the animal's cheek. It is similar to the human process but with the challenges of holding your dog or cat still while you do it. The swab will collect cheek cells in saliva which are then mailed to the DNA laboratory. Some kits may ask for blood samples – in that instance, you would need to get a blood sample taken by your vet.



WHAT CAN THE DNA TEST RESULTS TELL OWNERS?

DNA testing may give you insight into:

- Your pet's behaviour and temperament
- How big or small they might be
- Health risks they may face in the future
- Details on their physical traits
- Dietary issues depending on their breed

If you have a rescue pet with little medical and genetic history, knowing their breed(s) could give you an idea of their size when fully grown, as well as help you to adapt to your animal's potential behaviour and energy levels. Some breeds are predisposed to certain health conditions, so learning about these potential conditions may help you keep your pet healthy.

HOW ACCURATE ARE THE TESTS?

Unlike human DNA testing, pet DNA testing isn't regulated, meaning that test accuracy isn't independently determined. Currently, owners have to trust the claims from companies that sell pet DNA tests, and room does exist for error and bias. However, the larger the company, the more accurate the tests are, based on their large databases. With the growth in the industry globally, accuracy will only increase, benefitting everyone.

WHY DNA TESTING MATTERS

In addition to being an interesting way to learn more about your pet, the results of a DNA test could save your pet's life. Once the predominant breeds are established, you can take the results of this testing to your vet in order to discuss potential health issues for those specific breeds. Knowing what to look for as your pet ages can save its life while sharing this information with your vet allows them to be aware of any breed-specific health risks over time.

A DNA test can be a small investment to deliver big insight into the health and heritage of your pet. Given the growth in animal DNA testing, millions of pet owners around the world agree. 🐾



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JOIN OUR VOLUNTEER ROSTER!

Volunteers are the heart of AWLQ.
Become a volunteer and help AWLQ care
for more than 10,000 animals each year.



Visit awlqld.com.au to get involved!

Pet-friendly Holidays Gain Popularity

WHAT COULD BE MORE PAWFECT than going on holidays with your pet? According to the latest data from Airbnb, searches for pet-friendly accommodation increased by 50 per cent from April to September 2022 when compared to the same period in 2019. And, 'pets allowed' is now the top amenity searched for and requested.

Accommodation booking platform Stayz also reported that one-in-10 searches on their website is now a pet-friendly one. Research from Booking.com shows that 25% of Aussie travellers plan to choose their next stay based on how pet-friendly it is. 24% admitted that if they can't bring their pet, it will affect the accommodation they choose. Talk about pet power!

While furry-friendly travel and holidays can be fun, preparation is key. Experts recommend the following tips to help you navigate and plan an ideal pet-friendly holiday:

- **Location:** The town/area and the trip to the location need to work for your pet. Some animals aren't great travellers, and it can add some extra planning and preparation.
- **Accommodation:** Make sure pets are welcome year-round and are allowed inside the home. Check for full fencing in the yard and fence heights.
- **Pet Preparation:** Make sure vaccinations, flea and tick treatments are up to date.
- **Local Vet:** Find out where the local vet is in your holiday location in case they are needed.
- **Cleaning Charges:** Look out for excessive cleaning costs, as these can be added for people travelling with pets.

With the rise in popularity of caravanning over the pandemic, there are many caravanning holidays and trips that work brilliantly for pets. Here are some great tips for these holidays:

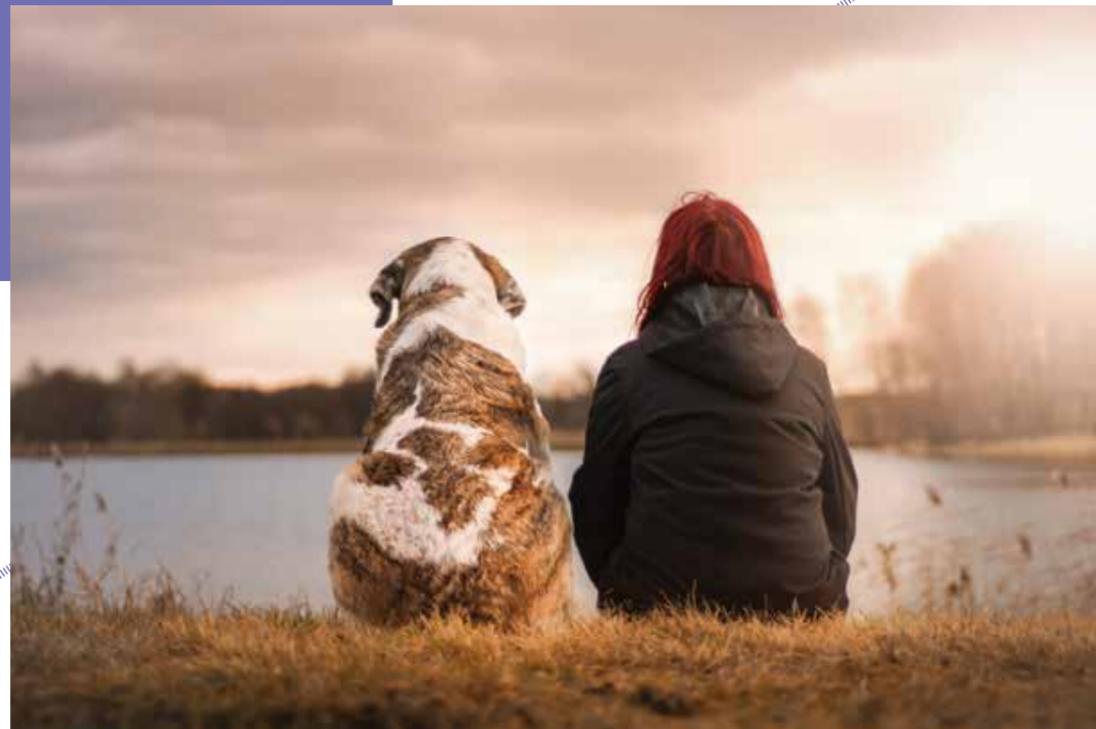
- **Needs:** You'll need to bring all their basics with them like bowls (sturdy not collapsible) and their bed. Pro tip - have dog poo bags EVERYWHERE – in the car, your wallet, caravan, and handbag, so you can clean up after them and respect the campground you are staying in.
- **Stoppages:** Factor in regular stops for water and wees.
- **Snacks:** Buy bulk dog snacks for easy consumption in the car.
- **Travel Safety:** Ensure they are secure in the car via a crate or a harness with a special attachment for the seat belt.
- **Preparation:** Do their flea and tick treatment just before you depart due to a high likelihood of bush adventures; ensure their microchip info is up to date, and have their vaccinations in the glove box just in case they need to go in a kennel in an emergency.
- **Leads:** have plenty of different lengths always handy.

Enjoy planning your next pet-friendly holiday! 🐾



AUSSIE PAWS IN CRISIS

THE COST OF LIVING IMPACT ON PETS AND THEIR FAMILIES



Australia's cost of living crisis is taking its toll on pets and pet owners, creating a domino effect that's straining resources and breaking hearts.

As the cost of living in Australia soars to new heights, an unexpected and often overlooked segment of the population is feeling the pinch: pets and their families.

From increased food prices to veterinary care expenses, the consequences of this crisis are rippling across the nation, leaving families struggling to keep up with the rising costs of pet ownership.

While many Australians are feeling the squeeze, it's the pets who are often suffering the most. Families who can no longer afford to care for their furry companions may be forced to make heartbreaking decisions, leading to overcrowded shelters and emotional distress for both pets and owners. In this article, we'll explore the impact of the cost of living crisis on pets and their families and what can be done to help them weather the storm.

The cost of pet ownership in Australia

The cost of owning a pet in Australia has always been significant, but the current crisis is amplifying the burden on pet owners. Essential expenses like food, healthcare, and supplies have all skyrocketed, with some brands of pet food increasing by as much as 15% in just the past year. Veterinary care has followed suit, with a simple consultation fee easily reaching \$70 or more. Add in the rising cost of pet insurance and preventive treatments like vaccinations and parasite control, and it's no wonder pet owners are feeling the strain.

The Australian Veterinary Association (AVA) has raised concerns that the cost of living crisis is leading to a decline in pet healthcare. In an effort to save money, some pet owners may opt to skip routine veterinary visits or delay necessary treatments. This can result in more severe health issues down the line, which is not only harder to treat but also more expensive, creating a vicious cycle of financial strain and compromised pet welfare.



“The cost of living crisis isn't just affecting pet owners – it's also causing a domino effect on shelters and rescue organisations.”

The domino effect on shelters and rescue organisations

The cost of living crisis isn't just affecting pet owners – it's also causing a domino effect on shelters and rescue organisations. As families struggle to make ends meet, some have no choice but to surrender their beloved pets to shelters, which are already bursting at the seams.

AWLQ has observed a sharp increase in requests for assistance from pet owners in financial distress. The cost-of-living crisis is clearly hitting Australians hard at the moment and forcing a lot of households to make difficult decisions. 29% of all animals being surrendered to AWLQ result from people not being able to care for their pets or find suitable affordable accommodation.

While AWLQ works tirelessly to find new homes for these animals, the influx has left them stretched thin, with resources and funding in short supply.

So, what can people do to get help if they struggle to care for their pets?

No pet should have to go hungry. No one should have to choose between feeding themselves or feeding their pets. Families shouldn't have to make the heartbreaking decision to part with their beloved companions or sacrifice vital vet care – all because of the cost of living crisis.

There are several options available. Firstly, pet owners should consider reaching out to their local animal welfare organisation or shelter. Many of these organisations assist those struggling to care for their pets, including low-cost veterinary care, food and supplies, and temporary foster care.

We want to keep people and their pets together and would urge anyone worried about caring for their animal to visit our website for help and advice. We understand the special bond you and your pet share and will do everything we can to keep you together during times of need. Whether that's supporting you with vet care and finding support services or giving your furry family member a helping paw with food, we'll always be here for you and your pet.

Pet insurance is also an option for those worried about the rising cost of veterinary care. While pet insurance does come with a price, it can provide peace of mind and financial security in case of unexpected medical expenses. Pet owners should research different insurance options and choose a plan that best suits their needs and budget.

What can be done to help?

To combat the devastating impact of the cost of living crisis on pets and their families, a multi-faceted approach is needed. If you are not personally affected by the cost of living crisis but want to help those who are, there are many things you can do. Here are a few ways to help:

- Support local shelters and rescue organisations: Donating time, money, or supplies to these organisations can help alleviate the strain they're experiencing as a result of the crisis.
- Adopt or foster a pet in need: If you can provide a loving home for a pet, consider adopting or fostering from a shelter or rescue organisation.
- Advocate for affordable pet healthcare: Encourage local and national government representatives to implement policies that make pet healthcare more accessible and affordable.
- Spread awareness: Use your voice and your platform to bring attention to the challenges pets and their families face during this crisis and encourage others to lend a helping hand.
- Advocate for change: The cost of living crisis is a complex issue requiring systemic change. By advocating for policies that support low-income families and ensure access to affordable healthcare, housing, and other essential needs, you can help prevent families from being forced to give up their pets due to financial hardship.

The cost of living crisis in Australia is having a significant impact on pets and their owners

As families struggle to make ends meet, many are forced to give up their pets, increasing the number of abandoned or surrendered pets. Additionally, pets may suffer from a lack of proper nutrition and veterinary care as families cut back on expenses.

Fortunately, there are resources available to help pet owners in need, and there are many ways to support pets and their owners during this difficult time. By donating to local shelters and rescues, volunteering your time, supporting local businesses, and advocating for change, you can make a difference in the lives of pets and their owners.

Pets are an important part of our families, and they should not have to suffer because of financial hardship. By coming together as a community and supporting those in need, we can help ensure that all pets receive the care and love they deserve.

Top tips for caring for your pets on a budget!

Pets are an important part of many people's lives but can also be a significant expense. If you're facing a cost of living crisis, you may be wondering how to provide for your furry friend without breaking the bank. Here are eight tips to help you save money while still caring for your pet:

- Buy pet food in bulk - Buying pet food in bulk can save you money in the long run. Look for deals on larger bags of pet food and store it in an airtight container to keep it fresh.
- Make your own pet treats – Making your own pet treats is a great way to save money and ensure your pet gets healthy, wholesome treats. There are plenty of recipes available online that use simple, inexpensive ingredients.
- Shop for pet supplies online – Shopping for pet supplies online can be cheaper than buying them in-store. Look for websites that offer free shipping and compare prices across different retailers to find the best deals.
- Keep up with preventative care – Regular check-ups and preventative care can help you avoid costly veterinary bills down the line. Keep up with



your pet's vaccinations, dental care, and flea and tick prevention to keep them healthy.

- DIY grooming – Grooming your pet at home can save you money on professional grooming services. Invest in a good set of clippers and grooming tools and learn how to trim your pet's nails, clean their ears, and brush their coat.
- Look for free or low-cost pet services – Many communities offer free or low-cost pet services such as vaccinations, spay/neuter programs, and wellness clinics. Check with your local animal shelter or council to find out what services are available in your area.
- Avoid unnecessary expenses – Finally, try to avoid unnecessary expenses such as expensive toys or fancy accessories. Your pet will be just as happy with a simple toy or a homemade bed, and you'll be able to save money in the process. 🐾

“ Pets are an important part of our families, and they should not have to suffer because of financial hardship. By coming together as a community and supporting those in need, we can help ensure that all pets receive the care and love they deserve. ”



COLOURFUL MISSION OF THE RAINBOW VET

Saying goodbye forever to a pet is a painful process. 'The Rainbow Vet' Dr Caroline Orli has made it her mission to ease this process for the families of terminal cats and dogs by celebrating their pet's life and helping their final journey 'over the rainbow bridge' with in-home euthanasia.

If ever there was someone who embodies their calling to help others, it's Dr Caroline Orli. This passionate and dedicated vet is based on the Gold Coast. She helps families from Nerang to Pottsville say goodbye to their pets in their homes via her mobile euthanasia service. Kind, empathetic and professional, she has been delivering this vital

service for several years. For much of that time, she was one of the first and few mobile veterinary services in Australia dedicated solely to this aspect of veterinary care.

"My business name, 'The Rainbow Vet', is inspired by three reasons. First, my service is based in the beautiful Rainbow Bay in Coolangatta, Queensland.

Second, a rainbow has so much radiant energy, which is important to connect with as we allow our loved ones to 'cross over.' And lastly, a very famous poem called Rainbow Bridge. It speaks of an otherworldly place where pets go upon death, eventually to be reunited with their owners."

One of the things that makes Dr Orli happiest is the increased number of vets on the Gold Coast who now specialise in in-home pet euthanasia services like hers. But, as a specialist committed to delivering a peaceful and respectful end-of-life for all animals, she couldn't help everyone who needed assistance when she was the only in-home service of its kind in the area.

Drawn to Australia since she was a child, Dr Orli initially came to study and fell in love with Australia. "I think it's one of the most special places in the world. And even recently, I've been travelling again, and all I think about is coming back here. I love the Gold Coast."

After leaving school, Dr Orli studied science in the US but wanted to learn more overseas. When looking at her options, she chose number five, her favourite number, which happened to be for Griffith University on the Gold Coast. Her love for the Gold Coast was ignited on landing and was reinforced when she suffered through a few Melbourne winters to enhance her veterinarian degree before returning to her adopted tropical home.

A passion for compassion

Dr Orli's journey to create the service she offers today was forged during her time as a vet nurse at busy veterinarian clinics. Seeing owners' distress during pet euthanasia, she intuitively offered people emotional support within the traditional vet surgery environment because the vets were so time-poor and clients needed to process their loss.

"Most normal consults with a vet are 15 minutes; for euthanasia, it may be even 15 or 30 minutes in a clinic. Please understand that I am very supportive of the incredible work that vets do. So many beautiful vets give as much as they can. So many do a wonderful job of euthanasia in the vet clinic, too, despite the time constraints. I work with many clinics that refer euthanasia to me so that I can spend time with people during this process.

"I initially speak to people on the phone about what's happening with their pet, and after they've already prepared everything in their mind, I come to their home. I'm usually there for at least an hour, sometimes an hour and a half. I couldn't do it any quicker."

Recognising that the euthanasia process can be very procedural in a clinical setting, Dr Orli has developed her service so that pet owners can spend time saying goodbye. "I understand it has to be slotted into a timeframe in a clinic. But you're



talking about the ceasing of a physical presence of a member of your family. I love the process I have created because it's not just about the comfort of the animal and being shown their next phase; it's also absolutely about their family."

Dr Orli feels very fulfilled by her brief but important role in people's lives. "I can't even explain all the beautiful things people have said to me over the years. Even just this morning, one of the texts I received was from a lady I helped with her husband's new understanding of death and the Rainbow Bridge journey through their pet.

"I can't help everyone, but for the families I help, I feel I'm there for a reason. And I know that even if my role was a small drop in the ocean of everything that happens in this lifetime, I make a difference to them. It's such a deep passion. However, I have to have boundaries because it's quite emotional, and you can't see everybody. But it's lovely. I feel fortunate to have chosen something I care so much about."

Helping people recognise when to say goodbye

Dr Orli has seen drastic changes in veterinary medicine that can help prolong the lives of pets. However, deciding when to say goodbye to a pet is still a journey unique to each pet owner.

"The change in modalities in veterinary medicine over the last 15 years is quite drastic, such as ultrasounds, MRI, and CT. Things were a little bit simpler not long ago, and now there are many ways to figure out what's happening (to a pet). Sometimes that process of figuring out, unfortunately, leads to the same results. Sometimes it doesn't, and pets have more quality time with their family.

"At other times, things happen entirely out of the blue; maybe the animal starts suddenly having seizures, and they're too overwhelming. As owners, there are so many things you can control. For example, what seems like a sudden change can be part of a progression. If a pet is struggling with arthritic changes, then it might start really slowing down and be in a lot more pain. If they're not getting up and soiling themselves and trying to sustain the limbs where there's no muscle mass to lift them, these things have to be considered.

"I want pets to be able to live their best life until the day comes when euthanasia is the best decision. And that's all about quality of life – and the assessment is different in everyone's eyes. I have

a quality-of-life scale on my website, and so many vets would discuss this when we talk about palliative care. We must consider how well a pet is eating, how well they're moving and interacting, what they used to do and their happiness.

"There are many scenarios as to when and how to make that decision. It depends on what the person themselves has gone through as far as losing other fur babies, losing family and friends, and their acceptance of loss.

Dr Orli feels like death is quite a beautiful relief. "I don't see anything negative associated with it. I feel like it's just another transition in life. For others, they've just never dealt with death. Some people have young children and struggle to explain death to them. Others have other animals bonded with this pet, and everything seems overwhelming; they can't imagine this happening. So, some people need a lot of extra comforts then.

"The main thing to know is that if you reach out to me, I can help you determine if this is the right time and decision. I get a lot of referrals, so many clients have already had these conversations with their regular vets. But if they still need to have those conversations? I answer all my calls, and I'll talk them through what's going on. Options include referring them to a palliative vet that works with their regular vet. Other options include acupuncture and different therapies that can help.

"I think sometimes people think that in every call I take, euthanasia is the answer, but it's not. There are different cases and scenarios. And when people approach me using my website or calling directly, I can start to go through that process with them."

Helping families prepare for the Rainbow Bridge

Dr Orli says there are several steps that she goes through with families once the decision has been made to help a pet over the Rainbow Bridge. "There's a lot of anticipation before I arrive; that's normal. Everything has been chosen for me to come. But the way that people react when I get there varies. Some people are very spiritual; they'll have music and candles. I literally feel like I've walked into like a beautiful crystal shop. They're very accepting of their pet's passing, and they share stories and pictures. There's no doubt that they'll grieve after, but how they process it may be a little different to someone who hasn't been through this.



"For someone when it's new or overwhelming, those are the people I make sure I spend extra time with and that I've given them support, such as counsellors that mainly help with pet loss. Plus, I follow up because if this is the first time they've gone through it, it might take them some extra time to heal.

"I help all people from all walks of life. Whatever the situation is, I know that by someone calling me, they already have this deep connection and love for their animal. It's about the experience and making it tasteful when I help them say goodbye. I see a few people in a week, but I can wholeheartedly give my time and attention to every person I see.

Dr Orli wants people who must euthanise their pets to know some essential things. "It's beautiful, as is how we embrace and honour it. My strongest feeling is that when we say goodbye, be present with the ones we love. That's why I encourage children to be there, making it almost like a ceremony. Of course, some people can't be in the room, or they want me to come in quickly. But once I get there, they kind of surrender to it. And that is part of it - surrendering to the process. The decision has been made; you know it's the right thing. I'm here to help you."

Dr Orli said if a client has to go into a clinic to say goodbye, she recommends bringing things from their home (pet's blankets, treats, toys, bedding, & even the other pet if they are a bonded pair). "This way, you can bring a home feel to the clinic room. Some vets have a devoted room for euthanasia with a lovely feel and a door leading out so that the

client doesn't have to go through reception again afterwards. This is the direction I would love vets to take to make this process more special and sacred for the pet and their family."

For in-home euthanasia, there are several steps and mementoes that Dr Orli can help people with. "Afterwards, I do a keepsake of a pawprint impression. Some people make a special altar. There are cremation companies that can come and help, and many people bury their pets at home.

"The process is a way to love your pet endlessly. That love is not going to die because they died. So it's an honour to help people and their pets on this journey. To help a beautiful soul crossover where there's no pain involved. They look completely blissed out. And so many people say they would like to be that peaceful when it's their time, or they wish other loved ones had that experience."

Dr Orli says clients thank her for helping them and their pets, and they often say, "I've given them a beautiful life. You've given them a beautiful death, and I will forever be thankful."

To learn more about Dr Caroline Orli, visit therainbowvet.com. 🐾

AWLQ Community Vet Clinics can assist you with end-of-life support for your much-loved companion; for more information, visit awlqld.com.au/vetclinics. All profits go directly to care for the more than 10,000 stray and homeless animals; ALWQ provides a second chance every year.

Grieving the Loss of Your Pet: Helpful Ways to Cope

Grief for a pet is increasingly acknowledged as impactful and painful as grief for a person. So how do you cope with this loss when it happens to you? We share helpful ways to cope.



When pets are considered to be members of the family, their loss leaves a profound impact on the people who were closest to them. Research has shown that grief for a pet can be just as painful and severe as bereavement for a person, resulting in the same levels of sadness, appetite loss, distraction, inability to sleep and more. Without support for the mourner, these symptoms and the impact of a pet’s loss can lead to anxiety, depression and even post-traumatic stress.

Suppose your pet is involved in your health and social activities, such as regular walking, trips to the beach, group events and more. In that case, their loss can directly affect your life beyond your home, leading to isolation, potential illness, and grief.

Losing part of your identity, having your daily routine change and feeling like you may no longer have access to the same social networks you once had are all normal parts of the pet grieving experience. In addition to what we have described, you may be experiencing the following types of grief:

ISOLATED GRIEF

At times grief from the loss of your pet can feel isolating. This is because others, especially those who don’t own pets or who have never experienced a deep bond with a pet, don’t understand the depth of love you have for your companion and don’t appreciate the level of grief you might feel at their loss. However, please understand that many people have experienced this same grief, which is normal.



DISENFRANCHISED GRIEF

Grief from losing your pet can be excruciating if it’s disenfranchised. Disenfranchised grief is experienced when you suffer a loss that isn’t (or can’t be) openly acknowledged or publicly mourned. Unfortunately, pet loss isn’t taken seriously, so those suffering may need to hide or minimise their grief. This often compounds the intensity and prolongs the experience.

Lecturer in psychology at the University of West Scotland and founder of Science of Pets, Dr Roxanne Hawkins, says, “despite the increasing awareness of the negative impacts of pet loss, pet bereavement is often disenfranchised in modern society. When the topic of taking compassionate leave for pet bereavement comes up among work colleagues, it is often mocked.

“Perhaps the issue stems from questions relating to types of pets. For example, do people only grieve for dogs and cats? Or do people mourn their hamsters and fish as well? Also, who decides whether a person was bonded ‘enough’ to their pet to be able to have a day off from work to mourn their loss?

“Only until pet loss and bereavement is taken more seriously, and more research has been done to understand bereavement and attachment to different pet types, can healthcare professionals and workplaces offer appropriate support and advice to those who need it.”¹

SIGNS OF GRIEF

It is perfectly normal to have conflicting emotions around a pet’s death, from heartbreak that they’re gone to relief that they are no longer distressed or in pain. Grief reflects the unique relationship between your pet and you, so everyone may grieve differently when they pass.

Grief can present itself in many ways, especially for those not practising sharing their emotional landscape. It can be displayed via the following signs and feelings:

- Shock and disbelief
- Difficulty sleeping
- Physical pains like headaches, muscular pain and flu-like symptoms
- Stress
- Feeling lonely
- Crying or a reluctance to cry
- Sadness and depression

- Difficulty concentrating on everyday tasks
- Losing motivation in ordinary interests
- Feeling guilty
- Numbness
- Anger
- Relief
- Freedom
- Heartbreak

Importantly, there is no one way to grieve for a pet. But how can you cope with this grief? It depends on the type of grief, how it affects you and those around you, and your stage in life. So let’s look at how it impacts several scenarios.

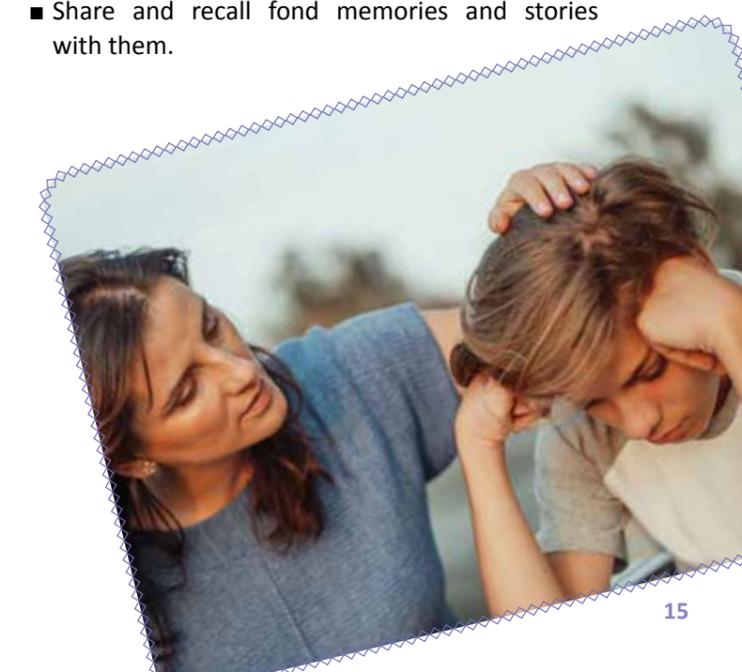
CHILDREN – WAYS TO COPE

For many children, pet loss is their first death experience. Yet, even amidst your grief, this is an opportunity to teach children about coping with the suffering and pain of loving and losing another living creature.

Some research shows children may report clinical levels of grief over their pet, especially when the child is younger and their pet attachment is at its strongest. Others may feel angry and blame a parent for a pet’s death; others may feel scared that their other pets or their parents and loved ones will die and leave them. It’s important to discuss these feelings and help children through their grief.

Shielding children from the sadness of losing a pet by not talking about it and hiding emotions is not healthy. The absence of information can leave children feeling more confused, frightened and betrayed once they learn the truth.

- Ways to help a child grieve the loss of a pet are:
- Where possible, include children in memorialising and remembering a pet after their death.
 - Share and recall fond memories and stories with them.



¹ <https://www.psychreg.org/pet-loss>

- Allow kids to actively participate in planning a funeral or memorial service.
- Help them to create a scrapbook of memories and keep some pet possessions as mementos.
- Make time on significant days, such as birthdays, to talk about their pet.
- Use clear language to answer their questions about death and loss.
- Avoid using euphemisms such as the pet “went to sleep”.
- Encourage them to share how they’re feeling and share your feelings in developmentally appropriate ways.

LOSING A PET FAMILY MEMBER

- Dealing with your grief for your pet can be helped via these methods:
- Surround yourself with family and friends who understand and appreciate the special bond you share with your pet
- Permit yourself to grieve; don’t let anyone tell you how to feel. Instead, allow yourself to truly heal by facing your grief and actively dealing with it.
- Connect to others. Share memories and stories; talk to friends and family or reach out to online message boards and pet loss support groups; read about pet loss and grief so you know you’re not alone.
- Hold a memorial for your pet to say farewell and get closure. Just as it does for humans, a funeral service for your pet can help you and your family express your feelings openly.
- Practice self-care, as the stress of losing a pet can deplete your energy and emotional reserves.
- Create a memento book or box, so it’s easy to touch and see your memories. Write your pet a farewell letter to keep with this sharing your love for them.
- Remember your pet on significant days. This helps to keep their memory alive – especially for children.
- Seek counselling, therapy or a pet loss support group.

COPING AS A SENIOR

Older adults living alone with a beloved pet who experience this loss can have a traumatic time. In addition to the list above, we suggest these ways for seniors to cope:



- Try to find an activity or distraction to fill the time you usually spend with your pet. Consider a new hobby or volunteer role – we are always seeking help at AWLQ that offers interaction with our animals, help others care for their pets, and think about getting another pet when the time feels right.
- Stay connected with friends and family. Regular face-to-face contact helps ward off depression.
- Stay active. If you regularly exercised with your pet, it’s important to continue or find another exercise program that can bring you enjoyment.

MANAGING GRIEF IN OTHER PETS

In addition to your grief, other pets in your household may be affected by the loss of a pet and the suffering experienced by other people in the house. Signs that your pets may be distressed and grieving include:

- Disinterest in food.
- Constant searching for the missing pet.
- Waiting in your missing pet’s favourite spot.
- Listless and lethargic behaviour.
- Acts of anger or confusion.

Your other pets will recover just as you do with your support, patience and extra attention.



GRIEVING THE LOSS OF A PET AFTER EUTHANASIA

Grieving the loss of a pet after euthanasia may or may not be different from grieving the loss due to other circumstances. Some studies have found that people who decide to have their pets euthanised experience grief similarly to those who lose their pets to injury or illness. Other studies have found that those who lose a pet to euthanasia experience more guilt.²

Like all grief we have described so far, the grief that follows the loss of a pet to euthanasia is ultimately unique to each person. However, counselling can be a beneficial resource when someone suffers from much guilt around the decision to euthanise their pet.

SUPPORTING SOMEONE WHO HAS LOST A PET

In the same way, it can be hard to share a person’s grief journey for a person and watch their pain; helping a grieving friend or knowing what to say to someone who has lost a beloved pet can be challenging.

Support from loved ones is vital to making the grieving process more bearable for the bereaved. Showing up and offering support goes a long way to helping them heal.

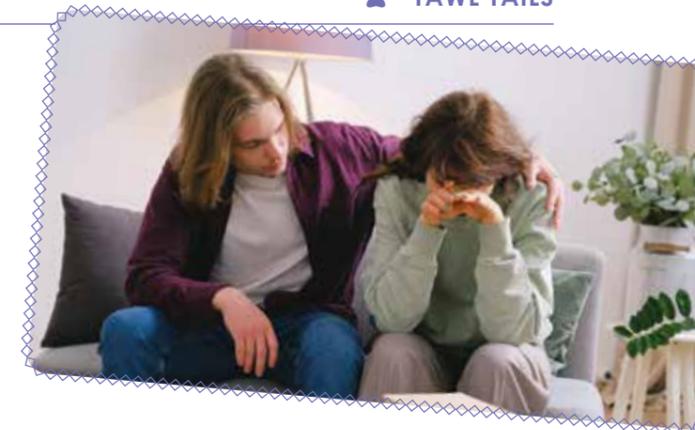
Experienced therapists suggest that you ask open-ended questions, validate their feelings, and listen without judgment when supporting someone through the grieving process. Pay attention to how the bereaved person responds to your words and actions of support. Ask them if you’re unsure how your support is being received.

Here are five suggested things to say to a person grieving the loss of a pet:

- I am so sorry for your loss.
- It’s okay not to be okay right now.
- How are you doing?
- How can I help you?
- I want to support you. What would be most helpful for me to say or do?

According to choosingtherapy.com, “avoid trying to make them see a silver lining to their loss, saying things that invalidate their relationship with their pet or their grief, or making assumptions about how they feel based on your own experiences.

Here are five things not to say to someone grieving the loss of a pet:



- It was just a dog (cat, guinea pig, lizard, bird, fish, etc.); you can always get another one.”
- I know exactly how you feel.
- Don’t feel bad; they’re in a better place now.
- At least they didn’t suffer.
- Be grateful you had the time together that you did.”³

COUNSELLING

Vetvoice.com.au shares that “sometimes dealing with grief can be too hard to deal with alone. Seeking counselling with a therapist who understands pet loss and people’s feelings of grief and loss helps many pet owners through this challenging time. Counsellors can provide a secure and compassionate environment where you can share and express your emotions and what this loss means.

Search for a pet loss counsellor in your area, or contact Beyond Blue or Lifeline, available 24 hours a day, if you cannot find a specialised counsellor.”⁴

KNOW YOU ARE NOT ALONE

Many animal companions bring unconditional love, comfort, tolerance, respect and joy. It is normal to feel devastated, empty and isolated when we lose a pet. It is important to remember that grief is a natural process that takes time, and so many others experience it when their pet dies. Grief is necessary for emotional healing. The process never really formally finishes, but rather it changes over time.

These final thoughts about grieving the loss of your pet are from choosingtherapy.com: “Coping with the death of a pet can be incredibly difficult and should not be overlooked or underplayed. Make sure you grieve properly and reach out for help from a trusted loved one or a therapist if you’re having trouble moving on.”³ 🐾

2 Bussolari, C.J., Habarth, J., Katz, R., Phillips, S., Carmack, B., & Packman, W. (2018). The euthanasia decision-making process: A qualitative exploration of bereaved companion animal owners. *Bereavement Care*, 37(3), 101-108. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02682621.2018.1542571>
 3 <https://www.choosingtherapy.com/loss-of-a-pet/>
 4 <https://www.vetvoice.com.au/ec/pet-ownership/grieving-for-your-pet/>

How Fostering Expanded Corrine's Heart

Corrine Barraclough started fostering dogs with AWLQ in 2018. Her fostering journey with some amazing pups has expanded her heart as they were by her side during her health battle.

A sense of giving back and a drive to help others led Corrine Barraclough to the AWLQ centre on the Gold Coast back in 2018, to begin her experience with fostering.

"I live alone, I don't have kids, or family. I thought fostering would be nice to do as something to give back. I had no idea at that point what to expect.

Corrine had never had a pet before she became a foster carer. "I had a fish when I was a child, but that was it. I knew that I had a lot of love to give because I didn't have children and I had that maternal instinct.

"I really wanted to do something that was just helpful. I went down to AWLQ, and there was an elderly Maltese in the pen, who they said wasn't doing well in amongst all of the chaos and commotion. So, it seemed completely doable for me to say yes, I'll foster him.

BEAUTIFUL BAYLEE

Baylee went home with Corrine and she said he rescued her as much as she rescued him. "He was a four-legged therapist, and an angel, he was absolutely beautiful. We bonded pretty quickly. He had extreme anxiety and separation anxiety, so there were challenges to navigate.

"I was looking after Baylee as a foster pet until he had to return to the AWLQ to have various tests and X-Rays and to work out what the next step would be for him. I remember having a conversation when I took him back to the vet, saying that I really want Baylee to be with a family. Because I was wrestling with the thought

that it may be selfish if I wanted to adopt him.

"The vet and I discussed that he probably doesn't mind, he just wants someone with an open heart and a loving home. So, Baylee was 10 when I adopted him, and we moved from Tallebudgera to Broadbeach. Every day we walked to the beach, and we often got up early and watched the sunrise. He was just absolutely my best friend. And I just loved it. I was a freelance writer, so I had lots of time at home and we had a pretty structured, daily routine. Both of us were very happy.

"I had Baylee for five and a half years. In that last year I was diagnosed with breast cancer and I moved in with a friend because they said it was unadvisable to be alone through long term treatment.

"It was tough, I'm not going to sugar coat it. I had stage two breast cancer. Everything happened very fast. I went for a biopsy. They made the diagnosis and I started chemo within a few weeks. It all happened very fast. I used to have long hair down to my waist, and I shaved that so that I was in the right headspace for chemo. And then I started on my chemo journey, which was gruelling, it was brutal.

"Baylee was absolutely my shining star throughout my treatment. I can't probably find the words to express how much he meant to me. The doctors were quite impressed because I kept telling them I had this beautiful little dog and I wanted to make sure that I got out and at least walked around the block with him. I had friends who were helping me to look after him when I wasn't well enough, but I wanted to at least get out of the house and walk

around the block. And there were days where that was really, really difficult."

Corrine believes that because she had such extreme health challenges of her own, she was in denial about Baylee's decline. "I really wanted him to be there for me, probably because I was quite sick. I just wanted to hold onto him. But his decline was pretty rapid in the last six months.

"He was my first dog, and he absolutely was a piece of my heart. But a series of things happened that showed me that it was his time, because he had really declined. So, I unfortunately had to take him to be euthanized.

"That was the day before my breast cancer surgery. It was really hard coming out of hospital and not having him there. I did what I was supposed to do and spent time healing and recovering from that expensive, major surgery. When I was able to not worry about the pain and just be myself, I felt like there was a gaping hole in my life, and in my heart. I really wanted to go back to AWLQ and foster again."

THE NEXT CHAPTER

Corrine then fostered a beautiful little Chihuahua x Foxy Terrier called Monty who was an absolute delight. "He was a puppy and it was quite full on. He also had separation anxiety and it was difficult, but we muddled through a few weeks together. I gave him the same love that I'd given to Baylee, it just wasn't for as long. I was really sad when I took him back and he went for his vet check, but he went on to find his forever home.

"That's the real joy and the beauty of fostering. You get to pour love into this little creature for every 24 hours that you're blessed to have them in your life. Then it's really fulfilling when you see that they've found their forever home, with their own little happy ending.

"After Monty I had a few weeks where I was puppy-less again, so I let the foster team know that I was happy to take a senior dog or a bonded pair. It was literally a matter of days before the foster office called to let me know they had a bonded pair who'd come in – a long-haired Chihuahua who was 13 called Katie and Harry, a seven-year-old, little Maltese x Chihuahua.

"My heart absolutely exploded when I saw these two beautiful little

doggies, who had obviously been very well cared for by an elderly owner who unfortunately could no longer look after them. I felt really happy that I was able to scoop them up, keep them together, take them home with me, and pour the same love into them that I had into Baylee."

Katie wasn't a well dog. The AWLQ team had let Corrine know that when she brought Katie back in a few weeks for a vet check, they would make a decision about her future.

"My heart broke for Harry, because he was seven and he'd never known a life without Katie in it. But it was pretty evident to me what the decision was going to be. Katie was blind, she didn't walk and like Baylee, she was showing those signs that her lifeforce had just faded. I almost felt like she was hanging around to look after Harry, and then when she knew that was not going to be a problem, she knew that it was her time as she'd really given up.

"It was an absolute joy fostering a bonded pair. Keeping them together was double the fulfillment on a whole new level. Unfortunately, the decision was made that it was Katie's time, so she didn't come home from the vet that day. But Harry did! Another foster fail for me, but I just knew that I wasn't going to leave beautiful little Harry stranded and alone. So, it's me and Harry now, getting our little daily structure and our routine rolling."

CORRINE'S PRINCE HARRY

Corrine has just finished her breast cancer treatment. "It's all pretty surreal, but Harry has helped me heal. Baylee was there through my chemo and through that section of the journey. Harry is this bouncing, cheeky, happy, ray of sunshine, who has helped me get out, reconnect with the world and make sure I have several walks a day.

"People think that you can't have a dog in an apartment, but you've just got to choose the breed carefully and make sure that you create a daily routine where you can get them out every couple of hours. I wouldn't take a working breed dog into an apartment, but tiny Harry likes little walks and meeting people and that's been absolutely wonderful for me.

"I started a new job working in the healthcare space just before Christmas that allows me to work from home.

I'd be hard-pressed to tell you who is happier, me or Harry. People stop us as we're walking along the path or along the beach and comment 'that is one happy dog'. That makes everything worthwhile.

"When you foster you don't know what a dog's background is. But it's clear to me now that I've got Harry, just how anxious Baylee was, probably due to some kind of trauma that he had gone through. I can really see the difference in Harry, who's been obviously treated like a prince. He is my Prince Harry and every day he brings me joy, spinning around, sitting on the beach, watching the sunrise or going for a walk.

"I have a really lovely life, made better by having a rescue pet. It's really fulfilling. I probably didn't understand at the beginning, before I took my first foster dog home, that fostering is really about the love that you have to give. It's not about living on a property or acreage and having loads of space. If you speak to the foster office at AWLQ, they'll give you tips, advice and guidance, and they'll make sure that you're matched with the right rescue pet.

"As long as you've got the desire to do it, and the care and the love to give, fostering is a beautiful opportunity to shower a creature with love for the days that you have them with you. You're just living in the moment, making that dog's life better, every second they are with you. There are pets in there that just need a warm and loving home for perhaps a few weeks. You can be that bridge to their forever home and that can make all the difference."

Corrine is already thinking about fostering her next dog. "Harry is part of the crew now and he is pretty thrilled with any human or any other dogs. I think he'd be an easy gatekeeper.

"If people are thinking about fostering, I want them to know that they can call the foster office and talk about their concerns. AWLQ will try to match you up with the best fit. Don't be afraid to ask questions or give it a go. If you're a good human being you've got something to offer, that's the only requirement. If you've got love to give, then you qualify." 🐾

Thinking about fostering with AWLQ? Visit awlqld.com.au/foster to learn more today.





Our Lasting Legacy and gift to animals

Former world travellers Manfred and Gisa Ebert have secured the future of their rescue pup Cora, through AWLQ's Legacy Pet Program and are leaving a bequest to help animals like her.

From Germany to South Africa to destinations all around the world, Manfred and Gisa Ebert lived and travelled across different continents for years until COVID kept them at their beloved Gold Coast home for an extended period.

"Originally, we are from Germany. We have lived in different continents and travelled all of our lives throughout 57 years of marriage, until eventually my husband was transferred to Australia," said Gisa.

"We sailed around the world and travelled for many years and when we came back, we explored Australia. We went through all the deserts and around and across the country and while doing all of that, we said we couldn't have a dog. Then finally COVID happened and we stopped traveling."

During the pandemic, Gisa and Manfred would stop and say hello to all of the dogs on their morning walks. Everyone encouraged them to get one of their own.

"My father was a forest ranger and I always grew up with working dogs. Manfred and I had dogs together over the years in South Africa and we said if we have another dog we wanted a rescue dog, similar to the Ridgebacks

and Great Danes that we raised from puppy stage."

In December 2021, Gisa and Manfred were looking for a dog and thought a rescued former racing Greyhound would suit them due to their lifestyle.

Gisa said she and Manfred then saw that there were other rescue options and they drove to AWLQ nearby. Cora the Staffie x Bull Arab was then three months old. Gisa knew she was theirs the minute Cora kned her in the leg, basically saying 'come on' to her and Manfred, even though they went in seeking an older dog.

"Everybody said we must be crazy at our age to get a puppy. It was quite stressful at first, but now we adore Cora and love her. Manfred has just turned 86 and I'm 80 plus. We are both fairly fit and healthy and have been like that all our lives. We've done lots of adventurous things continuously and now is our quiet time.



"Our travelling stopped with COVID because we didn't go bush anymore. Instead of the 4WD and sports car now we've got an MG SUV and Cora loves it so she can recline in the back!"

Gisa said adopting Cora and spending so much time with her was where the AWLQ bequest and setting Cora up as a Legacy Pet came in. "We're not rich, but we have no children or grandchildren so our inheritance will go to a niece and nephew in Germany. We wanted to make sure Cora is always taken care of and AWLQ is the next big thing in our priority because that's where she came from."

Cora has many classes as part of her training. "She is 20 months old now and she's a work in progress. We are training her continuously. We have had setbacks, but now she's improved and she's such a great dog. Cora's very affectionate and she's ended up being a good-looking dog.

"We have tried to do the right thing by Cora. We took her to the school, which is just up the road, to introduce her to children when we first walked with her. I walk her for 45 minutes every morning and we walk her in the afternoon or take her to the dog parks or for a swim.

"Manfred and I both have grey hair, but somehow, we're still full of energy. We go to the gym and we swim and we cycle. But that means nothing, because something can happen tomorrow. Cora is why all of a sudden, we were concerned about the future. That's why we thought doing a bequest and making her a Legacy Pet would be the best thing to give us peace of mind and be fair to Cora."

In a lovely twist, Cora's brother was adopted by a young family who live up the road from Gisa and Manfred, so the siblings can see each other for play dates.

"The AWLQ told us that their mother had rejected the whole litter, which is how they came to be in their care. Cora had some initial trauma around going to the vet, but we have worked on that and now she is great.

"As an active dog she is not one that you can just pass onto someone if something happens to Manfred and I. She's got a big personality and strong

needs. That's why we went back to AWLQ to organise the bequest and legacy program in case we are no longer here.

"It is a nice initiative. There's instruction in the Will and that means it's all taken care of and watertight with AWLQ, so Cora's future is absolutely secure." 🐾



Bequests allow us to continue our lifesaving work and provide a safe haven for close to 10,000 stray and homeless animals every year, while AWLQ's Legacy Pets Program will provide you with the peace of mind that, if something should happen to you, there is a secure plan in place for your pet's future. As part of this care, we will hand-select a new owner and environment that we feel best suits your pet's needs. Learn more here: <https://www.awlqld.com.au/bequests/>

Let your love of animals live on through a gift in your Will.

When you leave a bequest to Animal Welfare League Queensland in your Will, your gift will directly help create a brighter future for animals in need. Bequests allow us to continue our lifesaving work and provide a safe haven for close to 10,000 stray and homeless animals every year.

To every one of these animals who we welcome through our doors, a promise is made – to never euthanise a healthy, sociable, or treatable animal in our care. It is this promise that separates us from any other animal welfare organisation in Australia.

None of this could be possible without the financial support of animal lovers like you. A gift in your Will now, ensures your passion for animal welfare and love of animals continues to live on into the future.

For more information please visit awlqld.com.au/bequests or call us on 07 5509 9099.



Animal Welfare
League Qld
Est. 1959

Pet Poisoning Danger – What to Look Out For

Each year, thousands of cases of potential pet poisoning occur. But there are simple ways to prevent these.



Animals' curious personalities are part of what makes them such wonderful companions. Still, sometimes their curiosity can cause them to get into things they shouldn't – smelling, tasting and eating whatever interests them.

The health and happiness of our furry family members are a top priority. Unfortunately, each year, there are thousands of potential pet poisoning cases. Although there are simple ways to prevent these cases, awareness and education are your most powerful tools to keep your pet safe.

Many household items humans buy regularly can severely harm our pets. When it comes to food, be sure to keep items such as chocolate, avocados, garlic, onions, grapes, raisins, alcohol, raw yeast

bread dough, and xylitol (an artificial sweetener) far away from your pets' reach.

Rodent, snail and slug baits are often used to keep pests at bay. However, if ingested, these poisons are extremely harmful to pets. They are highly toxic and without immediate veterinary attention can be fatal. Rodent baits typically can result in blood clotting disorders, brain swelling or kidney failure, while snail and slug baits can result in severe tremors or seizures.

Human medications account for a high proportion of pet poison cases. Other household items such as cleaners, pesticides, and air fresheners can also threaten your animals. Be sure to keep these locked away.

Another unexpected hazard is household plants. Some plants contain toxins that harm your pet's digestive and circulatory systems. If you have dogs and/or cats, stay away from tulips, azaleas, lilies, and sago palms, all of which can cause sickness or even death to your pets if ingested and left untreated.

Symptoms of poisoning vary depending on the substance that has been ingested. But they may include vomiting, diarrhea, bloody stool or excessive urination, seizures, dizziness or loss of coordination, loss of appetite, lethargy, unusual breathing patterns or heartbeat. Remember, these are only signs of poisoning, and other symptoms may appear.

Pet proofing your house is the best solution to avoid your pets getting into something they shouldn't. Keep your cleaners and detergent hidden away. Keep dangerous food on the top shelves or in cabinets. Keep hazardous plants out of the house.

Visit www.awlqld.com.au/petpoison for more information on what could threaten your animals.

First steps if you suspect that your pet has been exposed to a poison:

- Remove your pet from the area so the poison is out of reach.
- Check how your pet is breathing and acting. Even if it seems normal, it still might have been exposed.
- Avoid giving your pet home remedies, and don't induce vomiting.
- Call your nearest AWLQ Community Vet Clinic or contact the Australian Animal Poisons Helpline at 1300 TOX PET for instructions.

If your pet eats something poisonous, you'll need to act fast. The smaller the pet, the less toxin it takes to cause severe illness or even death. It's essential to try to identify what your pet has ingested. 🐾



PLANTS CAN BE HARMFUL TO PETS IF INGESTED

There are many plants that can be dangerous to dogs and cats. Therefore, it's important to check the safety of any plants before giving your pet access to them.

PLANTS TOXIC TO DOGS

Some of the plants that can be toxic to dogs include Azaleas, Cherries, Daffodils, Black Locust, Bleeding Heart, Elderberry, Elephant Ear, Foxglove, Golden Chain, Hyacinth, Jasmine, Laurels, Lily of the Valley, Mistletoe, Narcissus, Oak trees, Wisteria, Wandering Jew and Yew.

PLANTS TOXIC TO CATS

For cats, dangerous plants can include Lilies, Aglaonema, Aloe Vera, Asparagus fern, Birds of Paradise, Daffodil, Gladiola, Hydrangea, Ivy, Morning Tongue, Nightshade, Plumosa Fern and Tulips. Lillies are extremely dangerous to cats and can cause death due to acute kidney failure.

SYMPTOMS

If your pet has been poisoned by a plant, you could notice the following:

- Irritation to their mouth including ulcers and skin, such as blisters. Coughing or drooling
- Loss of appetite, vomiting or diarrhoea, increased drinking, urinating, or no urination.
- Depressed, lethargic, convulsions, spasms or trouble walking. Skin allergies like red, itchy skin.

Socialising Cats Is Saving Their Lives

When Jo McGregor started fostering cats with AWLQ four years ago, she began a hugely rewarding journey that has saved the lives of countless cats who were initially assessed as unmanageable. Jo's work to socialise these animals embodies our promise never to euthanise a healthy, sociable or treatable animal in our care. We need more volunteers like Jo to save and rehome these beautiful pets.

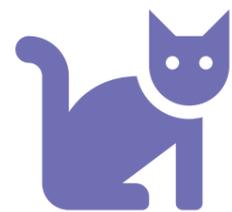
Jo McGregor is a warm, kind and practical person who has always had an affinity with cats. Her volunteer work with AWLQ to socialise cats and kittens who can't be handled and get them friendly is very important to our rehoming program.

"I have always had cats in my life, I couldn't live without them. Over the last few years my interest in cat behaviour and cat welfare has grown, so I am drawn to helping the cats and kittens who need help with socialisation.

"Socialising cats is complex but hugely rewarding. I don't want the process to appear hard or scary to people, because we really want more people on our team to help with these cats. These animals are often timid and scared, but the rewards are wonderful because of the outcomes once they are socialised! I just want people to give it a try."

Jo developed her skills from the team at AWLQ and by reading read multiple cat behaviour books, watching YouTube videos and following cat behaviour specialists on social media etc.

"I learn from every cat I foster; no two cats have been the same! The staff at the AWLQ Cat Care Team are always there for advice and support and I had a wonderful mentor named Sally who was my go-to for any help I needed when I started. The AWLQ Facebook Foster Carer page is also a wonderful support tool, there is help and support everywhere. We all want these cats to succeed."



Successfully socialised

Socially challenged cats

Jo teaches socially challenged and timid cats to trust and accept human touch and to acclimatise to human spaces, sounds and smells.

"Some of these poor cats have never been indoors or in a home before, so the sound of a TV or a ceiling fan can really scare them. Getting them comfortable with daily life is the aim.

"Changing this fear and behaviour takes time and patience, but with the smell of cooked roast chicken, which is my main tool, I have never had a cat or kitten reject it. After a few days they will eat it out of your hand, that's the turning point.

Jo knows that not every cat will leave foster care being a lap cat, but as long as they are confident and comfortable around humans, it's a great result.

"My aim is for the cats and kittens I foster to be happy and confident in themselves, which makes them more attractive to a potential adopter. I also provide the Cat Adoptions Team with foster feedback, which helps the staff find that perfect, understanding family who will continue with their cat's training if needed."

Starting her volunteering journey with AWLQ by caring for with cats and kittens with cat flu, Jo quickly saw that there was a need for foster carers to help with the shy and timid cats and those needing socialisation.

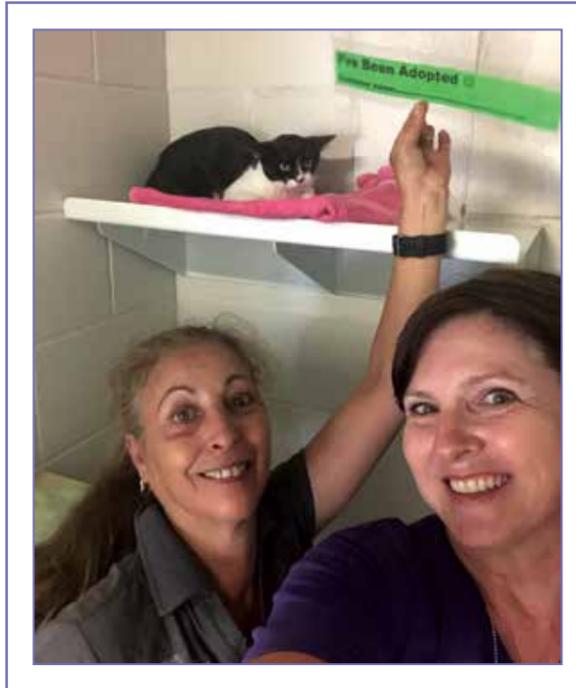
"These cats really needed the most help. With encouragement from the staff, I brought home my very first timid and scared kittens. I couldn't even look at them without them popping and spitting at me! Fast forward many weeks and those kittens were total cuddle-bugs and ready for adoption, and I have never felt so proud!

"I foster mainly adult cats now. It's hard to get a gauge on their behaviour at the shelter as it's a very stressful place for a cat, so it's very important to give these cats a chance and get them into foster care.

"If I'm volunteering in cat rehoming when one of my foster cats gets adopted, I am the happiest person in the world. I have been known to have a little cry, because I know I've done my job and this cat has also gotten themselves adopted, so I couldn't be prouder!"

Jo loves everything about the AWLQ and has some great encouragement for anyone thinking about being a foster carer for socially challenged or timid cats.

"I would recommend anyone who loves cats and has compassion towards them to give this a go. Start off with the shy ones first and gain 'your own confidence', then progress to cats that are more timid and socially challenged.



(Left) Irena; (Right) Jo McGregor, AWLQ cat staff member

Rewarding

"There is nothing more rewarding than turning a cat or kitten's life around, sometimes you are saving their lives! I am lucky to have a dedicated foster room at home (spare room) and I customise it to each cat that comes into foster care depending on their needs and the level of socialisation required.

"I'm actually fostering seven orphaned kittens at the moment, but I have had so many

cats that are special. There is one cat from last year who would have to be my favourite. I've got a photo of him when he was on the pound page, his 'before' picture. And then I've got a photo of him just lying in my arms, so relaxed, a great 'after' result.

"He sat for four days on top of a bookcase when he arrived to me, he was so distant and he needed so much socialisation. But he was the biggest marshmallow in the end. He's still one in my heart." 🐾

Socialisation Foster Homes Needed

Our foster carers have one of the most important roles at the shelter – they allow us to keep our promise to thousands of animals every year to never euthanise a healthy, sociable or treatable animal in our care. If helping to save these lives like Jo does through socialisation is of interest to you, please log on to: awlqld.com.au/foster



Animal Welfare
League Qld
Est. 1959

JOIN OUR FOSTER ROSTER!

There is nothing like the love and warmth of a foster family. Be a foster carer and help AWLQ save more lives!



Visit awlqld.com.au to get involved!

Save Dollars and Lives at Our Op Shops!

Thrifting and upcycling have dramatically risen in popularity over the last few years. When you buy second-hand fashion, homewares and furniture items you save animals' lives while you create a unique look for your wardrobe and interiors. Here are some of our recent items for sale, and some great thrifting tips. Remember to check our stores regularly for new items – great finds disappear fast!



FASHION BAG

Fashion-forward and fun, this handbag combines style and function. Our stores are packed with fashionable bags of all sizes, colours and shapes – come and check them out!

STATEMENT VASE

Retro and ready for big blooms! Vases like this make a statement – or you can give them a makeover with a lick of paint to suit your décor, all for a small price. We have many vases, plates and knick knacks just waiting to be discovered.



SIDE TABLE

The shape of this table is everything. Delicate and vintage, it will add a touch of class to your living room or bedroom.

CUDDLY TEDDY

This oversized teddy has a lot of cuddles to give! Our AWLQ stores are packed with good quality soft and hard toys – perfect for gifts.



SMALL RUG

Small and mighty... The details in this small rug are amazing, making it a perfect accent piece. Rugs and floor coverings of all shapes and sizes are available throughout our stores, but every offering is different.

BEACH PRINT

From photographic prints to paintings, there is an artwork just for you at our stores. This beach print captures the serenity of a stunning beach and would look great in any modern home.



FASHION SET

Crochet away! 70's chic is back and you can always find colourful and exciting fashion at our stores. This top and skirt is perfect for Summer, especially by the beach.

PLANT STAND

This plant stand is just waiting for a beautiful leafy plant to adorn its top. Made of solid timber, it is excellent quality. Upcycling this with a fresh paint colour would give it a modern twist. There are so many great furniture items in our stores.



FUN COSTUMES

Is Book Week, a theme party or Halloween rolling around? Come and check out our range of costumes and dress ups for kids and adults before you spend big money in mainstream stores. Princesses, characters, masks, hats and more are all here!



COOL SHADES

Vintage sunglasses on point! These cool shades are one of many pairs we have on offer. Fresh and white for Summer, their retro vibe works perfectly with any look. Make a statement on a budget.

REGAL ARMCHAIR

Create your own game of thrones at home with this beautiful armchair. The aqua upholstery is in great condition and gives it a modern feel. Chairs of all shapes and sizes are constantly on offer at our stores, but be quick as they go fast.



FRAME IT

This patterned photo frame works brilliantly in many interiors, especially when it's styled with pots and greenery. Photo frames in all shapes and sizes are available throughout our stores, so get inspired to change up your frames today.

ON BRIEF

This modern briefcase will help you look sharp! Perfect for work or uni, its stylish lines and two-tone colour palette are a great addition to any wardrobe.



CHOOSE YOUR SHOES

From sports shoes to school shoes and shoes for kids, a wide range of sizes and colours are on offer in our stores. Whether fashionable, fun or practical, our shoe ranges are constantly changing so come down and check them out.

DELIGHTFUL DOLLS

Explore and celebrate international cultures with a range of dolls that can be displayed or used for teaching purposes. Wearing traditional costumes, these dolls are decorative and educational.



SPARKLE & SHINE

These and many great dresses are in store just in time for parties, formals, awards nights and more with colour, crystals and bling at a fraction of the cost of buying them new.

Top Thrifting Tips

By buying second-hand, you are keeping still-wearable garments and still-usable items out of landfill. Here are our best tips to help you thrift:

- 1. Plan**
Make a plan of what you are seeking before you begin that is based on what you already have. Take pics on your phone of what you have and are planning to add, to ensure it works.
- 2. Measure**
It's only a bargain if it fits in your space! Have your measurements of your space with you and plan your transport options to ensure they will get home.
- 3. Make Space**
Make space for new treasures by re-purposing ones that no longer work for you. Donate to AWLQ by checking which stores are accepting donations, as some can be at capacity.

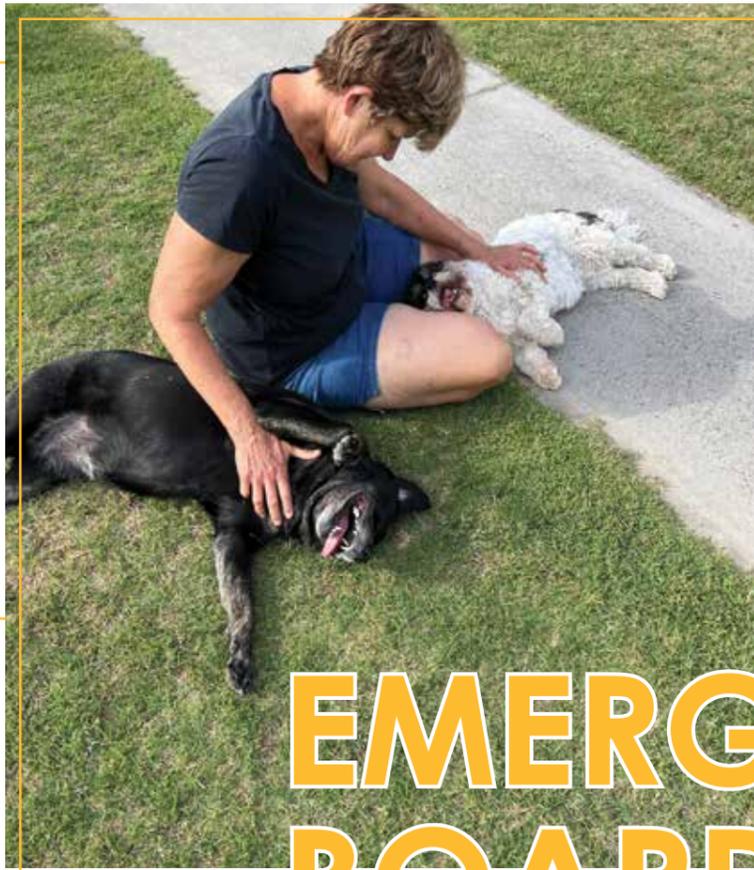
- 4. Budget**
Make a budget and stick to it! When thrifting it's easy to find bargains, but if they aren't your style or look, you won't use them or love them.
- 5. Be Kind!**
Our Op Shops are filled with amazing items – but they aren't regular retail stores. Our staff will go above and beyond to help you, but they can only offer what we have. Kindness goes a long way to making thrifting fun while raising vital funds.

Every sale in our Op Shops helps to save the lives of animals, so your purchases have great power to assist the AWLQ. Browse through many of the AWLQ stores via their Facebook page (facebook.com/awlqopshops) or their Instagram (@[opshopsawlq](https://instagram.com/opshopsawlq)) and see some items on our Gumtree page ([search AWLQ Opshops](#)).

The AWLQ Op Shops

<p>Beaudesert Shop 1, 15 William Street Beaudesert QLD 4285 Mon to Fri: 9am – 3pm</p>	<p>Coomera 31 Dreamworld Parkway Coomera QLD 4209 Mon to Fri: 9am – 3pm Sat: 9am – 12pm</p>	<p>Labrador Warehouse/Op Shop Unit C6-239 Brisbane Road Labrador QLD 4216 Mon to Fri: 9am – 3pm Sat: 8.30am – 12pm</p>	<p>Shelter Road Coombah QLD 4216 Mon to Fri: 9am – 3pm</p>
<p>Burleigh Cnr Lower GC Highway & Elder Street Burleigh Heads QLD 4220 Mon to Fri: 9am – 4pm Sat: 9am – 12pm</p>	<p>Currumbin 5/17 Villiers Drive Currumbin Waters QLD 4223 Mon to Fri: 8.30am – 2.30pm Sat: 8.30am – 12pm</p>	<p>Miami 5/10-14 Pacific Avenue Miami QLD 4220 Mon to Fri: 9am – 4pm Sat: 9am – 12pm</p>	<p>Southport 4 Railway Street Southport QLD 4215 Mon to Fri: 9am – 4pm</p>
<p>Coombah Coombah Plaza, Hansford Street Coombah QLD 4216 Mon to Fri: 9am – 3pm Sat: 9am – 1pm</p>	<p>Ipswich 189 Brisbane Street Ipswich QLD 4305 Mon & Tue: 9.30am – 4.15pm Sat: 9am – 12.15pm</p>	<p>Nerang 61 Lawrence Drive Nerang QLD 4211 Mon to Fri: 9am – 3pm Sat: 9am – 12pm</p>	<p>The Thrifty Kitten 2 Railway Street Southport QLD 4215 For days & times – Facebook @awlqopshops or Instagram @the.thrifty.kitten</p>

Do you have good quality items to donate? Drop your goods off to any of our conveniently located op shops or if you have a large amount or bulky items to donate we can often collect them from you – just email retail@awlqld.com.au or call 07 5509 9056.



Brin and Suzy right at home

Jayne's Mum Carol with Brin and Suzy when Jayne surprised her with their adoption

EMERGENCY BOARDING THAT HEALED HEARTS

Jayne Nielsen's first experience as an emergency boarding carer with AWLQ last year led to a wonderful journey of healing for dogs Brin and Suzy and for Jayne's family after a heartbreaking loss.

Gold Coast resident Jayne Nielsen registered with AWLQ's emergency boarding program last year after she and her family lost three of their beloved dogs in a short space of time. With only Heidi the cocker spaniel at home, Jayne felt she wasn't ready for new forever dogs just yet, but she was ready to open her heart to dogs in need through fostering.

The first email Jayne received from AWLQ tugged at her heartstrings. It was about black Labrador Brin

and Maltese Cavalier Suzy, whose owner had gone into emergency care. These dogs were bonded, so they needed to stay together.

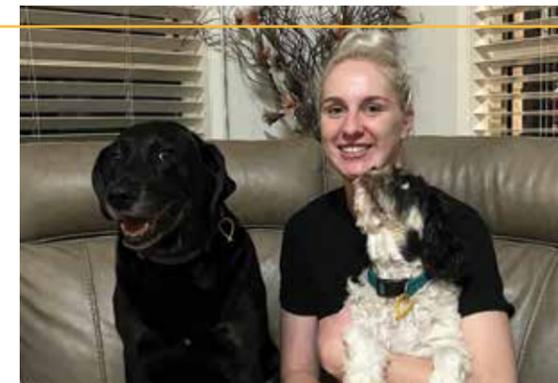
Jayne was a little concerned about how her dog Heidi would cope with new dogs in the house after such a huge loss, so Emergency Boarding staff suggested bringing Heidi into the shelter for for a 'meet and greet'.

"I love being a part of the fostering program at AWLQ because it gives the dogs a bigger opportunity

to get adopted. When they're in the shelter, it's a bit of a stressful environment for the animals. Bringing them out of the shelter gives them time to relax in a comfortable environment.

"We are given the background about the animals before they come to us for fostering, but you get to learn more about them and see their personality better when they are with you."

Jayne said when Brin and Suzy came to her and her family, Brin was very, very timid. "She definitely needed her pal Suzy with her. She was much happier with the two of them together than when she was on her own.



Jayne Nielsen with Brin and Suzy

"Knowing where the dogs came from, and why they were acting the way they were was definitely very helpful. AWLQ explains their situation and backstory to carers and how long they may be in the emergency foster system, which also helps. Mind you, I think if you're doing fostering, you're very empathetic and caring of the puppies anyway."

Brin and Suzy's owner sadly passed away while the dogs were with Jayne. However, this emergency boarding had a wonderful outcome for Jayne, Heidi and Jayne's parents, with whom Jayne lives.

"My parents were so upset when I had to take Brin and Suzy back to the shelter, so I organised for them to adopt Brin and Suzy in secret and I surprised them at Christmas. They were over the moon!

"My partner and I definitely want to continue fostering when we have a place of our own. We love the foster system."

Jayne has fostered some other dogs since Brin and Suzy. She highly recommends fostering with AWLQ and offers the following tips for those thinking about helping with the emergency boarding program.

"It's definitely very challenging at times when you bring in a dog into a home as they may have come

from a very different environment to the one that they're about to go into. You might have a really nice couch and they are used to sleeping on the couch, so when they start jumping up on the couch or the bed you just have to be very patient with them at the beginning.

"And then some animals are very scared, and you've got to try to be very patient with them. They've obviously ended up in the shelter somehow, so they come with a little bit of fear.

"Also, it can be very, very hard at the end, when you have to give them back. I think the thing that got us through with the other dogs that we didn't keep was that they were going to amazing homes, and we knew we'd just given them an opportunity to get from here to the place that they'll be forever."

Jayne has huge admiration for the people at AWLQ and the way that emergency boarding helps so many animals.

"I just love dogs, probably more than anything. So, the opportunity to meet different dogs by fostering is awesome. And the people who work there, they care so much for the animals. You really know it's not just a job to them, it's everything.

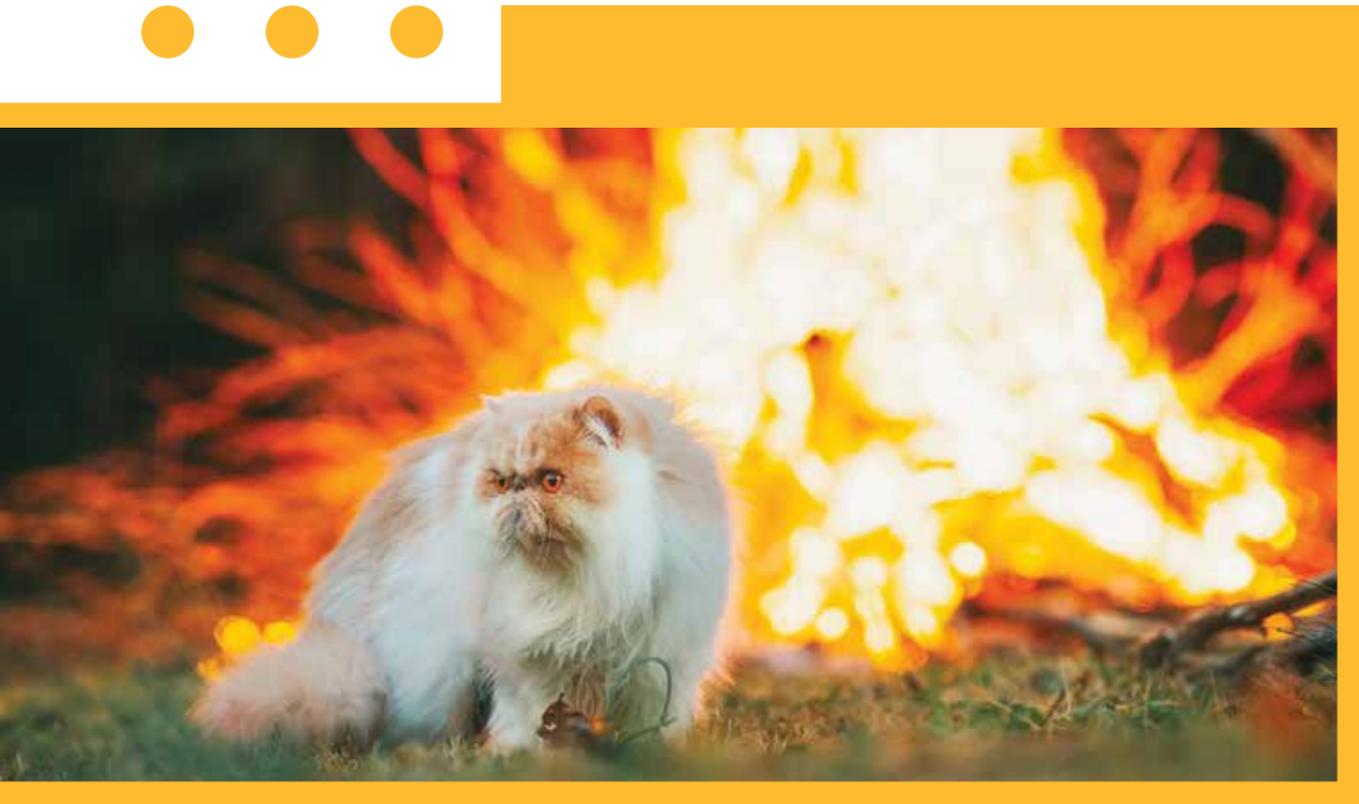
"I think the whole emergency boarding system is really helpful to get any pet out of a horrible situation, because they don't have anywhere else to go. They could end up who knows where."

Although Jayne and her family wanted to just dip their toes back into having more animals in the house through emergency fostering, their journey with Brin and Suzy has healed their and Heidi's hearts after such sadness and loss last year.

"They're just really special girls and they're definitely the perfect animals for us." 🐾

FOSTER HOMES NEEDED

WE PROMISE to never euthanise a healthy, sociable or treatable animal in our care. Our foster carers have one of the most important roles at the shelter – they allow us to keep our promise to thousands of animals every year. Sometimes the fostering experience is so special that foster carers choose to adopt the animal they have been caring for. Many of our staff and volunteers are proud of their "foster failures," the foster animals they have adopted themselves. Interested? Log on to: awlqld.com.au/foster



Preparing for Your Pets MAKES SENSE

The likelihood that you and your animals will survive an emergency such as a fire, flood, or cyclone depends mainly on today's emergency planning.

Some things you can do to prepare for the unexpected, such as having an animal emergency supply kit and developing a pet care buddy system, are the same for any emergency.

Whether you stay put in an emergency or evacuate to a safer location, you must plan for your pets in advance. If you must evacuate, take your pets with you. Then, prepare for shelter alternatives that work for you and your pets.

Make a backup emergency plan if you can't care for your animals. For example, develop a buddy system with neighbours, friends and relatives to ensure someone can care for or evacuate your pets if you cannot.

Be prepared to improvise and use what you have on hand to make it on your own for at least three days, maybe longer. **Preparing for the unexpected makes sense.** You can visit www.awlqld.com.au/DisasterPreparedness to download a copy of our 'Preparing your pets in case of disaster' brochure and get ready now.

1. Prepare – Get a Pet Emergency Supply Kit.

Consider two kits. In one, put everything you and your pets need to stay where you are. The other should be a lightweight, smaller version if you and your pets have to get away. Review your kits regularly to ensure that their contents haven't expired.

Food and water – keep at least three days of food in an airtight, waterproof container. Store at least three days of water specifically for your pets and the water you need for yourself.

First aid kit – talk to your veterinarian about the most appropriate for your pet's emergency medical needs. Most kits should include the following:

- Bandage rolls, tape and scissors.
- Antibiotic ointment.
- Flea and tick prevention.
- Latex gloves and saline solution.

Keep an extra supply of medicines for your pets in a waterproof container.

Crate or another pet carrier – if you need to evacuate, your ability to do so will be aided by having a sturdy, safe, comfortable crate or carrier ready for transporting your pet. The carrier should be large enough for your pet to stand, turn around and lie down.

Everyday items – put favourite toys, treats or bedding in your kit. Everyday things can help reduce stress for pets.

Collar with ID tag, harness or leash – your pet should always wear a collar with its identification. Include a spare lead, collar and ID tag in your pet's emergency supply kit. In addition, place copies of your pet's paperwork in a waterproof container and add them to your kit. You should also check that your pet's microchip details are current.

2. Plan – What You Will Do in an Emergency.

Depending on your circumstances and the nature of the emergency, the first important decision is

whether you stay or leave. You should understand and plan for both possibilities.

Create a plan to get away – plan how to assemble your pets and anticipate where you will go. Then, if you must evacuate, take your pets with you and go to a pet-friendly evacuation centre. Other options may include family, friends, or a pet-friendly hotel out of the danger zone. Before an emergency, find out if any of these facilities in your area might be viable options for you and your pets.

Develop a buddy system – plan with neighbours, friends or family to make sure someone is available to care for or evacuate your pets if you cannot. Talk with your pet care buddy about your evacuation plans and show them where you keep your pet's emergency kit.

Talk to your vet about emergency planning – discuss the types of things that you should include in your pet's emergency first aid kit. For example, get the names of vet clinics where you might need to seek temporary shelter. If you don't know your pet's microchip details, have the vet scan your animal to obtain this information and ensure it is up to date with the company the microchip is registered with.

Gather information for emergency animal treatment – list contact information and addresses of area animal control agencies and animal shelters. Keep one copy of these phone numbers and one in your pet's emergency supply kit.

3. Stay informed – Know about types of emergencies.

Some things you can do to prepare for the unexpected, such as assembling an emergency supply kit for yourself, your family and your pets, are the same regardless of the type of emergency.

It's essential to stay informed about what might happen and know what types of emergencies will likely affect your region and emergency plans established by your state and local government.

Visit getready.qld.gov.au/pets for more information about how to prepare.

Adapt this information to your circumstances and make every effort to follow instructions received from authorities on the scene. With these simple preparations, you can be ready for the unexpected.

Those who take the time to prepare themselves and their pets will likely encounter less difficulty, stress and worry. So take the time now to get yourself and your pet ready.

Preparing for Your Pets Makes Sense. Get ready now. 🐾

GOLDEN HEARTS™ SERVICE DELIVERS PEACE OF MIND



Heather Kruse is grateful for AWLQ's Golden Hearts™ free services. Without them, she would have found it impossible to go into hospital for necessary treatments as she didn't have anyone to care for her beloved pets.



Spoken from her hospital bed, Heather Kruse sang praises for the Golden Hearts™ program. "I would like to be an ambassador for Golden Hearts™, I cannot praise them highly enough. The attention to care is exemplary, the staff go out of their way ensure animal welfare and it's all provided free of charge to the Golden Hearts™ member!"

"As far as I'm aware, there's no other service like Golden Hearts™ offered anywhere. The fact that someone can go into hospital when necessary and not have to worry about the care of their pets is amazing."

The Golden Hearts™ Senior Pet Support program was created in 2015 as an AWLQ concept especially designed for seniors. The free program supports its members with emergency, short-term foster care of their pet if they have to go into hospital plus discounted care and services in AWLQ Community Vet Clinics.

Open to all pet owners 65 and older, whether their pet was adopted from AWLQ or not, Golden Hearts™ also supports people needing to transition into aged-care facilities that don't allow pets. AWLQ offers a free surrender of a person's beloved pet during this difficult situation and tries to match the pet with a loving new home in a similar environment to what it had.

Heather was born in California, USA and lived there until she moved to the Gold Coast in 1988, where she still resides. She has recently been in and out of hospital and is relieved she joined herself, her Scottish Terrier, Heddy and her ragdoll cat, Clawdia, back in 2021 just in case of a situation such as this.

In October 2022, Heather called on AWLQ when she entered hospital for some emergency care. She was overwhelmed with the care that the AWLQ team and volunteers gave to Heddy and Clawdia through Golden Hearts™.

"I don't see how I could have had gone to hospital without it, because I don't have anyone here, so there's no one I could have called upon to help me with my pets. It's just been amazing."

"I just have a cat now. Unfortunately, I lost Heddy in January this year, but when I had my dog and I had to go into hospital the Golden Hearts™ fostered Heddy and Clawdia out with a carer."

"They actually took Heddy to the AWLQ where there's a wonderful groomer called Mary and they groomed her all up. Heddy was a Scottish Terrier, so grooming was kind of a big job and they did beautifully. Just the extra mile that they go to is amazing, their HEARTS are in the right place."

"At the moment Clawdia enjoys staying with a foster carer while I am back in hospital. That gives me peace of mind. Animals come before people with this program, and I think that's fantastic. There is nothing else that I can think of going on in our society where animals are put first."

Heather is surprised that more people don't know about Golden Hearts™ and she takes every opportunity to share its benefits whenever she can.

"My dog Heddy had an illness that went on for quite some time. When I mentioned Golden Hearts™ to my regular vet, he said he had never heard of it, so I explained the services that they were offering. He thanked me for telling him because he said he has many older clients with animals, and they won't go into hospital because they are too worried about their pets."

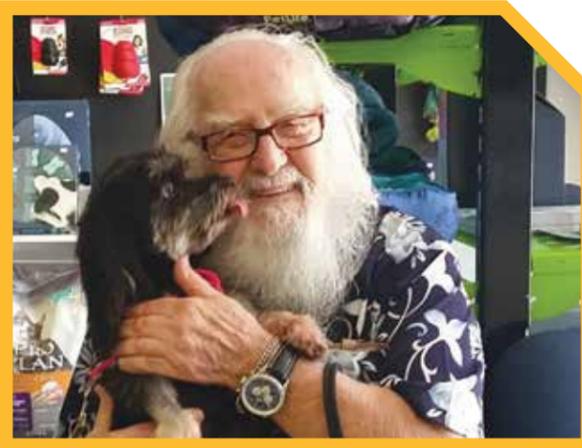
While Heddy had ongoing health issues before she passed, Clawdia is now 11 years old and came to Heather as a stray when she was quite young. "I think she was under one year old and she was wild. She scratched up a lot of my furniture and antiques with her claws, so Clawdia was the name."

Heather feels extremely indebted to Golden Hearts™. "I've been to hell with these medical issues for well over a year. Just knowing that I can go into hospital and not have to worry about both of them, now just Clawdia, by people who genuinely love animals is so important."

"AWLQ ensures that animals fostered through the Golden Hearts™ Program are cared for in homes that best suit the animal's needs. And they'll do nice things such as text me photos of how well the pet has settled into the home and things like that, which is beautiful."

"People may not go into hospital if they can't have their animals cared for. And that probably would have been my case, even though I needed to go. Golden Hearts™ has given me peace of mind while I've been going through this tough time in hospital." 

To learn more about Golden Hearts™, visit awlqld.com.au/pet-owner-help/seniors-pet-support/golden-hearts/



The day Les and Silky met at the shelter early 2015

Silky Gets a Wonderful New Home After Tragedy

From one loving home to the next loving home, Silky finds new love after loss.



Little Silky was more than comfortable in small trolleys

Les Roberts was a kind and compassionate man who had been a nurse and counsellor his working life. He had a big heart but it was his big white beard and jolly laugh that brought some new retirement opportunities to play Santa at charity events. However, being retired and living alone, Les became really lonely and wanted another dog in his life.

Les kept in contact with one of our Rehoming Centres at the time but the right dog never seemed to turn up. Les used a mobility scooter and needed a little dog who would be comfortable sitting in his basket. Les waited patiently.

Then one day, Les got the call he had been waiting for. AWLQ said, "I think we may have found just the right dog for you"

Les rushed over to meet little 10-year-old Silky and it was love at first sight.

Silky was totally spoilt by Les who fed him the best filet steak money could buy. He was his constant and loving companion and all Les was concerned about was Silky's future should anything happen to him.

AWLQ registered little Silky in AWLQ's Legacy Pet Program which gave Les peace of mind over the next couple of years.

Tough Times

Unfortunately, Les had a few visits to the hospital and AWLQ took care of Silky while he was recuperating. At 91-years-old, Les was full of life and as sharp as a tack but sadly, on one such overnight stay in the hospital, Les unexpectedly passed away.

Silky immediately came into AWLQ care. Then, Silky was taken into a warm loving foster home until new commitment carers could be found.

Being an older dog, AWLQ needed to find the perfect home for Silky where he would spend the rest of his life being just as spoilt as he was used to. To ensure his health was up to date, he received an immediate vet check, dental check, and a lovely warm bath, and a groom, all ready to snuggle up in bed.

New Legacy Pet commitment carers Irene and Bob welcome Silky into their hearts and home.

Irene and Bob are very fit people and in fact, Bob used to be a barefoot waterski champion and is in the Waterski Hall of fame. He and Irene are still very active even though they are in their 90s and take Silky for a walk twice a day.

The couple had just lost their previous rescue dog and were really pining to have someone to go walking with. AWLQ decided Silky was the perfect match for them.

Bob says "Silky has a lovely nature and loves stopping to say hello to all the neighbours on his morning walk. Irene treats him like one of her six great-grandchildren and he loves them too."

So, where does Silky sleep? "On our bed of course."

Silky the Lucky Legacy Pet

At 15 years young, Silky the Shih Tzu has found a wonderful home through the Legacy Pet Program with Irene and Bob Wing, who are both 92 and going strong.

April 2023 marks the second anniversary of Silky's life with Irene and Bob Wing and the trio is thriving together.

"Silky came to us as a Legacy Pet after his owner passed away. He had always had a special and good life with his owner, who was an AWLQ supporter," said Irene.



"Before his owner's death Silky was already enrolled in the Legacy Program, so it was important to the AWLQ team to find somebody who would look after him the way he'd always been used to being looked after.

"We'd had another, older dog for a couple of years from AWLQ that we'd lost not long before we were approached about Silky. The AWLQ knew us and knew we loved dogs, so they thought we were good people to take him."

Although they would have preferred a younger dog, as they felt they didn't have enough time enjoying the company of their last pet, Irene and Bob's ages of 92 meant a more mature dog would best match their lifestyle. This trio has worked out perfectly.

Dog lovers all their life, Irene and Bob went to AWLQ four years ago after someone in their street adopted a dog from AWLQ.

"We had two dogs for many years and both died within three weeks of each other. So, we decided we'd never have another dog. But when we saw these people down the street get a nice little white fluffy dog we said, why don't we try?"

"Both experiences with AWLQ dogs have been great. And I fall in love with whichever dog we get.

"Silky is gorgeous. I love him. He's a beautiful little dog, quiet and so well behaved. We've had him two years and we're still happy. We're all together."

Joining AWLQ's Legacy Pets Program is free of charge and will provide you with the peace of mind that, if something should happen to you, there is a secure plan in place for your pet's future.

For more information, please visit awlqld.com.au/legacypets or call us on 07 5509 9099. 

Sadly, Silky passed away just after the time of writing, after reaching a grand old age of 17.

Irene and Bob Wing – Silky's new commitment carers 



Carol's Care as a Volunteer

The search for a new cat led Carol Carseldine to years of volunteering at AWLQ's Warra Centre, where she continues to share so much joy.

For many years, Carol Carseldine's cats had found their way to her, becoming part of her family as strays that turned into beloved pets. But back in 2015, Carol was seeking a young cat to bring new energy to her two elderly pet cats, so she visited the nearby Warra AWLQ Centre in Bracken Ridge to meet with the rescued cats residing there.

Although Carol thought she needed a younger cat as part of the house, the staff advised her that older energies tended to work better together. Even though she visited the centre four times before taking then 6-year-old 'Sarah' the tabby home, Carol's interest in the centre was ignited.

The next year Carol began her volunteer journey, and she has enjoyed it ever since. "I have three 18-year-old cats, one that's about to be 19 years old, all from AWLQ. Some of them have some health issues, but you know, people often don't see how great the older cats are. If they're a little bit older,

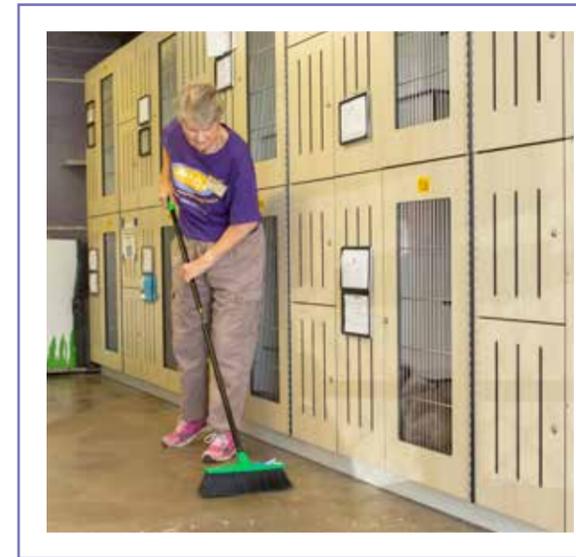
people don't want them. So, they always usually end up at my place.

"A couple of the ones that I've adopted over the years have been mistreated before they came into the shelter, but a lot of the ones we get in, particularly now with the housing crisis, come from elderly people who have had to go into care and the families haven't been able to take them.

"They are beautiful cats. Once you get them home and get them settled, they're just so lovely and affectionate."

Carol retired from paid work five years ago. The 75-year-old now volunteers two days a week doing a range of tasks for the Warra Centre's cats.

"On a morning shift you're responsible for cleaning out the pens each day, and feeding the cats and making sure they've got water every morning. On the afternoon shift, we do the same thing. We top up their food, or if they ignore their food, we just top



up their water and make sure they've got plenty for the night. We keep their pens clean and replace the bedding, making sure every night or every afternoon that they've all got something nice and warm."

Carol loves dogs and cats but chose to work with cats at Warra due to the physical nature of some of the bigger dogs.

"At my age, I'm not as strong as I was and my balance isn't as good as it used to be. So, I felt it was best that I worked with the cats. I find it really rewarding. Growing up, we always had a cat or a dog and I find them all really good company.

"When I worked, I always felt it was unfair to dogs to work each day and for them to not have company all day. I also used to worry about the cats, but then I had some holidays and stayed home with them. I found that they go to sleep in the morning and they wake up in the afternoon, and they are none the wiser that I wasn't home!

"I love cats. So many are so special and they're so intelligent, they're very clever. The senior cats can just give so much love."

Carol is full of admiration for the AWLQ for their whole attitude to the animals and just how much the organisation values the volunteers. "They don't believe in euthanasia. For them to have to euthanize an animal, there's got to be a really, really good reason. Usually, it's a health reason.

"One of the old cats that I've got at the moment, I brought him home 18 months ago, supposedly on

palliative care. They thought he had an intestinal lymphoma, with probably about six to eight weeks to live. Even with that diagnosis, he was quite healthy at the time and he was eating quite well, so they didn't want to put him to sleep at that stage.

"But they also said it wasn't fair to adopt him out to someone, so they asked me if I would take him on palliative care. Well, here we are 18 months later and he's going really well.

"The other thing that really impresses me about AWLQ, is how much they value not just myself, but all the volunteers. Every time we walk out the door and say goodbye, everyone that you pass on the way out will say thank you for coming today; thank you for your help. It's nice to feel so appreciated."

Carol has words of encouragement for anyone thinking of volunteering with AWLQ.

"It's such a rewarding experience. Sometimes you do see sad things and animals come in under certain circumstances, but there are just so many happy endings.

"Even if someone doesn't want animal contact, there are ways to help, like in the donation room. People drop us donations all the time such as sheets and towels and things that we need to use and these always need sorting.

"Everyone bends over backwards to take care of the animals and look after them and keep them happy and healthy till they're adopted. It's special to be a part of that." 🐾

AWLQ has many opportunities for you to volunteer throughout our centres and programs. Learn more here: <https://www.awlqld.com.au/support-us/volunteer-with-awlq>

Fur-iendship Separated: Understanding and Managing Separation Anxiety in Pets

As much as we love our pets, there are times when we need to leave them behind, whether it be for a holiday, work, or other commitments.

However, many pet owners are faced with the issue of separation anxiety in their cats and dogs.

Separation anxiety is a behaviour disorder that can cause significant distress for pets and their owners. Let's explore separation anxiety and how it manifests in cats and dogs, as well as offer tips on how to help your furry friend cope.

WHAT IS SEPARATION ANXIETY?

Separation anxiety is a behaviour disorder that occurs when an animal becomes distressed when separated from their owner. This can manifest as various behaviours, including destructive behaviour, excessive vocalisation, and inappropriate elimination. Separation anxiety can be caused by a variety of factors, including a lack of socialisation, changes in routine, or a history of abandonment.

SEPARATION ANXIETY IN CATS

Cats are often considered independent creatures, but they can suffer from separation anxiety, just like dogs. Symptoms of separation anxiety in cats may include excessive grooming, hiding, or vocalising. Cats may also become destructive, particularly with their litter box. For example, a cat may stop using the litter box or start urinating outside of it.

SEPARATION ANXIETY IN DOGS

Dogs are perhaps more commonly associated with separation anxiety, and the symptoms can be more pronounced. For example, some dogs become destructive when left alone, chewing on furniture or other household items. Others may become excessively vocal, barking or howling when their owner is away. Some dogs may also display physical symptoms, such as pacing or drooling.

HOW TO HELP YOUR PET COPE

If you suspect your pet is suffering from separation anxiety, there are several things you can do to help them cope.

SLOWLY INTRODUCE TIME APART

One way to help your pet cope with separation anxiety is to introduce them to time spent apart from you slowly. Start by leaving your pet alone for short periods and gradually increasing the amount of time. You can also try leaving your pet with a toy or treat to keep them occupied while you're away.

CREATE A SAFE SPACE

Creating a safe space for your pet can help them feel more secure when you're not around. This could be a crate for your dog or a quiet room with a litter box for your cat. Make sure the space is comfortable and includes items that are familiar to your pet, such as their favourite toys or blankets.

PROVIDE PLENTY OF EXERCISE AND STIMULATION

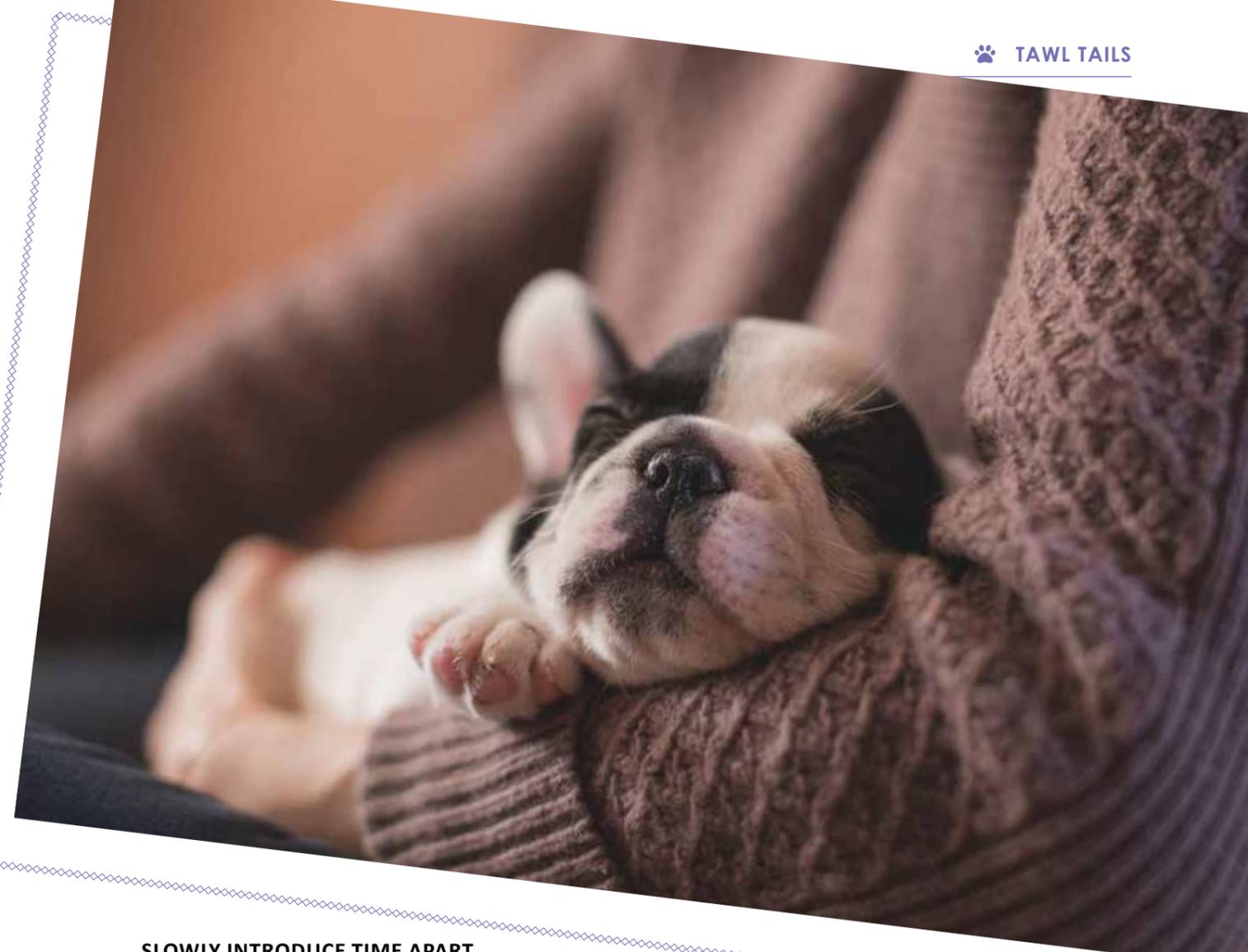
Regular exercise and mental stimulation can help reduce anxiety in both cats and dogs. Make sure your pet is getting plenty of exercise, whether it be through walks, playtime, or other activities. You can also provide mental stimulation through puzzle toys or training sessions.

CONSIDER MEDICATION

In severe cases, medication may be necessary to help your pet cope with separation anxiety. Talk to your veterinarian about whether medication is appropriate for your pet.

SEPARATION ANXIETY IS A COMMON ISSUE THAT CAN AFFECT BOTH CATS AND DOGS.

If you suspect your pet is suffering from separation anxiety, taking steps to help them cope is essential. Slowly introducing time apart, creating a safe space, providing plenty of exercise and stimulation, and considering medication are all options that can help your pet feel more secure when you're not around. By taking the time to understand and address your pet's separation anxiety, you can help them lead a happier and healthier life. 🐾



*If it is too cold for you,
it's probably too cold
for your pet.*

Keeping Your Furry Friends Warm and Healthy During the Cooler Months

As the crisp air and chilly winds announce the arrival of winter in Australia, it's essential to remember that our beloved pets need extra care during this season too. While Australia's winters are relatively mild compared to those in other parts of the world, there are still a few essential considerations to ensure your furry friends stay warm, happy, and healthy.

INDOOR COMFORT

While some pets, such as dogs, may enjoy spending time outdoors regardless of the weather, providing them with a warm and cozy indoor space during the colder months is crucial. Ensure your pet has access to a well-insulated and draught-free area, away from cold drafts and dampness. In addition, consider providing them with soft bedding, such as blankets or pet beds, to keep them comfortable and warm.



GROOMING

Avoid clipping your pet's coat close to the skin during winter, as longer coats provide warmth. Also, minimise bathing your pets in the cold. This can remove essential oils from your pet's skin and fur, increasing the chance of skin irritation. Instead, brush your pet regularly to get rid of dead hair and stimulate blood circulation. This can improve skin conditions. Cold weather can be brutal on your dog's paws, leading to chipping and cracking. If this occurs, consult your veterinarian for the best treatment options.

DRESS APPROPRIATELY

While it may seem amusing, some pets, particularly those with shorter fur or smaller bodies, may benefit from pet-specific clothing during colder periods. Dressing them in a well-fitting coat or sweater can provide extra warmth and protection when venturing outdoors. However, choosing clothing that doesn't restrict their movement, cause discomfort or prevent them from expressing their natural behaviours and using their body language to communicate is important.

NUTRITIOUS DIET

In winter, pets may require additional calories to maintain their body temperature. Consult your veterinarian to ensure your pet receives a well-balanced and appropriate diet. Adjust their portion sizes or include additional protein-rich and healthy fat sources to support their energy needs. Always provide fresh water and regularly check to ensure it doesn't freeze if your pet spends extended periods outdoors.

EXERCISE AND MENTAL STIMULATION

The colder weather makes it easy for both pets and their owners to become less active during winter. However, regular exercise is crucial for maintaining your pet's physical and mental well-being. Find ways to engage them indoors, such as puzzle toys, interactive games, or indoor agility exercises. For dogs, shorter and more frequent walks during the warmer parts of the day can help meet their exercise requirements without exposing them to extreme temperatures.

BE MINDFUL OF HEATING SOURCES

While keeping your pets warm is essential, ensuring their safety around heating sources is equally crucial.



Portable heaters, open fires, and electric blankets should be monitored carefully to prevent accidental burns or other injuries. In addition, ensure that cords are out of reach and that your pets have ample space to move away from the heat source if they feel uncomfortable.

REGULAR VETERINARY CHECK-UPS

Winter is an ideal time to schedule a visit to the veterinarian for a routine health check-up. This allows your vet to assess your pet's overall health, address any concerns, and recommend necessary preventive measures, such as vaccinations or parasite control specific to the season.

By following these guidelines for winter pet care, you can ensure that your furry companions stay warm, healthy, and happy during the colder months. Remember, while our winters may be milder than those in other regions, it's essential to be mindful of your pet's specific needs and provide them with the love, care, and attention they deserve throughout the year. 🐾





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Our heartfelt gratitude goes to our corporate supporters who have enabled us to achieve so much in accomplishing real and long-term improvements in the welfare of companion animals.

A WLQ is honored to work with our corporate partners and sponsors. They lend their support, engage their communities and help raise funds so that, together, we can continue to provide a safe haven for more than 10,000 stray and homeless animals every year. Together, we ensure sick or suffering animals will have access to veterinary care regardless of their owner’s capacity to pay, we work with the community to end pet overpopulation, and provide emergency boarding for vulnerable animals. We love our partners, and they love animals as much as we do. Thank you to all those working with AWLQ to create a brighter future for animals in need. 🐾





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