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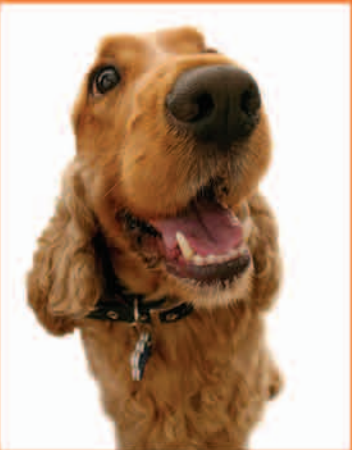


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urban animal

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 20 Hordern Street, Newtown NSW 2042
 Ph: (02) 9557 7766 Fx: (02) 9557 7788
 E: critters@urbananimal.net Web: www.urbananimal.net
 Publisher: Phil Tripp topdog@urbananimal.net
 Managing Editor: Lisa Treen lisa@urbananimal.net
 Design & Layout: Mark Berry mark@urbananimal.net
 Staff: Jess Goldstein, Justine Lynch, Danielle Hartmann
 Contributors: Jill Hedgecock, Emily Yoffe, Trudi Thorpe,
 Melissa Catt, Kath Briscoe, Alex Rosenwax
 Cover Photography: By Danielle Lyonne of Animax
 Dharma the Cat: By David Lourie
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In our third quarterly issue, we have stories to inspire and inform as well as amuse and advise. We plan our editorial months out and create each issue with the celebration of pet lifestyle foremost in our mind and evangelizing responsible pet ownership (though some call it guardianship or companionship) without preaching.

So this issue we've brought two generations of pet professionals together in our main features. These people started out playing with pets or their farm animals and turned caring into careers—one an icon and the three others we profile, innovators. Each has their niche.

Due to space considerations in our January issue, we had to bump 'Australia's Patron Saint of Pets', the interview we did with Dr Harry Cooper at his home in Tasmania. We'd rather have kept the interview for a longer stretch in our magazine than cut it to fit. Harry's a man who takes his time with people, and is mobbed by them wherever he goes. He's patient, caring and makes you think you're the only person in his world when he talks with you. But we explore the other facets to his life and personality—the things behind the camera, the image, the concept and the commercial aspects of being Dr. Harry.

The three people we profile as having gone from Play to Pay is the first in a two part story that Lisa Treen initiated about fascinating people who have created their own niches in the pet world. Next issue, we have three more as we wanted to split this set of profiles in two. They share having overcome adversity and taking on incredible challenges to make themselves 'Entre-Pet-neurs' in the tiny end of town within the vast and rapidly growing pet industry.

When we came up with the idea of a free quarterly, quality, pet magazine last year, our publishing peers and many friends thought we were crazy to launch such a risky venture. There are other free publications—street press for dogs and pets—in the US and Canada which is a far larger market than ours. We were initially inspired by 'Urban Dog' in New Orleans whose creator Lisa Robinson inspired us to unleash Urban Animal and from whom we have licensed some excellent articles. There is also 'Dogs, Dogs, Dogs' of Toronto Canada which is a newspaper on the street and 'OC Dog' from Orange County California as free mags.

So imagine our surprise and delight to find that a family business in Brisbane—which had come up with the idea independent of us and the other free pet publications—launched their new bimonthly 'Your Pet Magazine' (www.yourpetmagazine.com.au) in Brisbane late March. A glossy A4 high quality creation, it combines advisory and human interest stories on all types of pets with the occasional celebrity, fashion features, product profiles and reviews. We were overjoyed to find that someone shared our vision (without either of us knowing about each other!) and that they took the dedicated challenge to create a resource for the area stretching from the Sunshine Coast to the Gold Coast, centred in Brisneyland. Onya folks!

In our town, we're heartened by the support of a growing list of advertisers who have made this magazine viable in its third edition and also the incredible array of subscribers who have taken this magazine to heart from all over Australia. Not just in the region from Newcastle to Wollongong and out to Katoomba where we distribute 40,000 copies free to over 250 outlets from pet shops to vets, boarding kennels, groomers, pet-friendly cafes, pet businesses, mobile pet wash operators and a slew of pet events.

Due to our placing a subscription coupon on this page in our last issue, we'll be up to 200+ subscribers by the time you read this one. And we invite you to share this publication with your pet-mates if you pick it up at a pet business or pet-friendly venue where copies are freely available. For subscribers, we send four copies per issue so you can share with friends and family whether you're in Darwin or Tassie. And of course, the entire publication (with its two previous issues) is online as downloadable PDFs from our website www.urbananimal.net.

Thanks to all of you who have sent emails, letters, gifts, and support in so many ways. And to our advertisers who make this publication possible, we are grateful for your investment in us.

Woof!

Phil Tripp - Urban Animal Publisher

When I was six, I was given a plush toy seal-pup that I named 'Ruppy' and as a child with a vivid imagination, we had many adventures together. I loved him as he had a silly little grin on his face. He was such a big part of my childhood that a special 'Ruppy' language was created. It's a term of endearing communication my sisters still use. Often I get a phone call with the greeting in a Cookie Monster voice, "Rira Rira row rar rou?" which translated, means "Hi ho Lisa how are you?"

Ruppy's no longer in his original state, in fact it would be hard looking at him now to figure out exactly what he was in his former life. Flippers are missing, his eyes are long gone and his fur couldn't be described as plush. His current state is the result of much puppy love over the years. Several generations of family dogs have been attracted to him and have left their mark—removing limbs, extracting the eyes and chewing on whiskers.

I was reminded of this strange allure 'Ruppy' has to young dogs, early one morning last week. I hadn't seen 'Ruppy' for ages, and if anyone had enquired to his whereabouts, I wouldn't have a clue to his location. Yet he turned up on my bedroom carpet unexpectedly, attached to the mouth of a small Dalmatian puppy we call Lilly.



Jackson, Phil Tripp & Roger

Lilly came to us from Dalmatian Welfare, an organization of dedicated folk who collect Dalmatians abandoned at shelters. Like many caring welfare organisations, they foster these dogs, assess needs, rehabilitate them, if needed, and then find suitable homes. Lilly had been 'surrendered' with her parents because the owners were going overseas. Andy Robertson, co-ordinator of Dalmatian Welfare, had been caring for Lilly for a month before contacting us about the possibility of taking her. It's been two years since my other Dalmatian Mick passed away and only recently had I considered getting another dog. I'd registered an interest in taking a rescued Dalmatian over a month ago and had expected to get a call about adopting a two to four year old. I'd never expected to get a call about a puppy—it was like finding out you're pregnant and about to have the baby all at once.

Before we collected Lilly I had a minor 'freak-out' thinking about the impact a new dog would bring to the house and office. How her arrival would change routine and more importantly, the effect on Jerri, our other much loved dog. I had forgotten the joy that puppies bring and also the work involved! Accidents are ignored and toilet business in the backyard it met with enthusiastic praise. I'm sure I sound mad repeating "Good girl Lilly, you did a pee pee, you did a poo poo."

Lilly's come a long way in the month of Andy Robertson's care. She's less scared of strangers and loud noises. She's put on condition and her coat is silky and smooth. Like her parents, she's still very afraid of brooms and other large sticks. But importantly she's a happy, playful and responsive little dog. Her dinner manners have improved as she no longer has to growl for her share. And we're happy to report that Jerri has taken on a new lease of life with play times and guiding Lilly with her dog knowledge.

We're blessed to have the guidance and training of Trudi Thorpe from dogLogic who has been on hand to assess Lilly and listen to our concerns and observations. Through Trudi's training techniques, Lilly can now walk on a lead without the security of another dog. She's greeting visitors to the office and is more confident meeting other dogs and humans in the park.

Our office and house are littered with various squeaky toys and other prizes this little puppy has found. After nearly twenty-five years of being unged and slobbered on by various dogs, I'm not sure whether 'Ruppy' has it in him to last out the affections of Lilly. Perhaps this is the last dog he will live through still reasonably intact. He's got a quirky charm and when I look at him he still has that silly little grin on his furry face. And so do we.

For more information on Dalmatian Welfare visit: www.dalmatiansofnsw.org.au/rescue.htm

Lisa Treen - Urban Animal Editor

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Jerri, Lisa Treen & Lilly

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