

About ARF

ARF is an incorporated association of people in the ACT and surrounding NSW region who rescue dogs from euthanasia and foster them in their own homes for as long as it takes to find them loving, permanent homes. The dogs are desexed, C5 vaccinated, wormed and microchipped before going to their new homes.

The ARF Newsletter — January 2010

Welcome to the first issue to Chin Wag—the newsletter for ACT Rescue and Foster—for 2010. This month some of the things you can read about include: learn why your poochies like to roam; catch up on Jet's overseas travels and read everyone's point of view in Beau's new family! You can also read a few words from ARF's President as we review 2009 and get ready for 2010.

Enjoy!

Jet-setting Jet!

To the wonderful people from ARF

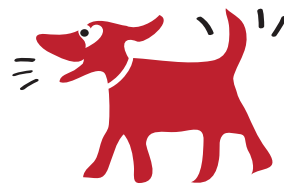
Just a little hello and again a big thank you for everybody that made it possible to adopt our wonderful, loving and relaxed boy Jet (calendar boy July 2009). Jet has been the love and the joy of our lives since he came to us more than a year ago. He is just a charm.

Now Jet is up for his next adventure. On 4 November, Jet is flying with PetJet again. He will go from Perth to Sydney, Sydney to Vancouver and last one Vancouver to Montreal, where he will be finally home, in the snow and the cold winter.

We will always be grateful for ARF for be able to bring Jet home where he belong, with us.

Cheers
Fannie and Jet
November 2009

Thank you Fannie Lachapelle for this email



CHIN WAG

Jan 2010



ACT Rescue and
Foster Inc.

Dogs re-homed

The total for 2009 was 117 dogs adopted. The total for ARF since its inception in 2001 now stands at 1797 so the 2000th dog is moving closer!



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A word from Martin Schwenke, ARF President

The 2008–09 financial year was another successful one for ARF. We continued to rescue an impressive number of dogs. The local rescue landscape has changed so the raw numbers aren't as huge as they were a couple of years ago. However, our overall contribution to rescue and direct pound adoptions makes up the difference.



Our temperament testers tested over 450 dogs at the Canberra and Queanbeyan pounds. More than two-thirds of these were either rescued by ARF, rescued by another group or adopted directly from the pound. This fraction is a little conservative

since we are unable to track the destination of all dogs that leave the pounds.

When the Canberra pound (DAS) was overflowing, ARF's Beverley Margosis called radio stations and offered to be interviewed. She let listeners know of the dire situation and encouraged them to go to DAS to adopt a dog. These 'direct adoptions' don't hit ARF's 'books', so they don't immediately make ARF look impressive. However, it isn't about the books, it is about the dogs. Direct adoptions from pounds take a lot of the pressure off ARF and other rescue groups. ARF obviously can't take credit for all direct pound adoptions. That said, nearly 1 in 5 dogs that ARF temperament tests are directly adopted. The 'cage write-ups' that our testers leave behind obviously have an impact.

Similarly, ARF's temperament testing summaries are posted on DogzOnline for other rescue groups to see. We're happy to lend this expertise to other rescuers to help them make informed and responsible choices. Our rescue liaison people, Beverley Margosis (DAS) and Lyn Boyer (Queanbeyan, Yass), are also in direct contact with other rescue groups, particularly the breed-specific ones, to let them know of dogs in need. About 1/3 of all dogs that we temperament test are rescued by other groups and individuals. That's an outstanding result and the significance of ARF's role in this should not be underestimated.

Although I've taken the opportunity to highlight the deeds of our temperament testing team, I'd obviously like to thank everyone who contributes to ARF. We could not exist without our excellent foster carers and associate carers — they are at the core of our mission. Similarly, our public relations team does a great job of making up the regular shortfall between vet and other costs, and adoption fees. There are many others who make integral contributions but don't fall neatly into any particular group. Thank you all.

Another way of measuring ARF's success is the number of people who come to us looking for dogs. Foster carers will have noticed the large number of dog wanted forms that appear on our members' web site. People tell us they find ARF in a variety of ways, although word-of-mouth and web search engines, like Google, seem especially popular. Our public web site is obviously easy to find and easy to use. It is fundamental to showcasing our foster dogs and proving prospective forever owners with comprehensive advice and information on the dogs. Our members' website is vital as it provides our foster carers with key resources and guides. It also works as a key communication tool for sharing information and news among all ARF members.

In March, Raelene Stewart was awarded MDBA Rescuer of the Year for the 2nd year in a row. Raelene has worked tirelessly as Foster Carer Co-ordinator and is taking a well earned break from the committee. Thanks Raelene!

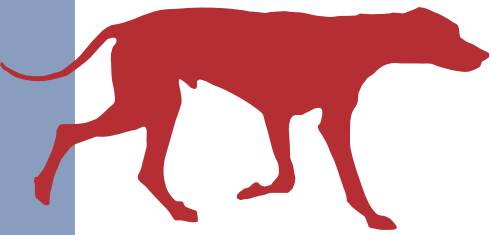
The committee has handled a variety of issues. We joined Volunteering ACT so that we could be part of the wider volunteering community and benefit from that. We're very close to finally having insurance, including public liability insurance. We have a draft strategic plan about to go out to our members for comment. We also have a work plan that lists a range of things that need to be done every year to help keep ARF ticking over.

Once again, thank you. It is humbling to be part of such a fantastic organisation.



Roaming, roaming, roaming

Why do dogs roam?



One of the most common reasons for dogs end up at the pound or rescue shelters is because they are found roaming.

Roaming is as important to dogs as eating, breathing, drinking and having sex. Research on semi-domesticated dogs has shown that they set out daily, in the early morning and late afternoon or evening on foraging trips, searching for food, water and making sure no one has invaded their territory. They will roam as individuals, but prefer to be in a group.

At certain times of the year, such as late winter to spring, both males and females seek each other out for mating. Unlike their wild cousins coyotes and wolves, who only mate once a year, female dogs come into season up to three or four times a year depending on the breed. Intact males are always interested in a female in season, even if she lives several kilometres away. Most dogs, if they get the opportunity to get out, will start to roam with the onset of sexual maturity between 6 and 9 months of age.

Dogs also love to know what is going on around them. Roaming is to dogs what reading the newspaper or watching the news on TV is for us. Lots of scent messages have been left (intentionally or not) for them, not only by other dogs but also by cats, wombats, kangaroos, foxes, rabbits, humans and so forth. Dogs will also leave messages for themselves. For example, if a dog has chased a rabbit in a particular spot, he may urinate after the chase on a prominent, vertical object, thereby leaving himself a reminder that he hunted there. If he has caught the rabbit then scent and other traces, such as blood and saliva will also be found in the area. The dog will remember that he had a successful hunt there and he will check this marked place regularly.

Dogs also roam for exercise. Most dogs need a minimum of 4–6 km a day, walking or running. All the working and hunting breeds like Kelpie, Cattle dog, Border Collie, German Shepherd, Doberman, Jack Russell, Labradors, Golden Retriever, etc. need even more, plus training.

Once your dog has discovered the joys of roaming they are generally hard to persuade to stay at home. From then on they will have to be restrained securely either by high fences, electric fences, a solid dog run or, not so ideally, the chain. Roaming may be prevented by having strict daily routines that follow your dogs natural activity levels by walking early in the morning, resting most of the day and then setting out for another walk in the late afternoon. This way your dogs need to exercise and investigate is satisfied.

Dogs are very social and prefer to travel in groups. Allowing your dog to roam by itself, apart from getting in trouble with the neighbours and the local council, is telling your dog that you are not in control of him and that you are not belonging to the same pack. Dogs must have that daily walk with you as the leader. It provides them not just with exercise, but it also helps you bond with your dog.

Good breed websites or breeders will give you advice on how much exercise a particular breed needs. If you do not want to walk those kilometres every day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, 5110 days (14 years, the average length of a dogs life), you may be better suited to a breed like greyhound or a toy dog who have lower exercise requirements.

Thank you to Heike Hahner
from Canine Communications
for this story.



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Caption competition

Just what is going on in this picture?

Email us at info@fosterdogs.org to win a package of doggy and human treats!

Last month's winner is...Joyce Webb



A poem from Dallas who was fostering Rosie*, a large female mastiff x listed by ARF on 20 December 2009

Twass the week before Christmas
And all through the pound
Dogs were dreaming of homes
They hoped would be found

Along came a kind lady
With two dogs in tow
She said 'I'll save Rosie'
And off they did go

She moved into the home
Didn't bark, quiet as a mouse
She was so well behaved
Because she was allowed in the house

She met the two cats
And thought they were great
She met other dogs
And they were quickly good mates

She took a walk every day
But said 'Mum, I'm a pup
I walk well on a lead
But sometimes I forget and jump up'

I don't jump fences
Though I am very tall
Just walk me every day
And you'll think I'm small

But she dreams every day
As she chews on her bone
That someone friendly will come
And give her a great home.



* Rosie (above) was adopted on Christmas Eve



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Out of the inbox

Thanks to Ann, Tony and Beau for these updates

First there was the foster family...

Dear Chinwag editor

I recently re-homed Rusty (now Beau) and below is an email I received from his new family. Rusty was extremely timid and had obviously been abused in his previous life. He was terrified of everything. Toys, balls (especially if you threw them and this is a kelpie for goodness sake) loud noises, sharp movements. He found it hard to understand dog treats, a lead and a nice walk and a collar. Over the next month and a half Neil and I worked on getting him used to all these things and more. Ours is not a particularly quiet home and with two well adjusted boisterous young terriers to play with, he learnt the ropes and started to show some of his brilliant beautiful little personality. He found he loved to play games and pick up toys, go for a walk and not be frightened of the lead. He started to taste (and like) dog treats, he learned 'sit' and 'down', he learned that a cuddle was a wonderful thing and that beds were even more so! When Tony and Sam called out of the blue to 'look at the dog which they were told by friends was a copy of their Roxy', it was a match made in heaven. On their first meet, Rusty and Roxy played chasey with each other and found a rabbit to romp after, they ran and ran until they were completely tired out. Later as the dogs were quiet on the lounge room floor of Tony and Sam's beautiful home overlooking the bush of Wamboin, I realised how caring and committed these people were to making their home a haven for a previously frightened and abused dog. I couldn't have wanted a better outcome for 'Rusty Ru'. He went willingly with Sam and Roxy when they came the following weekend, but not without a few tears from me and Neil.



Then there was Beau's new family...

Hi Ann and Neil

Just an update to let you know how well he is doing and how happy we are.

We decided on a name change as Rusty was a little close to Roxy which was confusing to them both not to mention Mum and Dad getting it all mixed up, so he is now known as Beau which is French for 'my boyfriend' and also roughly translates to 'he who is good looking' — fitting, we thought. So Roxy now has a new boyfriend and she is VERY Happy.

Sleeping has not been an issue with them both curling up on rugs together — and yes, they were spoilt on the first night, spending it on our bed — but now they're happy to go to their own.

No other issues with toilet training as they both go out together. Playing is definitely a must for them as they spend hours chasing each other around the block, decks and anywhere else they can think of. Beau is also happy to be the instigator in this and even picked up a ball of Roxy's and threw it at her. She thought all her Christmases had come at once, returning the favour.

I managed to increase the height of the fences after 7 hours of work just to make sure he is safe.

I had the Monday off all day with them and Sam came home lunchtime Wednesday doing some work from home and they were happy to sleep together in the office. He is eating well and there have been no issues regarding feed time. So I think he has fitted in extremely well so far and we must thank you both again for the work you guys do to find new homes.

Tony



And now an update from Beau himself...

Hi my name is Beau.

About two months ago I was adopted by my new family and life is just heaven. I have a new step sister (more like a girlfriend) named Roxy who I love very much. We do everything together and she shares all her stuff with me. We have a big backyard with lots of room to run and play. Tug is my favourite game.

I have learnt how to have fun and trust my new family, who love me very much. I have managed to put on some weight and even get spoilt with a cuddle on the bed some mornings. I have my own stocking under the Xmas tree! Smells good.

I have been camping, bike riding, swimming, jogging and through this I'm gaining more confidence. We go on lots of day trips and I just love the car and the adventures it brings.

We have lots of visitors at home and I'm slowly understanding they are nice people and I don't need to hide. They sometimes bring their dogs to have a play. Roxy and I just love it.

I would like to thank my ARF foster parents for finding me this new home. Keep up the good work.

Thanks
Beau (aka Rusty)



ARFing the Airways

ARF now has a regular spot on QBN FM 96.7 at 11am on Sunday mornings.

Beverley Margosis—who handles liaison with the pounds—gives listeners an update on the great dogs available from Canberra and Queanbeyan pounds, as well as practical tips for people who are looking for their new best friend or already have one.

Make sure you tune in for that one!

The next issue of Chin Wag will be in March. Please send any contributions through to info@fosterdogs.org by the end of February.

ARF Membership Form

Please complete this form and send it with \$15 annual membership to ARF, PO Box 1308, Woden ACT 2606

Name:

Address:

Telephone: Email:

Signature: Date:

I would like to find out more about becoming a sponsor becoming a foster carer

