

NRAS Newsletter – #3 /2021



20th birthday celebrations POSTPONED

A sad fact of life these days ...

Unfortunately, due to the uncertainty around regional lockdowns and crowd restrictions, NRAS has had to make the difficult decision to postpone its 20th birthday celebrations in October.

We hope the party can be bigger & better for our 21st in 2022.

But ... it's not all bad news!!!

At the close of the financial year, NRAS reported bumper **Adoption Statistics** for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021 with a total of **178 CATS & 105 DOGS** finding their forever homes. This was an increase of 44 adoptions on the 2019/20 FY and obviously due to the diligent efforts of our **Shelter Operations Manager** (Sarah), **Cat & Dog Coordinators** (Joy & Trish) and tireless foster carers.

Whilst our physical Adoption Days have been postponed due to the August / September lockdowns, the Shelter has been operating with a skeleton staff to ensure the doors would remain open for our furry friends in need and re-opened to the public on Monday 13 September.

The **NRAS Op Shop** is also kicking goals despite enforced closures with COVID lockdowns with end of financial year reports stating the shop recorded its **BEST year in the past four**, with year-on-year sales increasing by more than 23%.

Op Shop Manager, **Donna** has also been creative by reinstating the NRAS Op Shop Online during recent lockdowns.

<http://www.nrasonlineopshop.com>

A huge thank you and congratulations to Donna and the team of wonderful Op Shop volunteers for an incredible result.



NRAS CO-WINNER IN BALLINA SHIRE BUSINESS AWARDS 2021

Together with our friends at **Ballina-on-Richmond ROTARY**, NRAS was announced as co-winner of the **Outstanding Community Organisation** section at this year's Ballina Shire Business Awards.

"Receiving this accolade only reinforces the value of Northern Rivers Animal Services to our community," said NRAS President, **Jo Parker**.

"Our volunteers – be it in the Op Shop, Shelter, Office, Committee, Life Member or our tireless Foster Carers ... every single one has played a part in allowing NRAS to re-home the lost, abandoned and abused companion animals of this region for the past two decades. Something for which we should all be incredibly proud," continued Jo.

NRAS is now considered a **FINALIST** at the Northern Rivers Regional Business Awards, the winners to be announced in an online event on Saturday 23 October.

Jollie IN VIEW

Whilst some people may not know this beautiful soul, **Amy Gasnier** is the quiet achiever in the NRAS story so it's quite appropriate (and no coincidence) that she features as this issue's **Vollie in View**.



Amy has been with the organisation from the get-go; was the **first-ever foster carer**; is on the NRAS Committee; was awarded **Life Membership** in **2018** and she is still ONLY in her 30's!!!

When asked WHY she joined NRAS, Amy states: *"I'd been to the Pound and saw so many gorgeous dogs and cats needing homes. Joining NRAS gave me an opportunity to make a difference and once I became involved ... the more I learnt, the more I wanted to help."*

A great partnership has grown between Ballina Shire Council's Pound and NRAS throughout that time due to the work of Amy (and founder, Robyn Mostyn).

Would Amy recommend volunteering with NRAS? Her response, an adamant **YES!!!!**

"What's not to love!!! NRAS allows me to give back and do good in the world.

"I get to help save the lives of hundreds of amazing animals; meet wonderful like-minded people and be part of something that matters."

Undeniably, the best part is the **PUPPIES** but there's also "the privilege of bringing joy to people when you help complete their families when they adopt from us".

And Amy loves receiving "pup-dates" from the dogs and puppies she's helped to re-home.

"Rehabilitating the abused and traumatised pups and helping them learn to trust and love again is something I will never tire of," continued Amy.



And there is no doubt Amy wins the **Golden Pooper Scooper** award for the most foster animals in her care, having hosted more than 300 in her time with NRAS.

Besides the puppy love, Amy concedes that meeting beautiful "animal-crazy" people and making lifelong friendships has been a great part of the journey and *"knowing my kids are proud of what we do as part of NRAS is the icing on the cake."*

And it's certainly a **Gasnier Family affair**.

As well as opening their home to the menagerie of foster animals, husband **Trent** is an amazing local landscaper and a regular presence when things need to be done at the Shelter. In between her foster care duties, Amy is also a Teacher's Aide and mum to two busy boys, **Kyan** 12 and **Nash** 10 who love anything to do with the water but still think puppies are awesome.



BECOME A FOSTER CARER

As our *Vollie in View*, Amy and so many others will attest, being an NRAS Foster Carer is a wonderfully rewarding experience.

We're so grateful for all our foster carers, but we are still in **need of MORE**, specifically for our pussy cats – six months +

If you think you could open your heart & home to become a foster carer, please contact the office on **6681 1860** or download a Foster Carer Application from the website: <https://www.northernriversanimalservices.com/how-you-can-help>



**NRAS Membership is due
by 30 September**

Have you thought about joining the **NRAS Committee**? All positions become vacant prior to the AGM in December with nominations* welcome.

**Nominees must be a financial member as at 30 September 2021.*

For further details about becoming a Committee Member, email the Secretary at: NRAS.Secretary@gmail.com

The Mighty HARVEY

This fellow came into NRAS's care in September 2020 after his owner became ill and could no longer look after him.

At 14 years, with a high-grade heart murmur, a tumour on his chest, Alopecia (*noticeable hair loss or coat deficiencies*) and a lame rear leg, NRAS was advised that this poor little guy didn't have much longer so to make him as comfortable as possible.

Fast-forward 12 months and obviously the loving care and EXTRA COMFORT from his gorgeous foster carer, **Anne**, is exactly what the doctor ordered.



Here Harvey is sporting his luscious locks prior to his recent haircut ... that he managed to squeeze in- between going for walks and **LIVING LIFE!**

NRAS SUBSIDISED DESEXING PROGRAM

As has been reported previously, NRAS's mission over the past decade, and more so the last five years, has been to work with its Vet Partners* to ensure as many dogs and cats as possible are desexed as a means of helping to break the cycle of unwanted litters.

NRAS SUBSIDISED DESEXING PROGRAM continued ...

Reports tabled for the end of financial year show that since July 2016 NRAS has invested almost **\$65,000** on its desexing program with a total of **475 dogs** and **376 cats** being desexed through the scheme in the last five years.

This is an amazing effort and big thanks go to our **SDS Coordinator, Vicki** and our wonderful Vet Partners who have so enthusiastically embraced this initiative.

*NRAS Vet Partners include:-

- Alstonville Vet
- **Keen St Vet**
- **Ballina Vet Hospital**
- Lismore Central
- Casino Vet Clinic
- **Racecourse Rd**
- **Central Casino Vet**

PRINCE'S PALACE

One of our long-termers is **Prince**. This guy had a bit of attitude when he came into care ... but now he's so cruisy.



Prince has been accommodated in what we like to refer to as the "penthouse" ... cat cottage room #1 which boasts its own outdoor adventure-land now aptly named **Prince's Palace**.

This handsome boy loves people and is known to pop out of his posh digs to greet the volunteers as they arrive at the shelter.

Work is currently underway to get the rear cat enclosure completed with cargo nets, tunnels and driftwood runways to keep our residents entertained when they're out enjoying the fresh air and sunshine.



THE GENEROSITY FROM THE COMMUNITY

has also seen NRAS receive new garden benches for the Shelter exercise yards to make it easier and more comfortable for folks when having a "meet & greet" with our animals. A big thank you to **BUNNINGS WAREHOUSE** for their ongoing support.



And, as our workload and volunteer base has expanded since moving into the Shelter five years ago, the admin area also received a facelift making the office more functional and comfortable for our volunteers, thanks to a generous donation from the **SEATON FOUNDATION**.

