

NRAS Newsletter – July 2023

BALLINA PLAYERS FROCK UP FOR NRAS

On Wednesday 28 June, **Ballina Players** hosted a “charity performance” of **PRISCILLA, QUEEN OF THE DESERT** to raise funds for NRAS.



With the season already a sell-out, the night certainly did not disappoint as the Players cast brightened Ballina with lavish costumes matched only by their thespian enthusiasm.

A HUGE thank you to Ballina Players and local businesses who generously donated raffle prizes, including:-

- Tallaringa Views accommodation
- Tonic Beauty by Suzie
- Indigo Wellness
- Plateau Landscape Supplies
- R&R Carlsson for their \$100 gift card

After the license fee, proceeds from ticket sales, which included a shared cheese platter and raffle tickets, totalled just over \$4000 ... an amazing result from an amazing night.



SUBSIDISED DE-SEXING

With a new financial year comes a fresh allocation of funds to NRAS' **Subsidised Desexing program**. Vouchers to assist with desexing costs for those suffering financial hardship are available through NRAS vet partners, as listed on the website:-

www.nras.org.au Further enquiries can be made by emailing: SDS@nras.org.au or calling the office on **6681 1860**.

NRAS APPEALS TO LOCAL REAL ESTATE AGENTS

Unlike other States & Territories throughout Australia, NSW landlords can refuse to allow a tenant to keep a companion animal in rental accommodation.

Since the 2022 floods NRAS has seen a decline in adoptions and an increase in surrenders as people find it difficult to not only access accommodation in the current housing crisis but keep their companion animal at home with them.

“... some people are more inclined to live in their cars with their pets rather than give them up.”

Therefore, a few months back NRAS wrote to local real estate agents appealing for assistance to make changes to allow people to find accommodation WITH their pets.

“We are receiving daily calls from distressed folks needing to surrender their beloved dog or cat due to the rental crisis; still being displaced or not being allowed to take pets to their accommodation,” the letter stated.

“Many in our community have suffered immense hardships over the past few years and allowing them to retain their companion animal in their home aids their mental health and well-being. In fact, some people are more inclined to live in their cars with their pets rather than having to give them up.”

“By changing rental agreement clauses that will accept pets, the number of surrenders would drastically reduce, thus allowing rescue organisations such as ours, the ability to save and re-home more animals who unfortunately are left in Pounds or on the street without loving families.”

Let's hope CHANGE can happen.

Watch this space ...



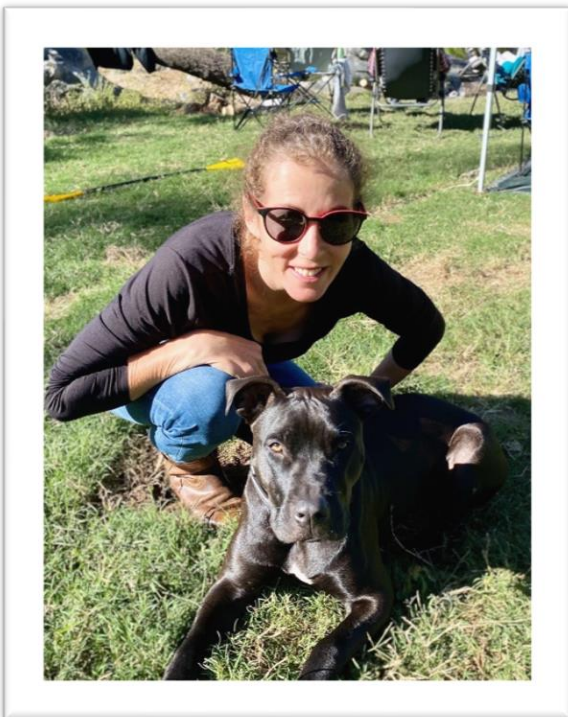
IN VIEW

This edition's **Vollie in View** is **Elizabeth** who currently volunteers in the shelter office two days a week, as well as at NRAS' monthly adoption days.

Initially (back in 2016) Elizabeth was a cat foster carer until she fell in love with one of her charges, **Rosie**, a gorgeous Torti and joined the long list of "failed" NRAS foster carers.

The next addition to the family was **Bear**, now a 14-month-old AmStaff X Ridgeback who Elizabeth adopted from NRAS as a pup which was when she also decided to volunteer for the organisation.

"Adopting Bear brought so much joy into my life that I wanted to spend my time in a way that would not only help our much-loved animal friends but also hopefully bring joy into other people's lives the same way it had mine," said Elizabeth.



"Working from home also meant I spent most of my days alone, so I was looking forward to working with other like-minded people and making new friends," continued Elizabeth.

Would Elizabeth recommend volunteering to others ...

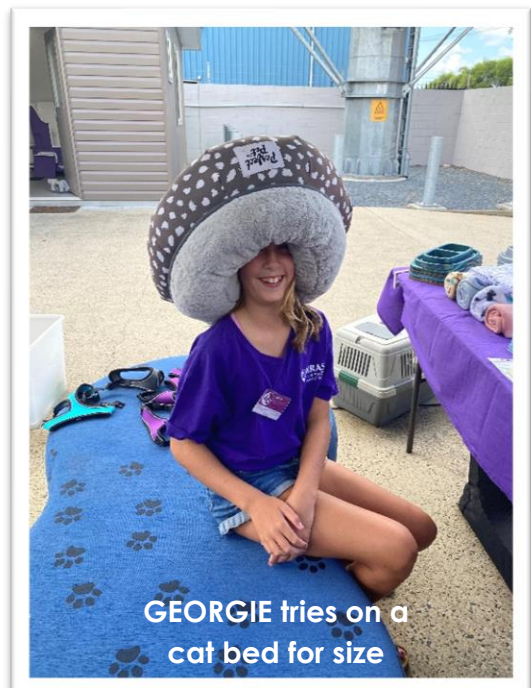
"Yes, without a doubt. If you're fortunate enough to be able to give your time to a cause you strongly believe in, it is so worthwhile and rewarding."

"If we have a chance to help others, especially animals who can't help themselves ... why wouldn't we!!"

"There is such a variety of people who volunteer for NRAS, who all have unique talents and interesting lives and are passionate about animals. I am learning so much working with people who are so knowledgeable when it comes to animal welfare and have made many new friends that I would otherwise not have met."

"Volunteering for NRAS has also been a great opportunity to teach my children the value of giving back to the community."

And NRAS is a family affair, as Bear goes to the office with Elizabeth and two of her three children are known to be on-hand at Adoption Days selling coffee, drinks, face-painting or running the pop-up shop.



Besides Bear and Rosie, Georgie has a pet snake and the boys have two guinea pigs which join the menagerie of cows, chickens, goats and working dogs on the family farm where they operate an accommodation business, [Tallaringa Views](#)

Prior to having children (12-year-old triplets, **Georgie, Finn, and Ralph**), Elizabeth worked as a planning and environment lawyer in Brisbane before moving to the Northern Rivers with husband **Pat** more than a decade ago.

Besides her family and NRAS, Elizabeth's other passion is art which she has studied through Byron School of Art with a keen interest in printmaking, photography, collage, sculpture, painting, and drawing. She also attends a weekly ceramics class.

Elizabeth says her husband, Pat is her huge supporter and works incredibly hard for their family on top of running two cattle farms. So, when there is precious downtime, this crew likes to go camping; have just bought their first caravan and are looking forward to making many memories together.



BUILDING STRONGER COMMUNITIES

Via the Office of Federal Member for Richmond, **Justine Elliot, MP** NRAS successfully applied for financial assistance as part of the recent round of "Stronger Communities" Grants program.

With specific needs to further upgrade the existing Cat Cottage at the Piper Drive facility, NRAS now has the allocated funds to:-

- Install solar panels to assist with increasing electricity bills and to run air conditioning in the three-suite cottage.
- Install an outdoor sink and litter tray cleaning station.
- Replace chipboard & melamine cabinetry with hygienic stainless-steel cupboards for food and medication storage.
- Indoor & outdoor benches for all-important kitty cuddles.

Our thanks to the Hon. Justine Elliot, MP, and her office for endorsing our application through the Department of Industry, Science and Resources.

And, while we're on the topic of Grants, just prior to the State Election, the NSW Government, under the Department of Planning & Environment, made available Grant funds specific to **Companion Animal Welfare projects**.

NRAS was the successful beneficiary of Grants money to undertake Stage 3 of the Kennel Upgrade program.

When NRAS renovated its Shelter in 2015/16 funds only allowed for Stage 1 of the kennel facilities, including upgrading drains and kennel partitions plus re-surfacing the floors.

With thanks to the State Government, NRAS will now embark on its planned Stage 3 (seven years on) to provide direct access to outdoor exercise yards; additional fencing to create yard separations and proper awnings that will provide all-weather shelter for our dogs.

A very busy, but exciting time ahead, with all work expected to be complete by June 2024.



TAFE students undertaking the Certificate III in Animal Studies have recently joined the NRAS team providing one day a week of on-site work experience towards their studies.



*TAFE student, **Alli** gets a puppy fix during her working day 😊*

“Not only has it given me some much-needed extra hands, but seeing the students benefit from physically working in the shelter has been a highlight,” said Shelter Operations Manager, **Amy Gasnier**.

Amy has been invited to speak at a TAFE this month (July) which will be a great opportunity to further connect with the students and discuss the work carried out by NRAS.

WHY HAVE ONE, WHEN YOU CAN HAVE THREE?

That was the precise thought of Mark and his partner when they recently visited the NRAS Cat Cottage for a “meet & greet.”

Being “serious cat people” was an understatement when they met roommates, **Martha** and **Maisie** who were sharing the kitty cottage suite with **Midnight**.

Midnight, a beautiful-natured black male had taken these two little girls under his wing being a surrogate father, teaching them feline manners and giving them daily grooms.

So having decided to adopt both Martha and Maisie, a deposit was paid, and Mark left the Shelter ... only to call the office the following morning to confirm they couldn't leave Midnight behind, so three it would be.



“We only thought of adopting one young cat, not two and certainly not three,” said Mark.

“We adopted through NRAS because it was clear that all the staff, and in particular Joy, the Cat Coordinator, are genuinely caring and passionate animal lovers themselves.”

“There are no plans for any more dogs, but if there was a cat desperately needing a home, who knows!!!!” confessed Mark.

With the introduction of the 3M's (Maisie, Martha & Midnight) ... this household now totals six cats and two dogs living harmoniously together.

OP SHOP VOLLIES KEEP THINGS TICKING ALONG

Over the past 12 months locals have answered our call for more volunteers and we've been very lucky to welcome a great bunch to the team.

No job is ever too hard, and all come in each week with a smile on their face and the enthusiasm to get in and help out.



Additions to complement our existing Monday, Thursday and Saturday crews include:-

- *Alison Wright
- *Anne Harris
- *Annette Wilson
- *Deborah Reimann
- *Ian Wright
- *Janice Woodcock
- *Kerrie Sanderson
- *Rosemarie Schibli
- *Sheryl Dorey
- *Simone MacDonald

Sadly, we bid farewell to **John Fielder** who has volunteered on a Monday afternoon for many years. John has been a fantastic support and will be sorely missed.

