

Who we are and why we do it

Sometimes the broad range of Urban Animal readers staggers us. We find out within days after we publish an issue who loves us and who might object to either some editorial or an ad. Our 18th edition was no exception.

The article we did on why Pet Barn stores no longer carry our magazine due to their management's decision that our advertising competed with their high prices and corporate attitude produced a wonderful set of waves of reaction from consumers who copied us on their emails and letters to upper management and their visits to their local former stores to give them an earful.



Phil Tripp with Jackson and Roger

We hadn't expected that and everyone from the little old lady with the Chihuahua to the 25 women in the agility and flyball club who 'banned the Barn' and moved their business to other competitors only served to shift more copies at those outlets as they let their mates know. We also won by getting a huge uptake in subscribers, including, oddly, Pet Barn staff who could no longer get the copies at their store and didn't want to be seen picking it up at competitors. And the calls we got were touching. Thanks folks.

But with the bundles of bouquets came a couple of brickbats. We had a small amount of emails, all in the same cookie-cutter style and all seeming to emanate from a single person's campaign, decrying our allowing the promoters of Cesar Millan—the American Dog Whisperer TV personality—to advertise his entertainment show.

This handful of dog trainers don't approve of Milan's methods and felt we were wrong allowing ads for what is essentially an entertainment and educational 'concert'. As we explained, we were neither endorsing nor 'supporting' his concepts, we were simply giving those presenting the show an opportunity to advertise it. A recent quote from UK based dog trainer Victoria Stillwell encapsulates our feelings on modern dog training. "The trainers I hang out with, are open to seeing other things. We might not agree with them, but we are open to seeing. I think that's the mark of a good trainer, you must know what else is out there in order to be able to form your own opinion."

Over 19 issues in what has been five years, we have presented a number of views, techniques and spokespeople for a broad range of pet behaviour methods or disciplines. And it's been the same with our support of adoption, rehoming and obtaining pets from qualified breeders as well as responsible and caring pet stores. We understand there are four sides to this story; impending legislation, extreme as well as balanced animal rights groups, the pet industry at large and those who make a business of selling livestock plus the caring and committed pet owners and supporters.

We try to be balanced and careful, listening to all opinions and answering all letters, emails and phone calls. But of course we can't serve everyone's needs, especially the more extreme ends of the equation. So you will not find us to be an organ of the industry nor a propagandist for the activists.

What we do best is celebrate pet lifestyle, inform and entertain our readers at the same time that we pass on valuable information on health, play, companionship and training without being preachy. We know our readers love that and our stance on not being advertorial like other magazines that either induce or reward advertising with blatant and biased editorial.

As we say, "The truth burns clean." And "Money is the way that people with no talent or scruples keep score."

Phil Tripp – Urban Animal Publisher

It's official, my dog is more popular than me. Scooter Dalmatian has more friends on Facebook and has over 250 followers on Twitter. K-Rudd and Guy Sebastian follow his Tweets along with a mix of celebrants, cats and dogs. Each day we send a micro-blog out that includes some little misstep or observation through his day.



Scooter

This revelation may leave some readers scratching their heads as to why a dog would log on each day to send a micro-blog, out to people and organizations that don't even know him or me. But simply put, it's a way for us to connect to folk on the other side of the globe that we wouldn't ordinarily get to communicate with. Take for example many of the Dalmatian owners who comprise a number of his 'friends'. A great deal of health and nutrition information is shared through these online mediums. Help is also given when there's a rescue dog in need—like transport from South Carolina to California or to money raised for important surgery. It's heart warming to see people and dogs in need, receiving help from virtual strangers—literally.

Scooter's visibility in the magazine also leads him to be recognised when out and about. This past weekend he was recognised as he accompanied me on the Mother's Day Classic run at the Domain. My faithful pacing companion wore the number 648 on his pack and had his pledge that he running for 'Everyone' attached to his chest. Through the organisers online site he managed to raise just on \$500.00 and a further \$100+ in pledges. I doubt I would have been able to do that just on my own. Dogs aren't generally, allowed to enter into these sorts of events, but with our philanthropic efforts, he's hardly going to be turned away.

Scooter's also a great ambassador for dogs in general. He's very well mannered with children who are a little less familiar with our canine friends. At the Mother's day event he had a wide range of kiddies come to pat and stroke his ears. Ask questions; top up his water dish; make him sit and shake paws for a treat and get up close to snuggle him. Having grown up with dogs, I sometimes forget that there are kids who never have that experience.

I've said before that my dogs are my fitness machine of choice and having completed this event, we're ready to tackle more. We're looking forward to improving our distance and time and perhaps getting a little more competitive. But mostly we'll be doing it for the fun of it and the great bonding experience that you achieve by being active together.

Lisa Treen – Urban Animal Editor

So you think you can dance, Scooter?

Scooter has the music in him but he needs help achieving his dream to be a doggie dancer.

Subscribe to Urban Animal and you can help Scooter get moving.

Yes! I want to help put Scooter through dog dance school. In some small way I know that Scooter will be on the way to learning the Salsa, Swing, Tango, Samba and Jive. **\$20**

Yes! I want to give a loved one a gift subscription for 1 year starting Aug 15, 2009. **\$20**

In some small way I know this kind gift will keep on giving as it will help Scooter develop his own dance style. My gift will assist Scooter to learn how to krump, hip hop and do the jerky Boot Scooter Shuffle

Yes! I wish to purchase the following back issues of Urban Animal for **\$5 each**:

- #18 (Feb 2009)
- #17 (Nov 2008)
- #16 (Aug 2008)
- #15 (May 2008)
- #14 (Feb 2008)
- #13 (Nov 2007)
- #11 (May 2007)
- #10 (Feb 2007)
- #9 (Nov 2006)
- #8 (Aug 2006)
- #7 (May 2006)
- #6 (Feb 2006)
- #5 (Oct 2005)
- #4 (July 2005)
- #3 (April 2005)
- #2 (Jan 2005)
- #1 (Oct 2004)



Photo by Animax

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Total amount enclosed (subscription and/or back issues).....

Where did you first encounter Urban Animal?.....

Your name.....

Your address.....

State.....Postcode.....

Phone (in case we need to reach you).....

This is a gift for.....

Their address is.....

State.....Postcode.....

Your message to them.....

Credit card Mastercard Visa Card #.....

Expiry Date.....CCV #.....

What is a CCV#? It's the last three digits of the number on the back of the card

Signature.....

Complete this form & mail it with credit card details or a cheque to 20 Hordern Street, Newtown NSW 2042