

Just a mouse click away



Kim Buchanan

By **Nicholas McIndoe**

MARCH 31, 2002, was a great day for pets in New Zealand. It was on this day 10 years ago that petsonthenet.co.nz went live after two years of planning.

The website is the brainchild of pet lover Kim Buchanan, who says it all started in June 2000 when her SPCA "special", Sammy the cat, went missing. After half a day of distributing

flyers and door-knocking, Kim became frustrated – first of all by not being able to find Sammy, but also by the lack of a co-ordinated or online service that everyone could access.

The idea for a website came to Kim and "the rest, as they say, is history".

From the beginning, Pets on the Net has been supported by the SPCA and

Kim says it has just "grown and grown".

Thousands of pets are now reunited with their owners or rehomed each year through the website.

Pets on the Net only provides pets for adoption, not for sale, says Kim. "With so many unwanted and unclaimed companion animals in shelters throughout New Zealand, we

strongly advocate that people 'adopt, don't buy and save a life'.

"There is a growing awareness among the public that when you buy a pet, it only encourages breeders (many are unregistered) to breed and sell even more animals, meaning there is less demand for shelter animals that desperately need homes.

"The sad fact is that there are more pets for adoption than there are homes available in New Zealand, so we also strongly advocate desexing."

Kim says that the key is "the community working together". She encourages people to put a notice on Pets on the Net if an animal looks lost.

Also, if you find a dead dog or cat on the road, take the body to a vet or the SPCA and put a notice on the website. The vet will hold the dead animal for seven days and this will hopefully give the owner the chance to retrieve the pet.

The website contains advice for owners who have lost a pet. As Kim says: "People get upset and it becomes hard to listen or take in verbal advice over the phone. The website gives them something in black and white in front of them to use in this situation."

She says she is forever grateful for the support of the SPCA which for the past 10 years has "religiously" entered

"Found Pets" notices into the Pets on the Net system. This task is carried out daily by a dedicated volunteer.

Kim remembers Auckland SPCA Executive Director Bob Kerridge telling her that Pets on the Net must "earn its stripes". She believes the site has "earned a stripe or two", with its thousands of success stories.

It has certainly revolutionised the rehoming of pets in New Zealand. "It used to take months for a pet to be adopted ... now it's a matter of days."

On the website's 10th birthday, Kim says she still gets a "huge thrill" every time a pet is rehomed or reunited with an owner through Pets on the Net.

Success story #1 – Bonnie

SPCA Kawerau was having problems rehoming animals. Suitable homes were few and far between. Some dogs were being held at the centre for six months or more.

But, at the 2011 New Zealand Companion Animal Council Conference, SPCA Kawerau discovered and connected with Pets on the Net. Things have since turned around for the centre.

Bonnie is a one-year-old whippet cross who, at around the time of Rugby World Cup 2011, was found by visitors, lying seriously hurt in a ditch on the side of a road.

She was taken to a vet clinic and underwent emergency surgery. The vet said the injuries were probably a couple of days old which means that poor Bonnie had been lying there helpless all that time.

Despite her ordeal, Bonnie retained her cheerful and gentle personality and was rehomed through Pets on the Net with an Auckland family who had previously owned whippets.

Since November 2011, SPCA Kawerau has rehomed six dogs and one kitten through Pets on the Net.



Success story #2 – Giselle

Giselle is a four-year-old fox terrier who was at SPCA Rotorua for months without finding a home. Giselle had been bitten by other dogs but was a gentle soul and wanted constant human company.

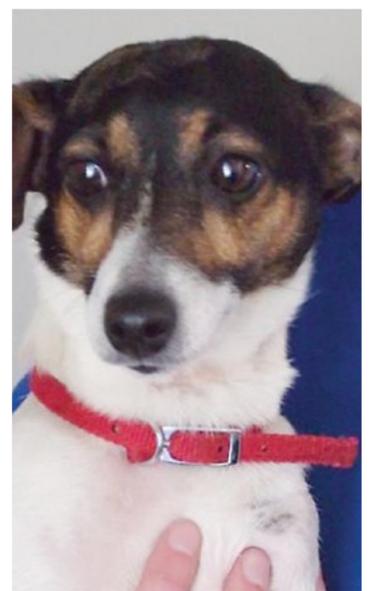
Taken to the SPCA, she had been living in the puppyry due to her size and was teaching the puppies great manners, but the time had come to find her a permanent home.

Nicola Martin, of SPCA Rotorua, takes up the story: "Little dogs are usually very easy to home. Many people had come to view Giselle but were wanting a dog to live outside and hunt rabbits. This is not what Giselle needed."

Within 12 hours of placing a notice on Pets on the Net, Giselle had found a new home in Northland with a couple who wanted a constant companion for their other little dog on a lifestyle block.

"After her flight from Rotorua to Northland she ran around her new home, had a drink and a lie down, before meeting the resident kune kune pig, who she decided could be the boss," says Nicola.

A wonderful success story. 🐾



petsonthenet.co.nz

NZ's nationwide database for lost & found pets + pets for adoption

search...

facebook

since 2002

Home Lost and Found pets Pets for Adoption Pet Directory Shelter Directory About Us Contact Us