

SOI DOG

December 2020

post



If you want to go fast, go alone.
If you want to go far, go together.

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For Dog and the Empire!

John Dalley awarded MBE for services to animal welfare

Amy Bryant

In October, we were beyond thrilled to announce that **John Dalley**, co-founder and president of **Soi Dog Foundation International**, had been made a Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (MBE) for his services to animal welfare in Southeast Asia.

John was named alongside a host of celebrities, medical staff, key workers and volunteers in the Queen's Birthday Honours List which was published on October 10th. MBEs are awarded to recognise people for outstanding achievements and service in their field. A special committee draws up the list which is then approved by the UK prime minister and, finally, by the Queen.



Smiles all round.



Dogs rescued from the meat trade greet John at a shelter in Bujram in 2013/2014.

Fittingly, the medal's ribbon is a signature Soi Dog orange.





Heartfelt words, well wishes and congratulations flooded in from around the globe in their thousands, but John remained humble as ever, making it clear that he saw the award more as recognition of the work done by the foundation and the tens of thousands of supporters and volunteers who have made that work possible over the past 17 years.

From responding to natural disasters, to winning the war against Thailand's dog meat traders, to introducing the country's first Animal Welfare Act, to neutering and treating more stray animals than any other organisation in the world today – Soi Dog owes it all to supporters worldwide, John said.

He added that his only regret was that *Gill*, his late wife and fellow co-founder, was not alive to share in the award. Gill herself received numerous awards during her lifetime, including being the first non-Asian by birth to be named Asian of the Year in the Channel News Asia annual awards.

Thank you to everyone who has helped to achieve this magnificent honour and to those joining us on the journey ahead. We simply can't do it without you.



John with his beloved late wife Gill in 2015.

John meets with government officials to push for the country's first ever Animal Welfare Bill, which came into effect in 2014.



Humane Education Centre opens its doors

Sam McElroy

Soi Dog Foundation's commitment to shaping a brighter future for stray animals has driven our humane education programme, an initiative that has seen over 15,000 children of various ages involved since its inception in 2017.

On November 23rd, we opened the brand-new Humane Education Centre here at the sanctuary in Phuket. The centre is the first of its kind in Thailand.

The ceremony, conducted jointly by *John Dalley* MBE and Soi Dog Thailand President *Kiraneer Narabal*, highlighted the necessities of teaching empathy for stray animals and instilling the ethics of compassion in the adults of tomorrow to an audience consisting of media and dignitaries from local government.

More poignantly, the opening was marked with a visit by 25 students from the local So Sa school for orphaned children who took part in a workshop held by our humane education team. It was a big thumbs up from the kids.

The centre is made possible by our wonderful supporters and is helping to bring the dreams of a better life for homeless animals in Asia closer to reality.

"Open your mind, change the world" are the words found on the wall at the entrance to the centre. We're doing that for the animals of today and, with our humane education programme, for the animals of the future too.



The centre can accommodate up to 40 students at a time.



So Sa students enjoy the first on-site class – a fun and interactive hour of roleplaying, brainstorming and problem solving.



Local government representatives cut the ribbon to officially open the centre.

Justice for Johnny Cash

Amy Bryant

On a Saturday morning in September, Johnny Cash's life changed forever. No, we don't mean the late country music legend. We mean the handsome young pit bull you see here.

HURT

Poor Johnny was abandoned in the Soi Dog Foundation car park at the height of Thailand's rainy season. Heartbreaking CCTV footage showed Johnny chasing after his owner's truck in the pouring rain as it drove into the distance, never to return.

Fortunately, a member of Soi Dog staff spotted Johnny in the road in a state of distress and brought him into the safety of the shelter.

We can hardly imagine how scared and confused he must have been. Everything he knew had just disappeared in a single moment. We also couldn't imagine such a cruel act going unpunished.

WANTED MAN

Armed with CCTV footage, Soi Dog reported the crime to local police who identified the owner – long-term Irish expat “Mr R” – and filed charges against him under the Cruelty Prevention and Welfare of Animal Act.

Abandonment is notoriously difficult to prove but, with clear video evidence, there was no doubt in Johnny's case. At court, Mr R pleaded guilty, was fined 2,000 THB (approximately 65 USD) and now has a criminal record in Thailand.

While the fine may not be much to some, this successful conviction represents a huge step in the right direction for animal welfare in Thailand. To our knowledge, this is the very first time that an owner has been convicted for abandoning a pet here.

WALK THE LINE

We were also encouraged to see the police take the matter as seriously as we did. The lieutenant colonel in charge of the case said, “We hope that this story serves as an obvious example of legal action that will be taken against the abandoning of pet dogs and cats.”

“I'm glad that the story will be published. This is not just the duty of the police or of Soi Dog; everyone can step in,” he added. “Without society change, law change is useless.”

A landmark case, and justice served for Johnny Cash.

To help dogs like Johnny Cash who have no one else, [click here](#).



Thanks to our supporters, we were able to take Johnny Cash in and help him find joy again.





CNVR Update: Soi Dog hits the magic half a million!

Nayomi Gunarathna

We've all been searching for silver linings this year, and they've certainly been few and far between. But despite the many unique challenges Soi Dog Foundation faced in 2020, we managed to make history by reaching some important milestones with the help of our incredible supporters.

The most anticipated of these milestones was Soi Dog passing 500,000 animals neutered since 2003!

Despite lockdowns, curfews and travel restrictions in a time of global uncertainty, our hardworking teams managed to neuter and vaccinate over 100,000 animals in a calendar year for the second year running, edging us over the half-a-million mark in December.

LOOKING BACK

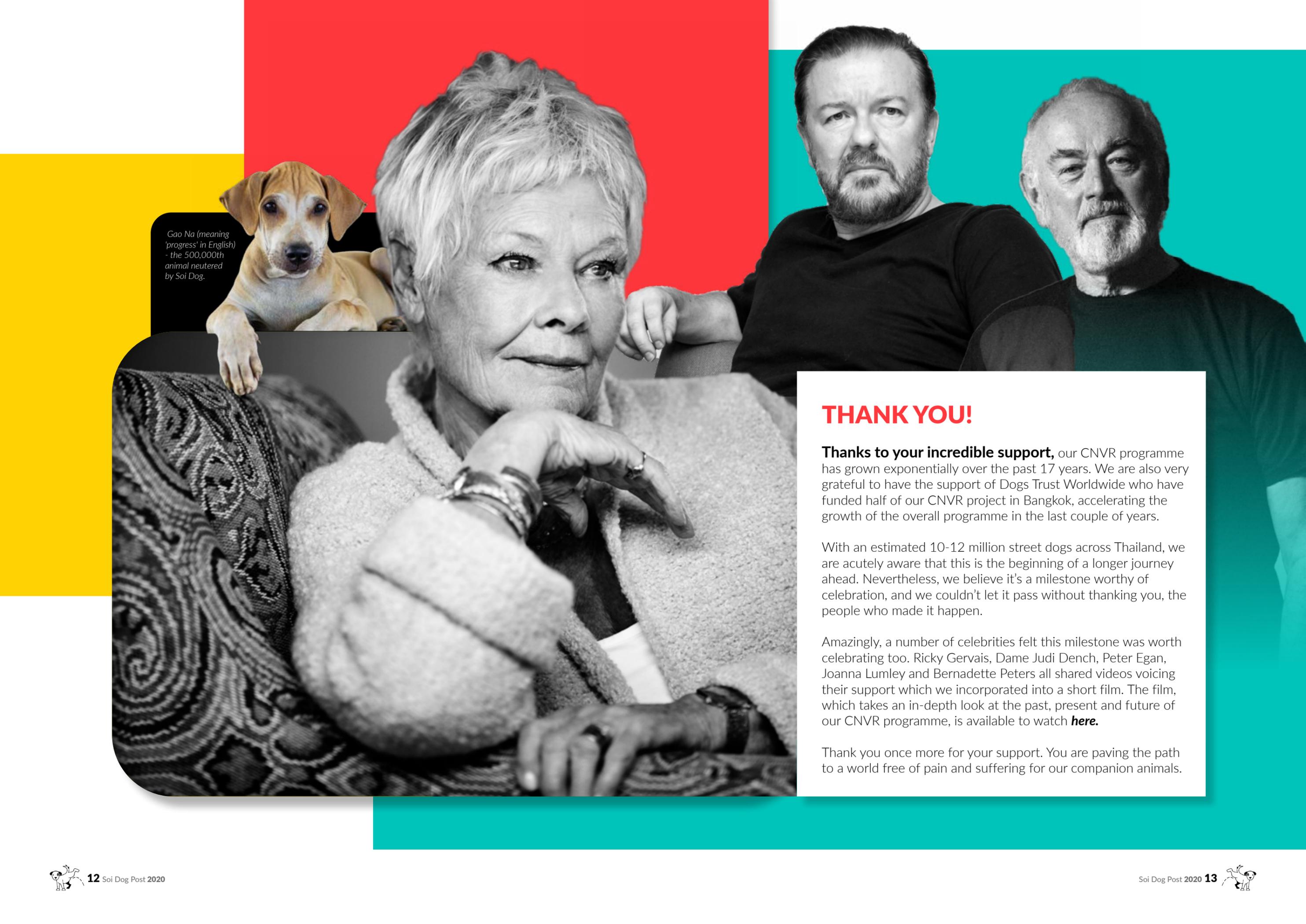
Back in 2003, when *John, Gill* and *Margot* started Soi Dog, could they ever have imagined that one day they would reach such a huge number? Possibly not. But it was their approach of taking each day as it came while also not losing sight of the bigger picture that eventually made it possible.

Soi Dog was founded in order to alleviate the suffering of street dogs and cats, and even back in its early days, the focus was very much on spaying and neutering or CNVR (Catch | Neuter | Vaccinate | Return).

Although operations were small back then – think makeshift clinics in living rooms and back yards, and John, Gill and Margot acting as vet assistants – spaying and neutering was at the forefront of operations. It is, and has always been, the backbone of Soi Dog's mission to provide a humane and sustainable solution to the overpopulation crisis of street animals.

After neutering saw a reduction of 90% of the street dogs in Phuket and controlled the population there, we took our CNVR programme to Bangkok in 2015, and our numbers increased dramatically. Our fleet of mobile clinic teams increased too, with eight teams now working in different parts of Thailand.

These teams are currently operating in the southern provinces of Phuket and Phang Nga, in the southeastern province of Nakhon Si Thammarat and in the capital Bangkok. Bangkok is our biggest project yet, and six of our eight teams are dedicated to controlling the street dog population there which is estimated to run into the hundreds of thousands.



Gao Na (meaning 'progress' in English) - the 500,000th animal neutered by Soi Dog.

THANK YOU!

Thanks to your incredible support, our CNVR programme has grown exponentially over the past 17 years. We are also very grateful to have the support of Dogs Trust Worldwide who have funded half of our CNVR project in Bangkok, accelerating the growth of the overall programme in the last couple of years.

With an estimated 10-12 million street dogs across Thailand, we are acutely aware that this is the beginning of a longer journey ahead. Nevertheless, we believe it's a milestone worthy of celebration, and we couldn't let it pass without thanking you, the people who made it happen.

Amazingly, a number of celebrities felt this milestone was worth celebrating too. Ricky Gervais, Dame Judi Dench, Peter Egan, Joanna Lumley and Bernadette Peters all shared videos voicing their support which we incorporated into a short film. The film, which takes an in-depth look at the past, present and future of our CNVR programme, is available to watch [here](#).

Thank you once more for your support. You are paving the path to a world free of pain and suffering for our companion animals.

A Gotcha Day surprise from a star

Chutima Srisawang

The name Aon Sarawut Martthong might not mean much to Soi Dog Foundation's overseas supporters, but here in Thailand, he's something of a household name, having appeared on screen in a number of Thai blockbusters.

But Aon isn't just known for his acting. He's also known for his love of animals. And he recently stepped in to help Soi Dog find a home for two very special dogs: *See Eiw* ("soy sauce") and *Mimi*.

The pair came into Soi Dog's Bangkok clinic within days of each other back in May. *See Eiw* had been in a car accident that had left her right hind leg permanently lame, while *Mimi* had a badly injured eye that had to be removed.

Aon met *See Eiw* and *Mimi* when he paid a visit to the clinic in July. Knowing it would be challenging to find them a home given their disabilities, he shared their stories through a number of video blogs on his Instagram page and YouTube channel.



Aon meets little *See Eiw* at Soi Dog's Bangkok clinic.



Surprise!



Mimi and See Eiw with their new family.

Their stories touched the hearts of *Pat* and *Mos*, a mother and son from Bangkok who had experience with disabled dogs and understood the extra care they needed. Excited, they began preparing their home for the dogs' Gotcha Day on October 12th.

What they weren't prepared for, however, was that *Aon* would be the one to escort the dogs to their home! It's not every day a superstar turns up at your door, and *Pat* and *Mos*' faces were a picture as *Aon* stepped out of the car with their new family members in tow.

In a video blog of the event, *Aon* said he hoped *See Eiw* and *Mimi*'s story would inspire others to adopt instead of buying from breeders. He also touched on the importance of sterilisation, acknowledging the differing opinions surrounding it.

"Many people still think that sterilisation is a sin. I don't think that's a right or wrong idea. But I want to present it in my view that letting these dogs give birth and risk their lives on the streets creates an endless suffering cycle which is definitely not a good thing."

We want to say a huge thank you to *Aon* for using his platform for the benefit of homeless animals, and to *Pat* and *Mos* for giving *See Eiw* and *Mimi* the second chance they so deserve.

Where to put them all?

Sam McElroy

In previous issues of the *Soi Dog Post*, we brought you news of how the pandemic has seen a rise in cases of abandonment and restricted the number of adopted dogs and cats travelling to their new homes.

These factors forced the construction of new dog enclosures at the sanctuary and prompted the additional help we provided in the community, such as supplying extra food and care for stray animals most in need during lockdown in Phuket in April.

Construction has continued throughout the year, and building work carried out in the past three months includes the completion of four brand-new dog enclosures, or 'runs', further easing the desperate overcrowding, and the much-needed new isolation ward containing kennels for dogs and cats who test positive for contagious disease upon arrival at the sanctuary. The essential isolation unit helps us to contain the spread of viral diseases such as distemper, canine parvovirus and feline parvovirus and is an integral factor in the sanctuary being able to maintain excellent disease control and keep the 1,300+ animals happy and healthy.

Huge thanks go to all supporters and donors for helping to make this happen, and to those who donated specifically towards the expansion project – many of whom kindly sponsored individual kennels in the new isolation building and were able to choose their own inscription on plaques which now adorn the entry to each kennel.

Sponsorship of some of these kennels is still available. For more information about these, and other sponsorship opportunities available at Soi Dog, please email info@soidog.org



Before and after images of the new K runs, previously home to the laundry area.



AN OPTIMISTIC GLANCE AT THE FUTURE

All of the expansion work means that every square metre of the sanctuary is now utilised. No corner remains undeveloped, and space is at a premium. Our hand was forced. We simply could not risk the scenario of having to turn away dogs and cats who need our help, so we have acquired an adjacent parcel of land, which increases the total land area of Soi Dog Foundation from 6.41 acres to 8.13 acres. September and October saw the new land, which was significantly lower than the existing land, backfilled with soil and we are now securing it with a boundary wall.

In the immediate future, this area, approximately 7,000 square metres (the size of a football field!), will become a new walking track for volunteers and shelter dogs, providing essential extra space for exercise and enrichment.

In the long term, this area may well prove to become a safe haven for the most vulnerable stray animals who are yet to arrive on our doorstep. Of course, who knows what the future will bring? Rest assured that whatever happens, Soi Dog, with your invaluable help, is prepared for it.

New land situated to the immediate east of the sanctuary.



Newly constructed quarantine and hospital dog runs.



A sponsored plaque in the new isolation building

Faces of the Soi Dog sponsor programme

 Sponsor one, save many 
Amy Bryant

Santosa's near-constant smile and sunny disposition mask a truly shocking past. Before she came to Soi Dog Foundation in 2014, she was being repeatedly beaten on the streets. These cruel attacks left her incontinent and with fractures to her pelvis.

Despite her traumatic ordeal, Santosa is one of the happiest and most friendly dogs at the shelter. But because of her incontinence, it's taking her much longer to find the perfect home.

Sponsoring Santosa keeps a sunny smile on her face and helps support the rest of our shelter residents too.

SANTOSA aka Little Miss Sunshine

Likes: Any and all affection
Dislikes: 5pm when her humans friends go home

Sponsor Santosa [here](#).

NAMFON aka Hypnokitty!

Likes: Hypnotising staff into giving her extra kibble
Dislikes: Sharing her toys

Sponsor Namfon [here](#).



Namfon arrived at Soi Dog with a deep, septic wound under her leg that was home to hordes of maggots. It was touch and go for a while, but this brave girl eventually pulled through.

With her hypnotic jade eyes and playful personality, a pretty kitty like Namfon would usually be quickly adopted. Sadly, she has feline leukemia (FeLV) which makes her lifespan uncertain and means she will likely live out her days at the shelter.

With your sponsorship, we can ensure those days are the best they can be for Namfon. It also ensures we can be there for the next homeless animal in need.

Ferrero was just a puppy when she was brought to Soi Dog. So unwelcome in her territory that people were threatening to shoot her, she desperately needed a place of safety.

Six years on, Ferrero still bears the emotional scars of her time on the streets and is scared of new people and places. But there's a quiet determination to this shy girl, and she's making progress with the help of our behaviour team.

If you choose to sponsor Ferrero, she will send you regular updates to let you know the difference you make to her life and the lives of hundreds of other animals.

FERRERO aka The Wallflower

Likes: The concrete tunnels in her enclosure
Dislikes: Being on a lead

Sponsor Ferrero [here](#).





Local adoption highlights

Dee Nordlander

With few international flights leaving Thailand and still no end in sight for the Covid-19 crisis, there remain limited opportunities for our rescues to fly to their forever homes overseas.

But it's not all doom and gloom. In the September issue of the *Soi Dog Post*, we shared the stories of some of the dogs and cats who found loving homes here in Thailand thanks to Soi Dog Foundation's hardworking and dedicated local adoptions team. The team show no signs of slowing, with over 160 animals adopted locally between the start of October and the end of December.

Here are some of the lucky dogs and cats that have found their happy ever after here over the last few months.



BLACKPANTER

Four-year-old labrador-mix *Blackpanter* was one of thousands of dogs rounded up in response to an exaggerated rabies scare in northern Thailand back in 2018. We found him at an overcrowded makeshift government facility and brought him to our Phuket shelter for safety.

With his sweet nature and big ol' smile, everyone thought he would be adopted in no time. Sadly, however, that wasn't the case for this black beauty. *Blackpanter* had numerous health issues, including problems with his hind legs, which seemed to put potential adopters off. His special requirements meant he struggled to find his forever home for almost two years.

Blackpanter's luck changed in September when a couple visited *Soi Dog* and fell madly in love with him. They knew right away that he'd be the perfect addition to their family here in Phuket, and they were right. *Blackpanter* has formed a particularly special bond with their nine-year-old son, and the pair are making a lifetime of memories together with plenty of playtime and adventures.



Best friends making a splash.



At the shelter, *Blackpanter* was known for being a big goofball with a tonne of energy.



Adoptions Manager Wilaiwan Sreeman (left) bids a fond farewell to *Blackpanter* as he joins his new family.

Understandably, *Bonuel* found the shelter environment stressful at times...



BONUEL

Handsome *Bonuel* was often referred to as "*Boonrod*" at the shelter which means "*survivor*" in Thai. On hearing his story, it's clear how he earned such a name. This brave boy not only survived a horrific car accident that damaged both of his eyes beyond repair, but he learnt to adapt and thrive despite it.

As a four-year-old blind kitty, we were worried that his chances of getting adopted were slim. But in September, after only three months at the shelter, *Bonuel* found a forever home in the northeastern province of Roi Et. His adopter had seen him on our Thai Instagram page and knew she had to do whatever it took to care for him. She certainly showed her commitment when she drove 500 kilometres to Bangkok to collect him from the airport!

According to his adopter, this special kitty has made himself at home and given her a sense of purpose (as well as plenty of cuddles).



...but things couldn't be more different in his new home where he's relaxed as can be.



HARMONG

Sweet little *Harmong* doesn't look like your typical temple dog, but that's where we found her. She may have had an owner before, but we'll never know for certain. All we know is that she was in a sickly state: covered in fleas, malnourished and refusing to eat.

Despite our attempts to try and feed her, this doe-eyed pup wasn't having any of it, sometimes taking up to three hours to finish a single meal. The local adoptions team had a hard time finding her a home as, although she was young, fit and healthy, potential adopters felt she looked too skinny.

After a year at the shelter, Harmong finally caught the eye of a lady here in Phuket who took her fussy eating habits as a challenge. In October, after just two weeks in her new home, she reported that Harmong had gained weight and now enjoys chowing down like there's no tomorrow!

Pretty in pink.



Harmong meets her new mum (right).

BOOBANK

Tabby tripod *Boobank* came to Soi Dog after he was abandoned on the streets at the tender age of four months. He had a badly fractured hind leg that had to be amputated, but he didn't let that hold him back and, during his short six-week spell at the shelter, he proved himself to be just as playful and active as any other kitten.

In October, Boobank was adopted by a couple from the nearby province of Phang Nga who got in touch after one of their cats passed away. Their remaining cat *T-Mone* had taken the loss hard and was struggling to cope on his own. Heartbroken to see him so distressed, they decided it was time to find him a companion, and our local adoptions team suggested Boobank.

Young and energetic Boobank has kept *T-Mone* distracted and helped to mend his broken heart, and the pair have become the best of friends.

To adopt a dog or cat in Thailand, email localadoption@soidog.org

Boobank was one of the lucky ones who spent just a few weeks at the shelter.



Kicking back kitty style.



A SPECIAL VISIT FROM THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

Chutima Srisawang

On November 3rd, Soi Dog Foundation welcomed a VIP to the Phuket shelter:

the Permanent Secretary of the Prime Minister's Office, *Theerapat Prayurasiddhi*.

Mr. Theerapat was attending meetings on the island with the Prime Minister and his Cabinet, but he took time out of his busy schedule to tour the shelter and discuss sustainable solutions for managing the street dog and cat populations in Thailand.

"We have collaborated with Soi Dog for years in several areas of stray animal welfare. This is a great opportunity to see its work and learn more," he said.

Mr. Theerapat has a keen and broad interest in animals, holding a PhD in Conservation Biology and previously serving as the Permanent Secretary for Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives. He also sits on a rabies prevention working group which aims to eradicate the disease in Thailand through vaccination, sterilisation and education.

"Stray animals are part of our communities, and everyone should ensure that the dogs and cats in their neighbourhoods are vaccinated, sterilised and looked after," he said. "Keeping these animals healthy will keep our people healthy too."

We hope that this visit by the Permanent Secretary will help strengthen our ties with the authorities, in turn building bridges to improve the welfare of street dogs and cats across the country.

Mr. Theerapat received a warm welcome from the shelter's furry residents.



Mr. Theerapat visited the dog hospital (above), puppy run, cattery and off-lead exercise areas.

He also made a kind donation and was presented with some Soi Dog merchandise.



Partnering up for Phuket's pups

Dana Pullen

"Saving one dog will not change the world, but surely for that one dog, the world will change forever." – Karen Davison.

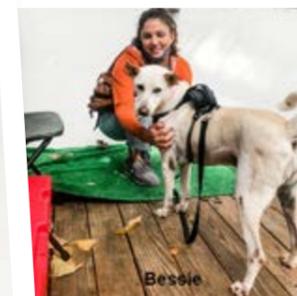
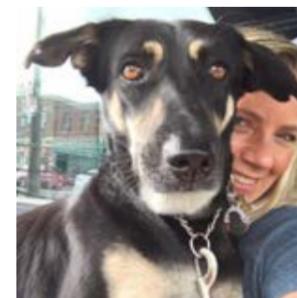
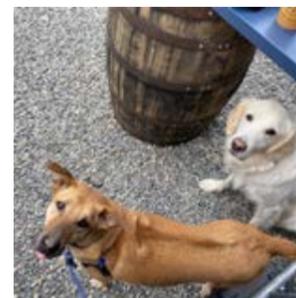
The world has changed irrevocably since the Covid-19 virus resulted in a global pandemic early in 2020. The adventures, events, dreams, celebrations and normal lives we had planned shuddered to a halt in an instant as airlines were grounded and life came to a standstill.

One of the things that did not change, however, was the steady stream of animals from the streets of Thailand that entered Soi Dog Foundation's gates in desperate need of sanctuary.

Luckily, the other thing that was a constant in these turbulent times was the dedication and support we received from our partner rescues in the USA and Canada. These amazing organisations have continued to welcome animals to their shores whenever our logistics team have managed to work their magic and find a flight for them. Their actions have given many pawesome dogs and cats the opportunity to find their forever homes while simultaneously creating space at our shelter for the animals that continue to arrive.

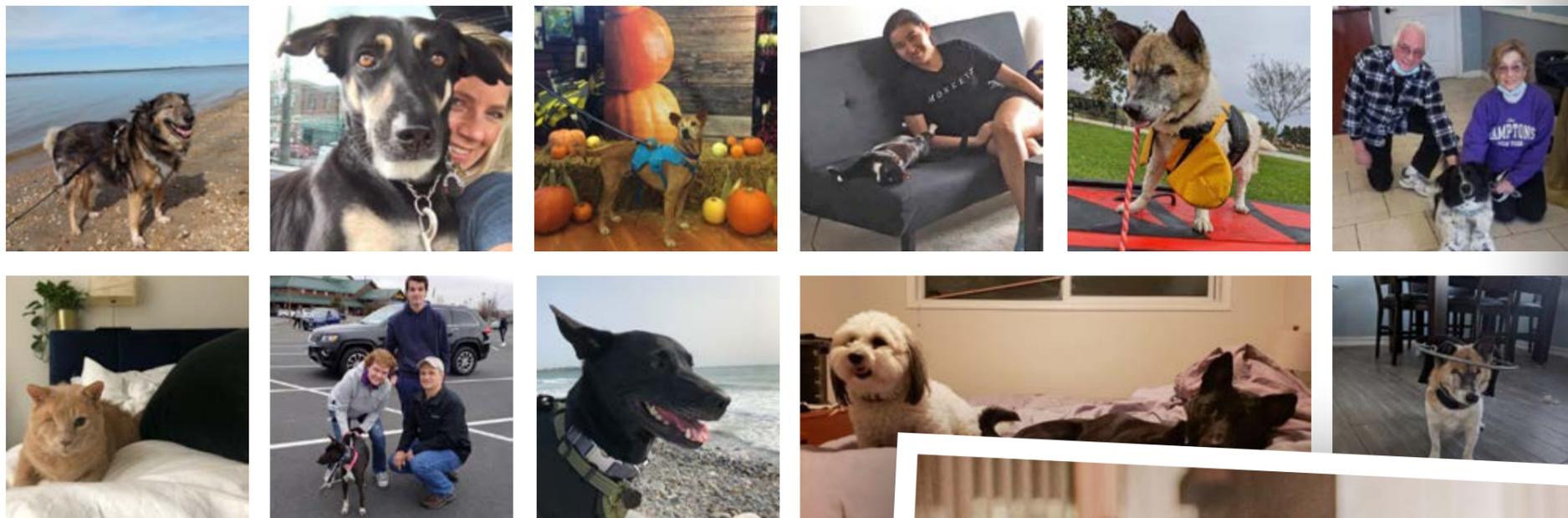
Through our International Partner Rescue Programme, we collaborate with animal rescue organisations in the USA and Canada to give vulnerable dogs and cats in our care the chance to find their forever families with the guidance and support of our experienced and vetted partners.

We have been in partnership with organisations like The Barking Lot in San Diego since the programme was set up in 2016. Founder Stacy Parmer and her team have welcomed hundreds of soi dogs to sunny California and helped them find their furrytail endings. It was wonderful to see some of our shy dogs like Snooze and Neptune have the opportunity to find happiness as well as those with disabilities like Cupido who was blind. Stacy even organised a Muffin's halo for Cupido so that he wouldn't bump into things after arriving in his forever home.



Just some of the hundreds of lucky dogs and cats who have found their happy ever after thanks to our wonderful partner rescues.



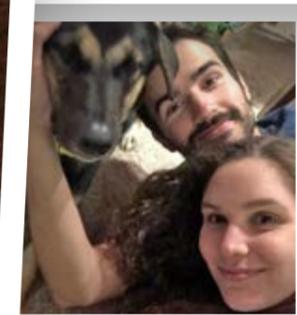


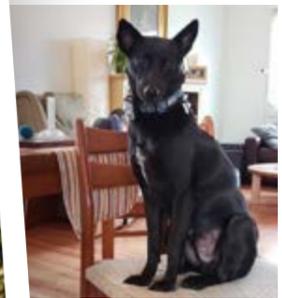
She also gave dogs like *Naonao*, who was almost disembowelled on the streets of Thailand, the chance to experience life as a precious pet.

Our other American partner rescues include Almost Home Animal Rescue, Pet Medical Center of Pasco, Motley Zoo, Posh Pets, Senior Dog Sanctuary, Animal Ark, Secondhand Hounds, AMA Animal Rescue, Addicus' Legacy, Homeward Trails, Garden Rescue, Kent Animal Rescue, BnR's Rock N Rescue, the SPCA of Westchester, the Student Rescue Project and Fetching Tails Foundation. They have all stood by us throughout this period, ensuring that as many soi dogs and cats as possible find their furrytail endings.

In Canada, we work with incredible organisations like Furever Furbaby Rescue, Pawsitive Match, Firefighter Dog Rescue, Adopt-a-Dog/Save-a-Life, Dachshund and Friends, Refuge Balto, Animal Haven Rescue League, Snookie's Society and Paws Above to give dogs like deaf Sawatdirak, partially sighted Vespa and many other happy pups like Beluga, Max and Lucia the chance to find happiness.

Soi Dog Canada's dedicated partner rescue volunteer *Sondra Sieminski* provides an additional layer of support to our Canadian partner rescues and the soi dogs they welcome home by being on standby 24/7 to offer advice and share her experience, reassuring everyone that no issue is insurmountable and, often, all that's needed is time.

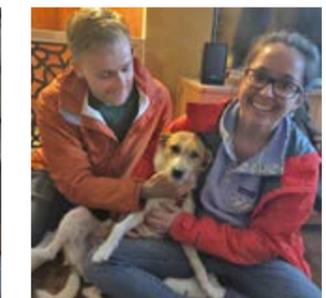




We have sent hundreds of dogs to our partner rescues since 2016 and, on average, the majority of them are adopted within a month or two of arriving in their new homelands. We are so grateful for the care and compassion our partner rescues show the soi dogs they pull from our shelter – ensuring that their forever families understand their uniqueness and keep them as safe as possible after arrival.

Many of the hundreds of dogs rescued and rehomed in North America through Soi Dog's International Partner Rescue Programme would still be waiting to find a safe place in the world without the assistance of our wonderful partners.

We are continually looking to find forever homes for the animals in our care and actively seek organisations to assist us. If your rescue, or an organisation that you are aware of, is able to help us rehome some of our dogs and cats, please contact partnerrescue@soidog.org and join forces with Soi Dog to give these animals a second chance in life.



Seeing stars: Soi Dog receives top Charity Navigator rating

Nayomi Gunarathna



In October, we received the exciting news that Charity Navigator – America’s largest and most-utilised evaluator of charities – had awarded Soi Dog Foundation a full four-star rating.

Soi Dog has always been committed to transparency and accountability. However, we were recently awarded this rating after meeting Charity Navigator’s criteria to publish certain details on our website, such as information about our board members.

Charity Navigator’s rating system examines two broad areas of a charity’s performance: financial health; and accountability and transparency. A four-star rating means Soi Dog exceeds industry standards and outperforms most charities in its cause.

This isn’t our first achievement when it comes to financial transparency and accountability. Soi Dog has also held

a Platinum Seal of Transparency from **GuideStar** for a number of years and has been featured in **GreatNonprofits’** list of top-rated charities every year since 2013.

GuideStar is the world’s largest source of non-profit information, while GreatNonprofits is a leading platform which shares stories from stakeholders who know the charity best.

It’s very important to us that we maintain these high standards. We owe it to every single one of our current and future donors, without whom our work wouldn’t be possible.

Donors are absolutely vital to the sustainability, longevity and success of our programmes, whether that’s spay and neuter, rescue and treatment, education or fighting the dog meat trade across Southeast Asia.

These programmes are designed to provide an overall solution to the street animal crisis, and we strive to carry them out while utilising every dollar, euro, pound, krone, franc and baht effectively.

Sandy Paws came to town

Sam McElroy

Although almost behind us now, this shocking year has left everyone in need of a pick-me-up – our shelter dogs included! So, at a time when families usually gather and merriment typically abounds, what better way to mark this holiday season, and to bring back that much-needed feel-good factor, than the traditional December 25th Soi Dog beach walk?

A splendidly overcast morning and a beautiful stretch of beach provided the perfect backdrop for 24 shelter dogs to let loose, feel the sand under their paws, taste the salty air and forget about their troubles for an hour or two.

Packing the Soi Dog songthaew, they came – young and old – to seize the moment and breathe it all in. Some cautious yet inquisitive, softly sniffing the beach flowers or treading the shady footpath. Others bold and adventurous, climbing the swirling shapes left in the sand by Mother Nature or playing in the shallow water as it gently kissed the shoreline. One thing they all had in common, though, was how much they loved the experience. Their faces smiling, their hearts full.

To be able to give them a taste of the good life is an honour enabled only by your support. Without you, they simply do not get these opportunities! Thank you for making their holiday season so special.

With so many dogs enjoying a glimpse of what normal life can give them, it is our only remaining wish that these dogs can find their forever homes in 2021 and find this kind of happiness on a frequent basis with a family to call their own.





For the love of cats:
In conversation with a
**hospice foster
parent**
Dee Nordlander

Some of you will have already met Silvia Balboni. Hers is one of the first faces you're likely to see upon entering the Soi Dog Foundation shelter in Phuket. Silvia works as a visitor and volunteer coordinator, welcoming animal lovers from around the world and adding her own 'Italian spice' to each tour. If you know Silvia, you'll know she's incredibly passionate about what she does.

What you might not know, however, is that Silvia has a special talent. She's basically a cat whisperer, specifically for hospice cases.

Silvia first accepted the role of foster mum when she moved to Colombia in 2006, taking it upon herself to care for the free-roaming and often heartlessly abandoned dogs and cats there. Noticing how she cared for these animals, people began leaving kittens – even neonatal – outside her yard at night. Although she wished they wouldn't do so, she would take these desperate creatures in as they had little chance of survival alone and in the cold overnight.

"I tend to gravitate to the ones that are overlooked, the ones that are sick and skinny. I want to give them a chance because, once they feel like they have a safe place with a bed and food, and once they realise there's no danger, they begin to relax and their health gets better. It's amazing to see," Silvia explains.

Fast-forward to May 2019, Silvia joined Soi Dog and began reliving her foster days all over again – this time with hospice cases. While many would think twice before accepting the task of caring for a terminally ill animal, Silvia agrees without hesitation. Fostering these fur babies is not for the faint-hearted, though, and Silvia stresses the

Silvia adopted two-year-old FIV+ Srivilai from Soi Dog in 2019.



10-year-old Godum, who has FIV and kidney failure, is living out his golden years with Silvia.

hard work that comes with it. The list of challenges she faces goes on and on: unique feeding habits; multiple vet check-ups, noting their medical and behavioural status every day; cleaning stains out of furniture; replacing shredded curtains and broken ornaments; and breaking up the occasional fight. And that's only naming a few.

"Sometimes I feel like I've had enough. But then when they look at you and give out a meow, or jump in bed with you and ask for some attention, it's all worth it and so rewarding in the end," she says.

Silvia has fostered a total of 12 cats for Soi Dog. She currently cares for five cats (four fosters and her adopted cat *Srivilai*).

To give a better understanding of the kinds of cases she deals with, three of those cats have feline immunodeficiency virus (FIV), three have stage-four kidney failure and one has abdominal cancer.



Cuddles with Apus.

Although Silvia loves all of the cats she takes in, there are two that she will always hold particularly dear to her heart. One of them was a ginger-and-white cutie pie named *Apus*. He was just a year old when he was diagnosed with feline infectious peritonitis (FIP), a fatal disease caused by certain strains of feline coronavirus. He was suffering from a number of other health issues too, including anorexia and stress, and the vets warned that the prognosis was bleak. Silvia pleaded with them to let her take him into her care, even if only to give him comfort and love during his final days. A few weeks in, miraculously, Apus got better and at one point was even up for adoption. But sadly, the FIP returned, and he passed away after six wonderful months in Silvia's care. She reminisces that he was the best cat she ever had.

Then there was *Doriana*, a six-year-old black beauty who had FIV and kidney failure and was given 1-2 months to live. Silvia and *Doriana* shared a truly special bond, and Silvia nicknamed her *Mido* ("Mi" meaning "my" in Spanish and "do" being short from *Doriana*). Silvia loved her so much she got a tattoo of her nickname on her finger. Sweet *Mido* stuck it out for 11 months before passing from renal failure. Silvia still tears up when she talks about these special cats.

Every time one of her foster cats crosses over the rainbow bridge, Silvia promises never to foster again. But being governed by her heart, she can never quite seem to stick to that promise, and that's why we all love her. Silvia's soft spot for the less fortunate is what makes her such a great person.



Mido curls up and catches some zzz's.

Southern team #2 hit the ground running

Chutima Srisawang

In the last issue of the *Soi Dog Post*, we announced the launch of Soi Dog Foundation's second Southern mobile spay and neuter team (the eighth overall in Thailand).

This new team have wasted no time. After neutering and vaccinating over 800 animals at mobile clinics around Phuket in August, they moved east to lend a hand with two special projects in September and October.

The first was at a naval base in the district of Sattahip which had become overrun with street dogs. The team neutered and vaccinated a total of 627 dogs and 81 cats living at the base itself, in the surrounding area and at a nearby shelter. The humane education team also travelled up to visit a local school and teach some young minds about animal welfare.



Captain Goodboy reporting for duty

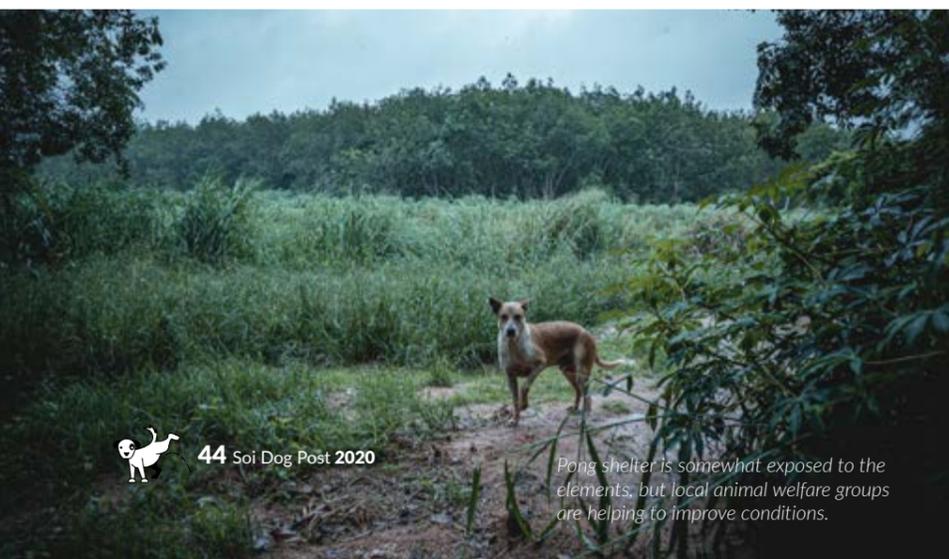
We were encouraged to hear that the commander of the base, *Captain Kongla Tumphu*, was on the same page in terms of managing the street dog and cat populations in the area going forward. In a productive meeting with Soi Dog representatives, he said, "Building more shelters will not solve the problem. We need to find a balance for both humans and dogs living in communities through humane population control like the CNVR programme that Soi Dog has been undertaking here."

The team then moved to the city of Pattaya and set up at Pong shelter, a large and open-air facility home to around 250 dogs, some of which had already been neutered. All resident dogs were well-fed and in good condition and local government vets were on hand administering treatments. At the shelter and at three nearby temples, the team neutered and vaccinated a further 218 dogs.

With their work in the east complete, the team have returned to the south to run mobile spay and neuter clinics in the province of Phang Nga until the end of January 2021.



The Navy welcomed Soi Dog and were open to discussion.



Two down, 216 to go!



Soi Dog marks World Rabies Day 2020

Dee Nordlander



September 28th is World Rabies Day – a global day dedicated to raising awareness of rabies and enhancing its prevention.

What better way to mark this important occasion than with a special vaccination drive for street dogs and cats?

Soi Dog Foundation set up shop at a community hall in Phuket and welcomed locals to bring homeless animals from their neighbourhoods, as well as their owned pets, to be treated by one of our mobile clinic teams.

The humane education team were also on hand to educate pet owners and feeders of

street animals about the importance of annual vaccinations in protecting animals against rabies and other infectious diseases as well as the best course of action in the eventuality of being bitten by a potentially rabid dog or cat.

Rabies cases have been minimised in Thailand in recent years due to vaccination initiatives such as Soi Dog's large-scale CNVR programme. In Phuket in particular, only one case of rabies has been identified – in a dog – in the past 25 years. But until this deadly disease is eliminated completely, our work continues.



The future of Thailand's animal shelters

Chutima Srisawang

At Soi Dog Foundation, we are constantly looking for ways to improve our shelter for the benefit of the dogs and cats who call it home. We are also keen to share this knowledge and learn from others.

With this in mind, Soi Dog met with the Animal Welfare Protection Division of Thailand's Department of Livestock Development (DLD) and representatives from animal quarantine centres in Buriram and Nakhon Phanom in September to discuss how shelters across the country could be best developed and managed.

Soi Dog's animal welfare directors, sanctuary director and adoption manager as well as a number of behaviourists and veterinarians all shared their experiences and best practices from their individual areas of the shelter.

We continue to advocate for better standards of care at shelters, including on-site veterinary care, isolation areas for sick animals, spacious indoor/outdoor housing and an adoption programme (including pre-adoption screening checks and post-adoption follow-ups). We also encourage shelters to open their doors to the public and welcome volunteers and visitors as, in our experience, this can truly transform a good shelter into a great one.

Ultimately, the message that we drive home is that sheltering is not the solution for managing stray dog and cat populations and government budgets would be better spent on a long-term sterilisation and vaccination programme. The DLD are giving our suggestions consideration.

We hope this meeting signals change for Thailand's animal shelters and look forward to continuing cooperation with government departments.

Soi Dog X Leo Burnett Thailand

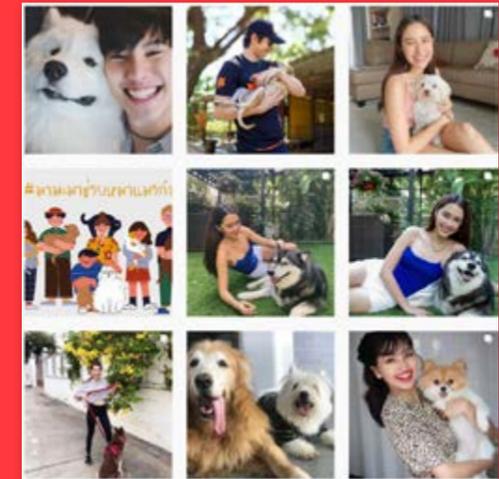
Chutima Srisawang

“Let’s gear our advertising to sell goods, but let’s recognise also that advertising has a broad social responsibility,” said Leo Burnett, the late American advertising executive and founder of the Leo Burnett advertising agency.

Leo Burnett Thailand certainly continue to stay true to this motto. In September, they launched a campaign to help stray animal shelters who have seen their donations shrink amidst the Covid-19 pandemic.

The user-generated campaign, “Pet Shows for Good”, called on owners to post photos and videos of their pets on Facebook and Instagram to raise awareness of the plight of homeless animals and generate much-needed funds for their care. Donations were shared between Soi Dog Foundation and fellow Thailand-based animal rescue organisations Home4Animals and The Voice Foundation.

Pet Shows for Good quickly caught on, and celebrities joined in with the hashtag *#มาหมาช่วยหมาแมวกัน* (*#LetsHelpDogsAndCatsTogether*) on their social media platforms, including Thai superstars *Patricia Good* and *Jpreem* who have 3.3 million followers between them. Adopters across the country also shared heartwarming stories about their rescues.



Asked about the motive behind the campaign, Account Executive *Thayaneer “Jean” Dechadee* said, “People aren’t travelling around or doing as much outside, making it difficult to help stray animals or visit shelters. But lots of people spend almost 24 hours online, so this campaign is a great way to reach people and help them realise that stray dogs’ and cats’ needs are real and they can help them.”

Jean was familiar with Soi Dog’s work, having visited the shelter in Phuket several years ago. The Covid-19 pandemic presented the perfect opportunity to launch a campaign to help.

Thanks to the team at Leo Burnett Thailand and everyone who posted, shared, liked and donated.

Clunkers for canines, four-wheels for felines

Nayomi Gunarathna

In November, Soi Dog Foundation teamed up with US-registered charity CARS (Charitable Adult Rides & Services) to offer supporters a unique opportunity to contribute towards the cause they're most passionate about.

Our American supporters – and some of our Canadian supporters too, depending on the state they reside in – can now donate their unused vehicles to Soi Dog.

Whether it's a car, truck, RV or even a boat, whether it's brand-new, secondhand or been driven way past the intended mileage, all motorised vehicles are eligible to be traded in to raise vital funds for Soi Dog's life-saving programmes.

Through its network of over 400 local and national resale vendors, CARS are able to find

the right buyer for each vehicle and maximise returns for both nonprofits and donors. Since its founding 17 years ago, the social enterprise has returned a whopping 300 million US dollars to its nonprofits partners.

Interested but sounds complicated? The good news is that CARS make the entire process hassle free. They will arrange collection, evaluation and carry out all transactions on the owner's behalf. The even better news is that donations are tax deductible too.

So if you're feeling extra generous, how about donating one of your unused vehicles to Soi Dog today? It could be the most rewarding donation you've ever made.

To find out more, visit our partnership page [here](#).



Donate while you shop

Nayomi Gunarathna

We get it. Donating your car may not be an option for you right now, but don't underestimate what you can do – like donating while you shop online!

Introducing *AmazonSmile* and *Easyfundraising*. When you select Soi Dog Foundation as your charity and make a purchase through the AmazonSmile or Easyfundraising websites or apps, we receive a donation at no extra cost to you.

AmazonSmile

AmazonSmile is Amazon's nonprofit initiative through which 0.5% of eligible purchases are donated to registered charities.

AmazonSmile is currently available to UK and USA supporters, and you can sign up by visiting either www.smile.amazon.co.uk or smile.amazon.com and choosing Soi Dog Foundation as your preferred charity. Every time you shop through AmazonSmile from that point on, a donation will come to the animals you care about. It's a win-win.

Note: If you are in the USA, please choose "Soi Dog USA" (our registered name in the USA) and if you are in the UK, please choose Soi Dog UK CIO, our registered name in the UK.

Easyfundraising

Another one for our UK supporters is Easyfundraising. The site connects over 4,000 retailers and has raised over 34 million GBP for causes across the UK, making it the country's largest charity shopping site. To get started, simply sign up on their website www.easyfundraising.org.uk or through their app and select Soi Dog Foundation as your cause. When you shop using Easyfundraising, your chosen retailer will donate between 0.5% and 10% of your purchase to us. It's as simple as that.

Retailers include John Lewis, eBay, M&S and Argos as well as all major UK supermarkets, travel companies, insurance companies and restaurants. Just remember to start your shopping via the Easyfundraising website or app.

Put the fun back in fundraising. Sign up today and raise funds for your favourite charity while you shop online. It couldn't be easier.

amazonsmile
You Shop. Amazon Gives.

easyfundraising
feel good shopping



Gill Dalley
1959-2017



The legacy Gill left for the street dogs and cats of Thailand, who had no-one else to turn to, will live on eternally.

**YOU CAN LET YOUR LEGACY
BE THE FUTURE FOR STRAY ANIMALS.
SHARE OUR VISION BY JOINING
THE SOI DOG LEGACY PROGRAMME.**

Visit www.soidog.org/legacy or email legacy@soidog.org to find out more.

