

Media Release

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Ranger Annie's tale from 'backyard breeder' to honorary City team member gains RSPCA WA award nomination

Honorary City of Cockburn Ranger, Annie the loveable former pound puppy, has been nominated for an RSPCA WA Animal Welfare Award for 2021.

Annie is an entrant in the inaugural animal award category which recognises furry friends who have had a positive impact on the life of their owner or a community.

"The bond humans and animals share can be incredibly powerful – it really does change lives and this award is a chance to celebrate that," RSPCA WA General Manager Ben Cave said.

City Ranger Team Leader Kylie Smyth said the feisty, loyal little terrier crossbreed had become an important member of the City's Ranger team and the extended family that worked out of the City's Bibra Lake Operations Centre.

Once referred to as Hairy Maclary, inspired by the much-loved canine character created by New Zealand children's author and illustrator Lynley Dodd, Annie's is an eventful tale with a happy ending.

Ranger Kylie adopted the serial escapee, later bringing her to work where she became an integral part of the culture at Cockburn, and in the community where she is a popular visitor.

"Annie had a sad upbringing, being used for backyard breeding and a long history with our pound," Kylie said.

"She was probably the most impounded dog ever. The first time we picked her up was in 2015. She kept running away, often many kilometres from home, and ending up with us.

"In 2019 the owner agreed to surrender her and we adopted her as our Ranger dog. It took a while to get her back to health. She was still lactating when we adopted her, as well as having a neglected little body.



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“Annie underwent assessments to ensure she was safe with kids and unusual circumstances and places, passing with flying colours. She now attends local schools teaching kids all about dog safety and etiquette.

“We also run internal staff talks for those that work out in the field that may encounter dogs and how to stay safe. This has been a huge success with many not even realising how simple actions can diffuse an imminent situation.

“She is one in a million and we have all fallen in love with her. She can often be seen sitting on someone’s lap, providing a bit of calm companionship, or having a bit of a play, which is a great stress reliever in the workplace.

“Ranger work can be very demanding and emotionally draining so having a dog around the workplace certainly creates an instant impact on morale.

“Ranger Annie was so popular; it wasn’t long before we realised how she brightened not only the days of children, but adults as well.

“She visits staff around the City’s buildings, such as our Seniors Centre and Youth Centre and creates smiles wherever she goes. A simple visit by her, makes even the hardest day feel better.

“Annie loves any attention and now lives her best life. More importantly, she hasn't run away since.”

The awards will be announced by RSPCA WA chair Lynne Bradshaw AM at a morning tea on 4 October.

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