

COMPANION



Lort Smith
caring for animals



**THE CATTITUDE
OF KOBEE**

**WHEN
SEPARATION
IS THE BEST
MEDICINE**

**HOW
ACUPUNCTURE
HELPED**

THIS PUPPY WALK AGAIN

**MEET HIRO, THE
FRONT-DESK HERO**

**THE HEALING
POWER OF
DOGS ON
YOUNG PEOPLE**

**COUNTDOWN TO
CAMPBELLFIELD**



BUMPER SPRING EDITION 2021

lortsmith.com



Dr David with adopted pup Katie Taylor

LEADERSHIP MESSAGE

CELEBRATING

85 years of Lort Smith



It's been another tough year for us all. I'm sure that, like me, you yearn for the days when we could see friends, visit with family, laugh in a cinema, eat at restaurants and travel wherever we wanted. It feels bizarre that we ever took those things for granted.

But I am hopeful that we will get back to that way of life. And until we do, I will continue to feel grateful for the fact that we at least have animals in our lives.

Animals don't know what's going on in the world. They don't watch the news or scroll through social media. They don't have a political opinion. Their needs are simple — to eat, enjoy a walk, sleep soundly, love and be loved. My rescue dog, Scout, has kept me sane during the lockdowns and I hope that you too have had the comfort of a pet during these uncertain and challenging times.

If you haven't, I hope you will take comfort in knowing that your generosity has helped so many pets stay with their families. As Australia's busiest not-for-profit animal hospital, who offers discounts and payment plans to people in need, your donations ensure that we can keep the human-animal bond strong and keep families together during times of crisis.

The good news is that we have something very exciting to look forward to. Lort Smith Animal Hospital – Campbellfield Centre is opening later this year, expanding the number of pets and their families we can help across north-west Melbourne. You can read all about this amazing new chapter for Lort Smith, as well as all the other incredible things you've recently made possible, in this newsletter.

Happy reading and thank you again for your support. It's even more powerful now, when life is still so tumultuous, that you continue to show so much compassion towards animals and the people who love them.

Thank you.

Dr David Cunliffe
Head of Hospital



THE CATTITUDE OF KOBEE

Eleven-year-old Kobee wasn't in the best shape when he arrived at Lort Smith. He had an eye disease that had been left untreated for months, causing his right eye to be squinty and clearly very painful. He had a heart murmur, dental issues and some lumps on his face that needed investigating. He was very underweight. And on top of all that, he had a healthy dose of sass that our team at Lort Smith like to call 'cattitude'.

But all we saw was a cat in desperate need of some love and care. After assessing his eye, our vets determined that Kobee's best chance of living pain-free would be for us to remove the eye. Once the delicate surgery was complete, he was placed in foster care to recover with Lisa and Ralph.

"He certainly wasn't a happy boy when I first met him," says Lisa. "But fair enough ... he was skin and bones and had just been through a big surgery. He was just a cranky old man who needed a quiet place to fatten up and recuperate."



Lisa says Kobee hid in her walk-in robe for about two weeks before he eventually started to show some interest in her.

"Once he started healing, he came out of his shell... If I was reading in bed, he'd come and sleep next to me or at my feet. He's really a sweet soul; he just needed someone to be patient with him."

Head to our website to see all the beautiful, *'perfectly imperfect'* pets who are waiting to find their forever homes.

lortsmith.com/adoptions



ROCCO



RUBY



WHEN SEPARATION IS THE BEST MEDICINE

When two animals are surrendered as a bonded pair to Lort Smith, we will do everything in our power to keep them together. We know that most bonded pairs can become distressed if they are separated from each other and although it can be trickier to find a home for two animals, we won't give up until we do.

However, the case of nine-year-old boxers Rocco and Ruby was very different. Our behaviour team observed how Ruby would become extremely stressed whenever the bouncier and more exuberant Rocco approached her. The otherwise sweet and gentle girl would lash out in frustration, leaving him with bite marks on his ears and face. After much deliberation, we decided that it was in the best interest of both dogs to be rehomed separately.

Being older dogs, both with medical issues, we wanted to make sure we found them the right people who would understand their needs. And

thankfully, we found exactly that.

Liz and Jeff, who adopted Rocco, describe him as a gorgeous dog who is their constant shadow and companion.

"He'll come out the front with me while I'm doing the gardening or to put the bins out and will even jump in the car to go to the post office," Jeff says. *"Those things are just the highlight of his day. He just loves being with us. He doesn't run off — he doesn't want to run off."*

Liz says while she's had boxers before and has always loved their character, she's *"never had as smoochy a boxer as this one"*.

"Boxers are such people-dogs and Rocco is no exception," she says. *"Although not a lot of people can put up with slobber — I forgot about that part!"*

Meanwhile, Ruby has gone to live with Julieanne and Allister, and their teenage daughter Michaela. Sadly, the family had lost their two older boxers a few months prior and missed the goofiness and sweetness boxers can bring to a home.

"I wasn't sure I was ready to adopt again to be honest, because we were still grieving," Julieanne says. *"But when Ruby popped up, it just felt right ... And it's turned out to be one of the best decisions we've ever made."*

One of the best things about Ruby joining their family is the impact she has had on 17-year-old Michaela.

"I didn't realise just how much losing our other two dogs so close to each other had affected our daughter until I heard her laughing and giggling while one day playing with Ruby," Julieanne says. *"I realised I hadn't heard that sound for quite a while."*

"She and Ruby are like best buddies now. When Michaela walks in the room, Ruby will just roll over onto her back immediately because she knows she's going to get her tummy scratched."

As for the decision to separate the dogs, both Rocco and Ruby's new families agree that it was definitely the right one.

"Rocco still has a difficulty with other dogs — he's not nasty, he's just rough," Liz says. *"We just keep him to us, to be honest. Outside the house, he's always going to be an on-lead dog and all three of us have just resigned ourselves to that fact. It works for us."*

Julieanne agrees: "At this stage, we wouldn't take her to an off-lead dog park until we know how she'd cope. She's been great with us, but you just don't know. She loves being a single dog though - she just loves all the attention."

"It would've been a hard decision to make to separate them," Liz says. *"But this one worked out; separating them has been the best thing for both of them."*



Rocco and Ruby getting a much needed bath after they arrived at Lort Smith

Because of you, Lort Smith are able to dedicate time and resources to finding the best homes for animals like Ruby and Rocco. If you're looking to add a furry member to your family, jump online here: lortsmith.com/adoptions

RANDALL LOSES A TAIL BUT GAINS HAPPINESS

The first two years of Randall's life were miserable. The central bearded dragon lived in a small enclosure that reeked of faeces, with nothing but one rock, a tiny bowl of pellets and a few loose crickets for him to eat. Tamara heard about his situation through a friend and, being the carer of an eastern blue tongue lizard named Chico, stepped up to adopt him.

"Randall looked underweight, he had dehydrated skin, very long nails, smelt horrible, was not very alert and overall appeared miserable," Tamara says. She also noticed that the tip of Randall's tail was slightly curled, blackened and extremely stiff.

"I chose to bring Randall to Lort Smith as I had tried a different exotic vet and wasn't happy with my experience," she says. *"I found they didn't really have much information about bearded dragons or why his tail was the way it was."*

At Lort Smith, Tamara met with Dr Esther, who diagnosed Randall with a fused tail, which meant the vertebrae didn't have any separation between them.

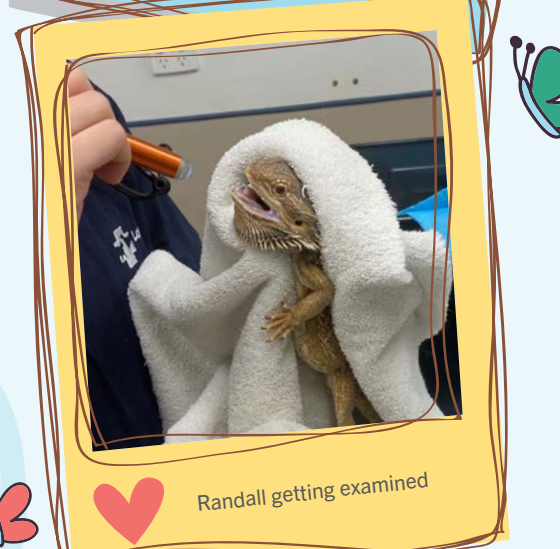
"Dr Esther said he may have metabolic bone disease in his tail. I put it down to his lack of care from his previous home – poor diet and lack of calcium from the wrong UVB lighting. It makes me angry," says Tamara.

"Dr Esther said the bottom of the tail was already dying and she could smell the infection. She was confident that amputation was the best way to go, and I felt confident in her decision. I just wanted his pain to go away so we did what we had to do!"

Randall's surgery only took a few hours and he was able to go home that same day. Tamara was briefed on his post-surgery care including antibiotic injections, oral pain relief and Betadine spray. Randall may have lost half a tail but he's gained so much more. He now resides in a four foot 'mansion' enclosure, full of items to climb on and soft coconut husks to dig in. He has lots of basking rocks and a leaf wall. Tamara also ensures he gets time out of his enclosure every day to spend time with Chico and Lucky, Tamara's cocker spaniel cross.



Randall's X-ray



Randall getting examined



Randall after surgery



ACUPUNCTURE TREATMENT WITH DR AMANDA LUNA AND ANIMAL WELFARE OFFICER JO

HOW ACUPUNCTURE HELPED THIS PUPPY WALK AGAIN

Little Luna was found as a stray and brought to a local pound where they noticed something unusual about her. Her feet and legs were swollen, causing her a lot of pain and discomfort. At nine-weeks-old, she should've been running and playing like a normal puppy. But this tiny poodle cross could barely walk without yelping.

The pound transferred her immediately to Lort Smith, where we diagnosed her with congenital lymphedema — a malformation of the lymphatic system. Unfortunately, there is no cure for this condition, but we were determined to give this sweet little puppy the best chance at a normal pain-free life.

We placed her in a loving foster care home so she could be constantly doted on while we tried out different treatments. We tried compression stockings to reduce the swelling, different kinds of oral medication, daily massages and short walks, however, the most effective treatment to date has been Luna's regular acupuncture appointments with Dr Amanda.

As with humans, acupuncture in animals is used to help the body heal itself by correcting energy imbalances. The technique requires the insertion of fine needles into

the dog's body at specific acupuncture points, where nerves and blood vessels meet.

Over a period of five months, Dr Amanda performed acupuncture on Luna once a fortnight. Of course, like any puppy, Luna was not overly well behaved when attending her appointments and food and treats were always on hand to distract her! But gradually, we began to notice that her lymphedema symptoms were reducing and it was decided that she was ready to be fostered with a view to adopt.

Within 24 hours Luna caught the eye of Gaby and Mitch and this trio has been inseparable ever since! Luna now spends her days at the local dog beach, basking in the sun and enjoying sea water physiotherapy, which helps reduce the swelling of her legs.

And while Luna still needs to visit Dr Amanda every month, this pup is definitely enjoying a healthier, happier and pain-free life.



MEET HIRO, THE FRONT-DESK HERO

To describe the Lort Smith front desk as busy is something of an understatement. Between pets getting their regular check-ups, emergency patients being rushed in, phones ringing constantly with people making appointments or checking up on their beloved pets in the hospital — it's certainly never dull around here!

So to help make the process smoother for both patients and Lort Smith staff, we decided to implement a volunteer concierge position: someone who would be there to greet clients, answer any questions they have and help them feel more comfortable. Hiro is one such volunteer.

"My role is to assess what people need and just be as accommodating as possible," he says. "If someone rushes in in complete distress with their dog in their arms because they've been hit by a car, it can be confronting... I don't want to intrude but I just tell them I can get them a glass of water or some tissues, or help them with any simple questions they have."

"If they need space, I'll tell them they can go outside, and I'll let them know when we have an update. It's about being as supportive as possible."

While Hiro says it can be an emotional role, he gets a lot out of feeling like he's helped someone during a tough time.

"It's a break from my regular work for me. I do IT support for Melbourne Uni, which is a lot of troubleshooting, but at Lort Smith, I get to chat with people and be empathetic and listen to their stories."

"And of course, I get to spend time with animals, which is fantastic."

If you're interested in joining Lort Smith as a volunteer and making a difference to the lives of pets and the people who love them, visit lortsmith.com/volunteering and register now.

My role is to assess what people need and just be as accommodating as possible...



Hiro and his cat Ronny

THE HEALING POWER OF DOGS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Animal lovers have long believed that dogs have superpowers — and Lort Smith's Pet Therapy program proves that it's true!

Every week, volunteers take their own, specially assessed dogs to spend time with people who are experiencing illness, adversity, or loneliness. The dogs' gentle and joyful presence has proven to increase people's happiness, communication skills and overall wellbeing. Some studies have even linked pet therapy to improved physical health.

And while our program has been running for 35 years, historically our volunteers have focused on the health and aged care sectors. However, in 2019 Lort Smith Pet Therapy volunteers started visiting young people in the youth justice precinct, to bring the healing powers of the human-animal bond to them.

The results in this time have been truly astounding.

"I have also witnessed the profound effects the regular presence of a dog can have on a young person entrenched in the system," says Andrea Davidson, the Director of the Parkville Precinct Operations. *"In one case not only did the Lort Smith dogs provide immediate comfort to a young person who had experienced harm, but in fact supported their journey of desistance from crime, through presenting a tangible, achievable goal and very real motivation to one day have and care for their own furry friend."*

Volunteer Leanne and her dog Leo have been a part of the program since day one and says she has seen the incredible difference Leo has made to the lives of many of the children in detention.

"Therapy dogs are non-judgemental; they don't care about your background, the mistakes you may have made — they see the real person inside, the hurt, the uncertainty, the anxiety," she says.



"They know what the young people need — a dog that loves them unconditionally, is so excited to see them, is ready to shake your hand, play ball or cuddle."

"These interactions make such a huge difference. I have seen many young people transformed and it never ceases to amaze me the connection between these young people and dogs."

Following the success of the program, the Department of Justice and Community Safety now supports Lort Smith in continuing to deliver this service to more young people in youth justice.



Pet Therapy pooch Leo spreading some Easter love at one of our facilities.



IS A UNIQUE CAREER MACAW-LLING YOUR NAME?



Working at Lort Smith means that no two days will ever look the same.

Sure, our main patient base are dogs and cats, but it's also not uncommon for our staff to be working with lizards, rats, Guinea pigs, snakes — even wombats! Our highly skilled veterinary team includes Unusual Pets and Wildlife Veterinarians who specialise in working with more exotic pets, and every department is involved in an animal's journey.

So, when Jess brought her five-month-old macaw Shelby in to Lort Smith, we knew she'd come to the right place. These rare and magnificent birds are highly intelligent and live for an average of 60 years, but given they are not native to Australia, not a lot of clinics know how to properly care for them. So when Jess met Lort Smith's Unusual Pets and Wildlife Veterinarian Dr Tristan, she was relieved to know Shelby was in good hands

She'd noticed that her bird was not quite herself, being less chatty, regurgitating her food, losing weight and had droopy wings. Dr Tristan did some radiographs and discovered a large foreign body present inside Shelby.

"I was able to take it out of the stomach using an endoscope," he says. "Once we removed it, we could see that it was a feeding tube. Jess said they weren't missing any feeding tubes, so I suspect the tube had been swallowed while still at the breeders — sitting in the stomach the whole time they have had her."



Communications specialist Shannon with Shelby

Shelby and Dr Tristan

It is very inappropriate for a breeder to sell an unweaned bird. Lort Smith does not recommend buying unweaned birds unless you are experienced in caring for birds. Jess was very surprised at what Dr Tristan had found, especially the length of the feeding tube, which measured 8cm!

"I've been really happy with Dr Tristan and the service we've received from Lort Smith. He is really engaging and very informative," says Jess.

Thankfully Shelby has now made a full recovery and is back to eating her favourite blueberries and causing a ruckus for Jess and her partner.

If you're interested in an exciting career working with rare and unusual animals — as well as the more common ones — head to our careers page to learn about the different positions we currently have available at our Campbellfield and North Melbourne locations — lortsmith.com/careers

COUNTDOWN TO CAMPBELLFIELD

We are excited to announce that the works on Lort Smith Animal Hospital – Campbellfield Centre are nearly complete, with the grand opening in the planning. And as our Business Transformation Manager Amanda explains, it couldn't come a moment sooner.

"We are splitting at the seams here in North Melbourne," she says. ***"We've been here for 85 years and we've done a lot of amazing work from this site but as the area becomes more built-up, we are running out of room impacting on our ability to help more people."***

The new location was chosen for its accessibility and space. Just 25 minutes from our North Melbourne site and close to a major freeway, the new site will allow us to work together to reach even more people and their pets in the community. Our onsite vet clinic will be able to offer appointments for routine pet care such as vaccinations, health checks, behaviour advice, and day surgeries, such as desexing operations and dentals.

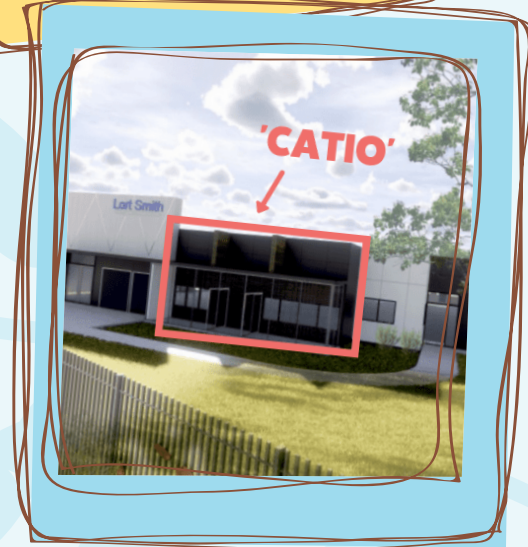
The Campbellfield Centre will also be the new home to our Adoption Centre, with significantly improved amenities for animals while they are waiting to be rehomed. ***"It's a wonderful move for the animals that we care for,"*** Amanda says. ***"The Adoption Centre will have modern, specially designed facilities so animals awaiting their new home will be more comfortable."***

These facilities include a 'catio', where cats can sit in the north-facing sun from a balcony, additional communal cat areas so they can be more social and playful, and an expanded kennels area to make the dogs more comfortable.

In addition to improved accommodation, the site will have an onsite dog park, which is a great opportunity for us to connect with our community as the dog park will be open to everyone during business hours. The park will have a sensory garden with a variety of plants with different textures and smells so dogs can have stimulating sniffing adventures.



Campbellfield Centre reception



"It's an exciting time for Lort Smith because it helps position our hospital as a referral centre and really focus on the community. It gives us a chance to reflect on who we've been for the last 85 years, and who we want to become for the next part of the journey," shares Amanda.

Thank you to all our incredible donors who have helped make the Campbellfield Centre possible. We look forward to welcoming you there soon.

For more information:
lortsmith.com/future-directions



EVERY TIME SHE POOPED, I GOT SO EXCITED!

As a vet nurse for Lort Smith, Vanessa looks after countless animals every week. But every now and then, an animal will come in who truly captures her heart. Bobbins is one such animal.

The young cat had been hit by a car, causing multiple fractures to her pelvis. She wasn't able to walk or go to the toilet on her own and her carers sadly couldn't afford to proceed with the extensive rehabilitation Bobbins would need. Following a CT scan, it was revealed that she had a narrow pelvis, which would cause difficulty in her being able to defecate. Vanessa had to work around the clock with Bobbins, manually expressing her bladder, performing enemas to help her defecate, giving her regular pain medication and doing gentle physio work.

"We just formed a bond," Vanessa says. *"She was a very spicy girl as you can imagine with all she had been through ... but I saw improvement and I knew she wasn't going to give up. And neither was I!"*

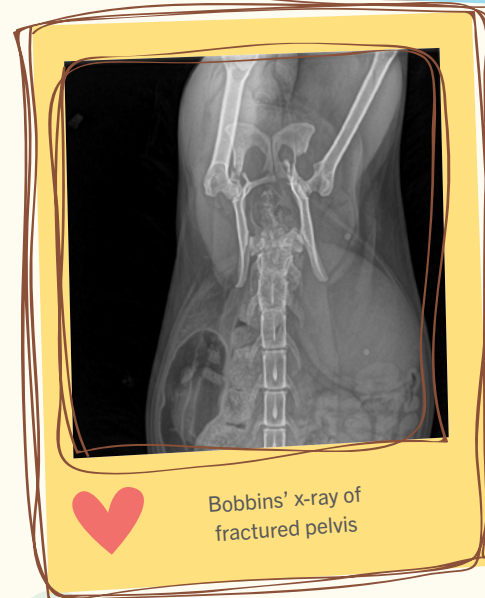
Vanessa put her hand up to take Bobbins home as a foster, in order to give her time to recover in a quiet and stress-free environment. At least, stress-free for Bobbins!

"It was incredibly stressful for me!" laughs Vanessa. *"But I would do it a million times over."*

"She was on four to six different types of medications and giving her those was no easy task, but we managed. She gained trust with me and let me express her bladder and give her enemas when needed but it was always a waiting game to see if she could toilet on her own."

"The day she did I cried, filmed it and sent it to all the vets and nurses who had helped her. Every time she pooped, I got so excited!"

Soon Bobbins was up and walking, and Vanessa knew their time together would need to come to an end so Bobbins could go on to her forever home. Bobbins is now in a foster-to-adopt arrangement and Vanessa says she thinks they've found the perfect home.



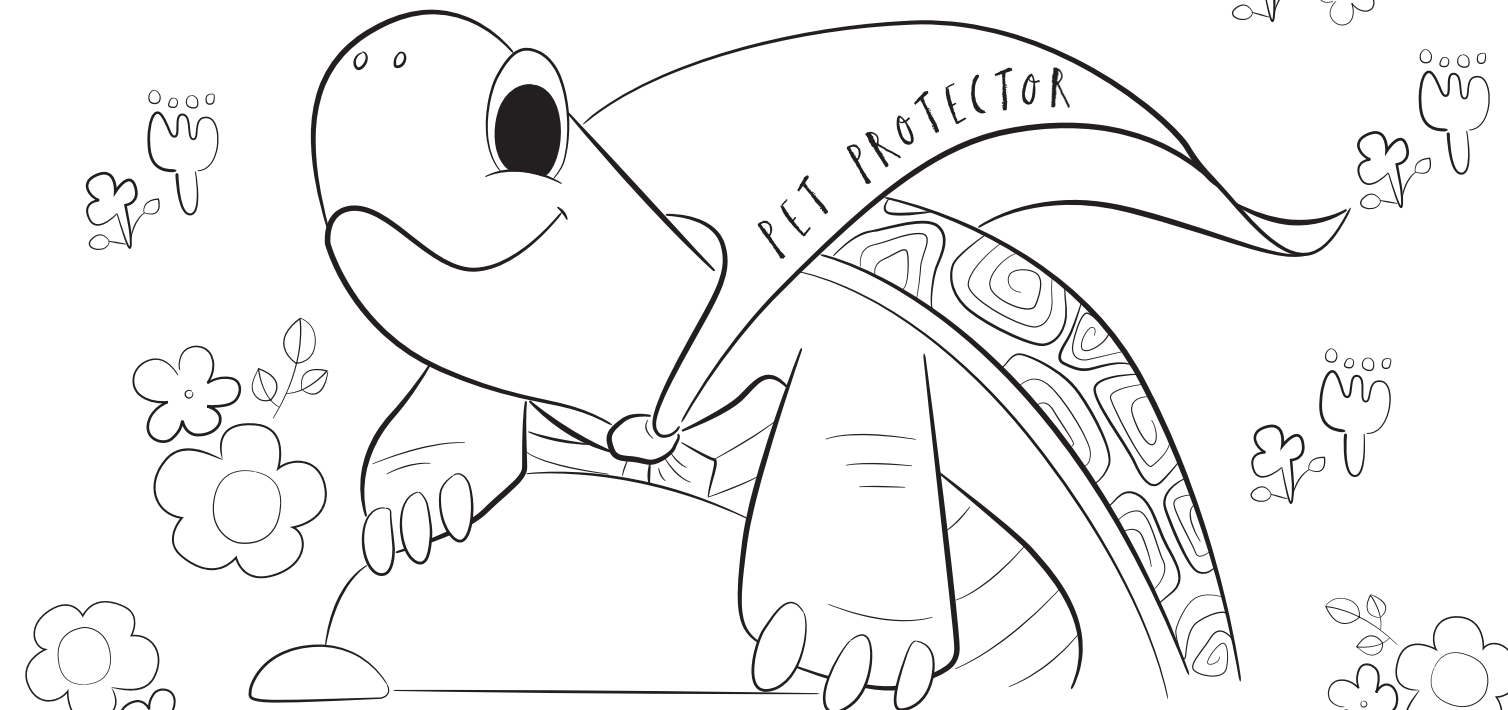
They have bonded so well, and I get updates regularly...

That's why I love fostering — it's truly incredible to see the transformation that a loving home and a bit of time can do to change the lives of these animals and ultimately the lives of the human who takes them home."

BRING COLOUR TO LIFE!

Isolating at home with the kids or grandkids? Pass the time with these colouring-in pages, featuring Pet Protector heroes Raphael and Lexie.

Share your masterpieces on social media using [#lortsmithheroes](#) and we will feature on Lort Smith stories!



KUNG FU TURTLE

with MOVES *so quick!*

YOU CAN'T EVEN SEE THEM

RAPHAEL COLOUR ME IN!

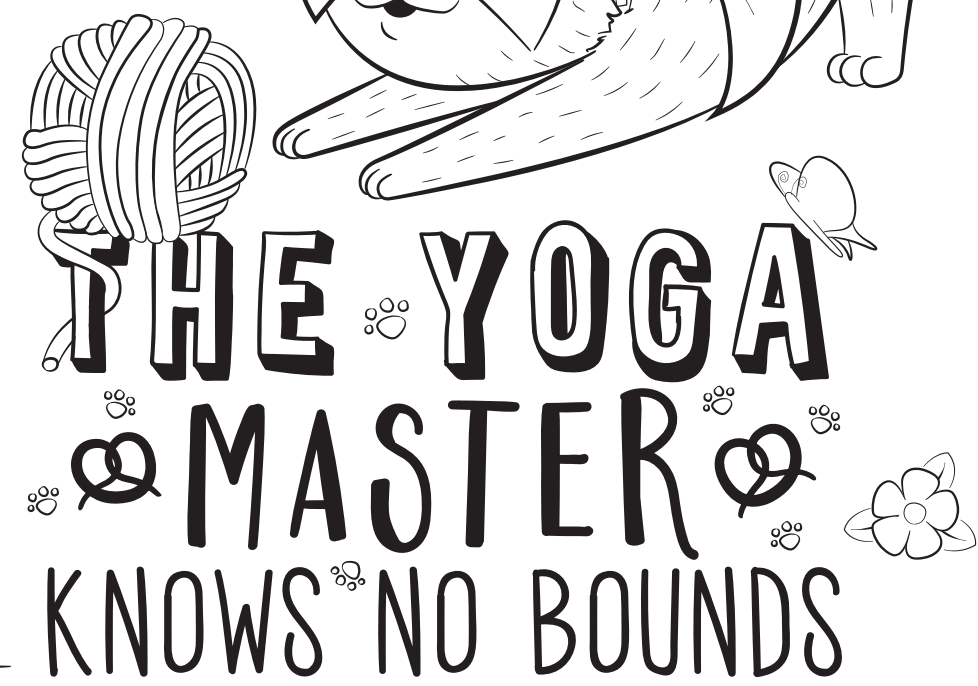
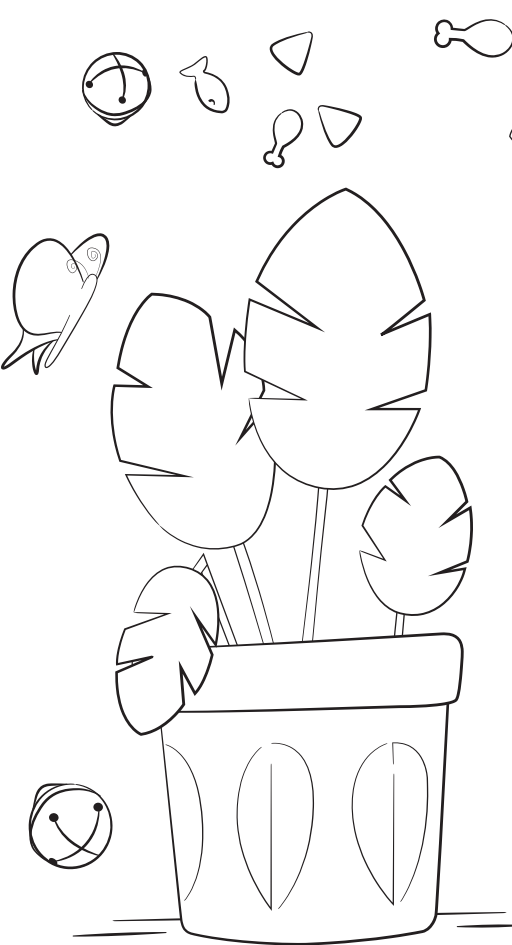
Name:

Age:

BRING COLOUR TO LIFE!

Isolating at home with the kids or grandkids? Pass the time with these colouring-in pages, featuring Pet Protector heroes Raphael and Lexie.

Share your masterpieces on social media using [#lortsmithheroes](#) and we will feature on Lort Smith stories!



LEXIE COLOUR ME IN!

Name:

Age:

YOU CAN SAVE AN ANIMAL'S LIFE EVERY MONTH.

SIGN-UP TO BECOME A REGULAR GIVER TODAY.



I would like to make a regular monthly gift of:

\$25
 \$35
 \$50
 Or my choice of \$

Personal Details

First Name Surname
 Address
 Suburb/State Postcode
 Telephone Mobile
 Email DOB

Payment Details

Visa MasterCard
 Card Number Name on Card
 Signature Expiry date /

Please complete this form and return to:
Fundraising Team at Lort Smith 24 Villiers Street, North Melbourne VIC 3051
 To view our Privacy Policy, please visit www.lortsmith.com/privacy. Donations over \$2 are tax-deductible.



LORT SMITH HAS YOUR GIFT GIVING SORTED!

Take a peek at our online shop when the next occasion calls.

From Birthdays to Christmas, Mother's Day to Easter, our range of eGifts have got you covered.

By choosing to shop with Lort Smith, you will contribute to the improved health and wellbeing of shelter animals in our care.

Your **tax-deductible** gift will allow us to provide them with necessary veterinary and behavioural care, making them available for adoption much sooner.

Give a meaningful alternative to a traditional gift. Shop with Lort Smith and you are guaranteed to give, and get, that "warm and fuzzy" feeling!

lortsmith.com/shop



Transforming Lives™

Lort Smith | ABN 87 004 238 475

24 Villiers Street, North Melbourne VIC 3051

Hospital appointments 03 9328 3021

Bequests 03 9287 6430

Donations 03 9287 6419

Community fundraising 03 9287 6419

FOLLOW US FOR ALL THE LATEST NEWS

 [lortsmithhospital](https://www.facebook.com/lortsmithhospital)

 [lortsmith](https://www.instagram.com/lortsmith)

 [LortSmith](https://twitter.com/LortSmith)

 [LortSmith](https://www.linkedin.com/company/lortsmith)



*Celebrating
85 years*

lortsmith.com