# Bark

MAGAZINE VOLUME2/2014

# **PIRATES AHOY!**









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### **ADOPTION DAY**

12.30pm – Adoption Day is here! The afternoon brings sunshine with a cool breeze, perfect weather for a big crowd. It is time to start setting up marquees and assembling dog pens. Eager volunteers start arriving kitted out in their Embark t-shirts, along with the veterinary team looking business-like in their lab coats. Unical is also here bearing complimentary vitamins to be handed out to the new adopters.

2.30pm – Everyone is set up in their stations and we are ready to kick off Adoption Day. The pens have quickly filled up with frisky puppies. Little doggy yaps fill the air as the gathering crowd swells with excitement and pick out their best friends forever after screening and receiving advise on puppy care.



5.00pm – Thirty-one homeless puppies went home in the arms of their loving new family. This is what we call a very successful Adoption Day!



8.15am – Monday morning comes bright and early the day after Adoption Day. It is time to open our database and carefully file away all the precious information from last evening. Next, we need to check up on how the puppies got through their first night by calling the up the families who joined the Embark family vesterday.



MON

12.00 noon – Next on the agenda for the field team is what we call physical follow ups. A list is prepared containing details of adoptions from previous months: names, dates and addresses. Armed with the list the field team goes visiting. We photograph each pup; they are no longer the small trembling bundles we once gave up for adoption. Most have grown into big strong dogs full of energy and confidence. Their proud owners are keen to give us information on their diet, medical history etc.



5.00pm – The field team gets back to office in time to update the database with all the new information collected at the follow up. Once everyone has had a chance to swoon over all the doggy photos, it is time to call it a day!









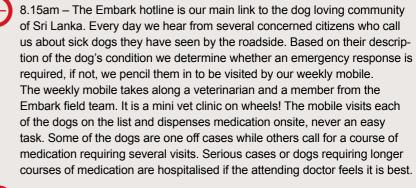
## VISITING THE HOSPITAL

- 9.00am The Odel head office reception is crowded with Embark volunteers dressed in cargo pants and sporty outfits. They are all ready for a day at the pooch hospital. A brisk drive takes us out of Colombo to the hospital, which is located in the middle of a rubber plantation. A deafening volley of barks greet us as we step out of the van!
- 10.00am The dogs come tumbling out of their kennels some are blind, some are limping, some are slower than others but they are all equally excited. They are all too familiar with the sound of the Embark van arriving and what that indicates hugs and cuddles! There is plenty of work to do following the weekly reunion: several of the dogs need baths, a few receive physiotherapy, while others with rashes get a rub down with ointment.
- 4.00pm An exhausting but just as rewarding day comes to an end. The dogs have been played with, been fed and treated for their specific ailments. It is time for them to return to their kennels and for us to head back to Colombo.





#### **MOBILE TREATMENTS**





5.00pm – A mange lotion here, a wound cleaning there and a few more dogs treated in between have brought another productive day to a close.





**FIELD CLINIC** 



8.15 – A field clinic has been scheduled for the Maharagama Catch-Neuter-Vaccinate-Release (CNVR) Program. The program is in its fourth and final year. Maharagama is one of the most densely populated, with dogs that is, suburbs of the Colombo district. We are proud to state that not a single human rabies case was reported from the area, since our campaign commenced. We are very excited that the finish line is now clearly in sight.

A familiar sight, the Best Care Animal Clinic surgery bus, greets us in Maharagama. The bus is a fully functional, mobile operating theatre.

Three surgeries are being carried out at this very moment. A pen has been assembled beside the bus, several unconscious dogs lie inside on mats with their tongues hanging out and eyes glazed over. These dogs are recovering from anaesthesia post-surgery or have been anaesthetized and are awaiting surgery. Two tables have been set up, one is being used to prepare the dogs for surgery and the other is for administrative work.

- 12 noon A small van drives up to the makeshift clinic site, in the back there are several dogs curled up in nets. The dogs are caught in nets to ensure both their safety and the safety of the catchers. The dogs are then weighed on a scale and are given sedatives based on the reading.
- 5.00pm Thirty-five female dogs have been successfully sterilised. They have been dosed with antibiotics and given intravenous sustenance to last two days. The anaesthesia has worn off and the dogs are back on their feet. We are heading off to help release them back to the locations they know as home.





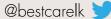
9.00am – We are standing in a classroom in Depanama, Pannipitiya, looking into a sea of little smiling faces. Today, we are taking a break from dogs to educate school children - about dogs. An education and awareness program that teaches school kids about interacting with dogs accompanies the Maharagama CNVR Program. Fifty primary and secondary school children sit in rows listening intently while the veterinarian tells them about how to avoid being bitten by a street dog and why they should vaccinate and how they should look after their family pet responsibly. Once the presentation ends, the children are impatient to share their own stories about the dogs and cats they take care of at home. We conclude the session by handing out information leaflets and encouraging the kids to draw us a picture to illustrate their stories.

12.30pm - It is time to leave the kids behind to play at lunch break and head back to office. Wait! There is an emergency call on the Embark hotline. A puppy has been seen limping close to the rail tracks in Dehiwala; it appears to have had an accident. The caller seems upset and anxious. We quickly get the directions to the dog's location and we are on our way. The caller meets us on arrival and points out the young dog. Yes, it looks like a broken leg. The field team springs into action and soon the pup is safely in our carrier box ready to be transported to the hospital. We exchange contact information with the caller and set off to the hospital.

5.00pm – The puppy has been settled in a kennel at the hospital and the doctors are confident he will make a full recovery. In a few months the Dehiwala puppy will be joining several others in a pen at Adoption Day. We have no doubt that with his unusual markings and bubbly personality, he will be snapped up by a loving family in







## THE BEST CARE FOR YOUR BEST FRIEND





Once you have decided to get a dog, you need to decide where to look for one? There are many breeds out there to choose from and among them is the very special Sri Lankan dog. Why not consider adopting one. Here are eight reasons why you should adopt a street dog from Embark -

# FREE?

A street dog is simply a mix of many different breeds. When you adopt a street dog, you adopt a totally unique companion!

A mix of breeds means all street dogs have more diverse genes than pedigrees, which usually makes for a healthier dog overall.

Adopting a puppy from Embark is completely free and you get free veterinary care for a whole year after adoption.

All Embark puppies are vaccinated against Rabies, Pavo, Canine Distemper, Canine Hepatitis and Leptospira and Canine Adenovirus type 2.

All female puppies are sterilised prior to adoption. This prevents unwanted puppies reduces the risk of tumours and the dog will display a more consistent and less aggressive temperament.

You get to feel good about giving a homeless dog a better life.

When you adopt from a shelter, you are taking a stand against pet shops that keep puppies in inhumane conditions. You are also discouraging the business of irresponsible breeders who do not have the dogs' best interest at heart.

When you adopt a street pooch, you are also helping to reduce

Sri Lanka's one million plus population of street dogs.



A dog is a gift you give yourself. Embark also has adult and special needs dogs who are looking for loving homes. If you would like to open your heart and home to a street dog please call Embark on +94 773429 025 or email us at <a href="mailto:embark@eodel.com">embark@eodel.com</a> and adopt love today!







EMBARA S WITH THE PIRATES

Embark founder Otara
Gunewardene's pet
pooches Niko, Bandit and
Rozzy feature in yet another
suave collection for the
fashion label as swaggering
pirates, complete with
bicorne hat, eye patch and
polka dotted scarf.

The new collection is based on a quest, with the three mates searching the high seas for adventure and intrigue. Adding further dimension to this collection is the use of bright colours and pronounced stripes emphasizing the expressive nature of Bandit, the captain on this voyage.

Billed as jollier than the Jolly Roger, more stylish than long John Silver and more colourful than a shoulder full of parrots, the Embark Pirate Collection 'walked the plank' at a lively pirate-themed fashion show at Odel's Alexandra Place store on the 27<sup>th</sup> of March 2014 drawing oohs and aahs from the large crowd of fans.









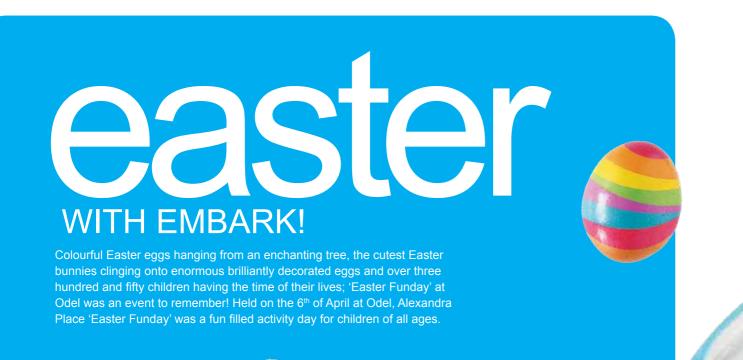




**OURPRODUCTS** 

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EMBARK X



The activities included cupcake decorating, where the little ones decorated mini cupcakes in shades of pastel icing and added their choice of sprinkles, gummies, fondant flowers and Easter eggs! The Egg painting corner saw kids covered in glitter, sequins and colour as they attempted to paint their very own Easter egg! The Easter 'puppies' in the 'Puppy Petting Corner' featured the cute pooches from 'Embark' all ready for Easter ,decked in their very own pair of bunny ears!













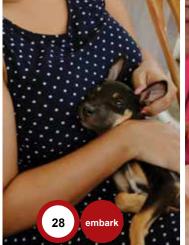








# volunteers









# 'You give but little when you give of your possessions. It is when you give of yourself that you truly give' Khalil Gibran

In its seven short years, Embark has had the good fortune of encountering several people who regularly put Khalil Gibran's insightful words into practice. Whether it is bathing a hospitalised dog, screening new adopters at Adoption Day or helping out with fundraising efforts, there is always someone in the trusty group who comes forward with a willing smile and positive attitude.

This is what some of our volunteers had to say about their experience at Embark.



Sue Wijekulasuriya has been with us for only three months but in this short time, she has made herself a permanent fixture at Embark. Whether it is a weekly visit to the hospital or an

Adoption Day, Sue is on board and hands on.

"When you step inside the hospital you see as many two legged pooches as four just staring at you with their big googly eyes as if wanting to share so many stories of



their life with you. One's heart goes out to those that are paralysed and barely can move their legs but it is amazing to see with time and the medical care they get at the hospital how they slowly are back on their feet again.

One of the most memorable experiences at the hospital happened maybe three weeks ago; I took this dog for a walk, he did not have a scrap of fur on his body, he looked black as charcoal and so happy to get out of his cage and go for a small walk. When I revisited the hospital last week, I wanted to take my 'no fur friend' for a walk once again. I searched the row of cages twice before fearfully inquiring about him. I was shown a pooch with snowy white fur covering almost two thirds of his body. I was so happy to see him like that, he had made it, he had beaten the nasty skin rash and was on his way to a hundred per cent recovery! He looked so happy too! What more can you ask?"

The dedication of a volunteer like Sue is priceless. She is an inspiration to us and a blessing to all the injured dogs.

### CLAIRE DE LOURAILLE

Claire de Louraille came to Sri Lanka to teach English at a school in Matara.

Her year-long good deed is highly commendable but that was not enough for Claire who took to volunteering at Embark on her days off!

"The plight of the street dog is heartbreaking, and as a volunteer I am not spared from the cruelty that people can inflict upon these animals. It is not always easy or comfortable; I usually end my days at Embark covered in sweat, dirt, and lots of dog fur, yet those very days are always my most gratifying. Whether I've taken a few dogs



for their walks, rubbed Scrappy Doo down with margosa oil, helped with a treatment, or even just spent time giving the dogs some attention, I know that even if my time here makes them just a little bit happier, it's all worth it."

If you love dogs and do not want to see them suffer, today there is a wonderful support network of people in Sri Lanka who feel the same way. Embark connects people who care and in that sense is not just an effective street dog organization in Sri Lanka, but is also a wonderful human network. Although my time in Sri Lanka is limited, I hope to spend as much of it as I can supporting Embark."

Today, Embark is able to help more dogs because of volunteers like Claire. She has our best wishes as she works towards her goal of becoming a vet. Claire will be returning to America in June of this year but we hope she will always remain part of the Embark family.

**ROZANNE DE ZILWA** 

Rozanne De Zilwa joined the Embark team to travel out to Negombo and help out at our second Adoption Day held out of Colombo. She was moved by the people who gathered, with open arms and hearts, to embrace man's best friend.

"Amidst all the bustle of our day to day lives, full of family, work, studies, we all feel lonely sometimes and wish we had that one friend or soul mate that we know will listen and not judge, or just hang out and let us do all the talking or sobbing or whatever - I guess we all do have this feeling now and again - and I bet many people found their perfect match today...



We were at the Jetwing Blue car Park in Negambo today and it was so amazing to see the enthusiasm, the affection and the reactions of the people who came over to adopt. The program was due to start at 10.30 a.m. but I saw over six or seven people already carrying pups around and reserving them well in advance. Wow! Most of the pups were reserved or adopted VOLUNTEER within just an hour. The looks on the faces of the adopting families, the kids especially, was so touching.

Realizing that you were a part of a team that has put so much effort to change the life and destiny of a pooch, a living being who could easily have died on the streets, is the most satisfying and rewarding feeling. This feeling can never be found in our corporate work world or the big achievements we make in terms of money or riches.

I am so proud and happy to be a part of Embark and to help in the smallest way I can to save a life and change the destiny of an unloved or unwanted life."

Every Adoption Day draws large crowds of people: families that are looking to adopt, fosters trying to secure good homes for their pups and a host of other interested onlookers. The volunteers are the eyes and ears in the crowd while screening new adopters, keeping an eye on

the pups and helping to match them with a loving family. Embark values its volunteers on these days more than most others!



**EMBARK** 

Aimee Douglas is spending some time in Sri Lanka conducting research for a doctorate. Despite her workload, she manages to spare several hours each week to help needy street dogs.

Volunteering with Embark has been an enriching experience, to say the least. At February's Adoption Day, "I was amazed by the number of people who turned out to either assist with the adoption process or to adopt and take home a puppy of their own.

Caring for a puppy certainly presents its own challenges; looking after sick and wounded dogs, however, is truly not for the faint of heart, yet Embark field team members Rukshan and Nafais manage to make it look not only easy, but also fulfilling. The smiles on their faces as they carry out work that some people would find "too dirty" cleaning wounds, bathing injured dogs, washing down





kennels— suggest a true affection for and commitment to the animals whose lives they work hard to improve.

They are a true inspiration to me, and I look forward to seeing more of what they do (and to helping out where I can!) during the remainder of my time in Sri Lanka."

Embark finds Aimee just as inspirational as she finds the field team! She takes on each task cheerfully and with keen interest. She has even managed to learn enough Sinhala to help her get about alone, in just a few months.

A volunteer with an eagerness to learn and experience new things – gold!

It takes a special kind of person to become an Embark volunteer. One who cannot ignore the reality that at any given moment: there is a puppy in need of a home, a dog in need of a vaccine or a sick dog in need of treatment. They feel driven to selflessly give of their valuable time and energy to make a difference. They are the people for whom, Embark and the one million plus street dogs of Sri Lanka, will always be thankful.





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# news & events



### **DAMBULLA**

Embark and Jetwing Hotels Sri Lanka have partnered to implement a comprehensive and sustainable CNVR project in the Matale District. The project takes a holistic approach toward controlling the roaming canine population, eliminating rabies, and creating a safe environment for communities, dogs, and tourists. Initially targeting locations with concentrated numbers of roaming dogs like Sigiriya and Dambulla Temple, the project will then expand to cover Dambulla town and suburbs.





### **JAFFNA**

Responding to a request from the Jaffna Mayor's Office, the Jaffna project was launched in March 2014 with a sample dog count conducted by the Tsunami Animal-People Alliance (TAPA) and the Jaffna Public Health Depatment. Embark, Dogstar Foundation, TAPA, and the Jaffna Municipal Council are implementing the project, which will cover the entirety of the Jaffna Municipal Limits (population 90,300), and focus on surgical sterilisation, anti-rabies vaccination, treatment and education.













### KANDY / NEGOMBO

Embark's adoption programme scaled new heights in 2014, with Adoption Days organised in Kandy and Negombo! More than 40 pups found homes through the two events and Embark's message to adopt reached an even larger number of people. Volunteers were a source of strength at both Adoption Days, and have been instrumental in following up, monitoring and advising newly adopting families.















### **REHOMING**

A heart-warming experience for foster parents and everyone at Embark, several adult rescue dogs found great new homes in the last months. Families from a variety of backgrounds have come forward to adopt an adult dog, and have experienced the joy of adopting a rescued dog!

**GALLERY** 

# A my and my dog



































Rescued from the streets, fostered, treated, vaccinated, sterilized and soon re-homed, all these wonderful dogs were adopted from Embark and now live happy in their new homes!

If you have a doggie picture to send or a story to share, we would love to hear it! Write to us on embark@eodel.com with your stories and pictures, or visit us on facebook at www.facebook.com/embarklk and drop us a message!





































Embark works closely with three veterinary hospitals and the care given by them has been instrumental in improving the well-being of many a street dog. If you have any animalrelated queries that go beyond our line of work, here are their numbers.

#### PET VET CLINIC -**COLOMBO**

Contact: Rasha Yusuf E-mail: petvetclinic.mail@gmail.com Tel: 2599 799

#### **BEST CARE ANIMAL HOSPITAL - COLOMBO**

Contact: Thusira Soorasena E-mail: bestcareanimal@gmail.com

#### **RAJAGIRIYA VETERINARY CLINIC - COLOMBO**

Contact: S. S. Gallage E-mail: ssudarshanag@live.com Tel: 714 682 307

#### **CONTACT US**





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### **TIXFREE**

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**DOGS & CATS** 



CHICKEN

