

embark

MAGAZINE | VOLUME 3/2014

THE HISTORY OF
SRI LANKA'S
VERY OWN BREED;

THE SRI LANKAN RICE HOUND

SPECIAL FEATURE

STREET DOGS CLIMBING THE RANKS

THE JAFFNA ANIMAL
PROTECTION PROGRAM

BACK TO PUPPY SCHOOL



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STREET
POOCH

PLUS

NEWS AND EVENTS

FASHION PAGES

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CONTENTS

02

THE
SRI LANKAN
RICE HOUND



08

STREET DOGS
CLIMBING THE RANKS



10

BACK TO
PUPPY SCHOOL



12

THE JAFFNA
ANIMAL
PROTECTION
PROGRAM



16
FASHION
SKOOL KOOL

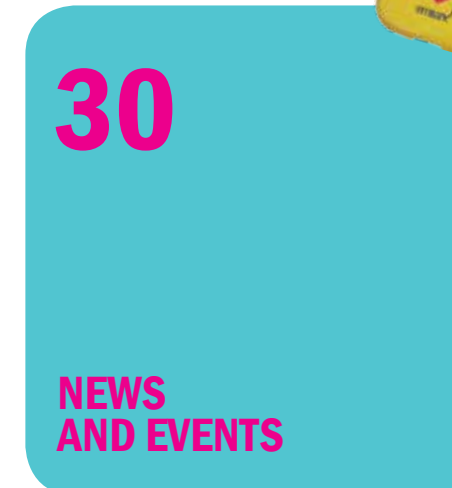


26
EMBARK
POP-UP STORE



30

NEWS
AND EVENTS

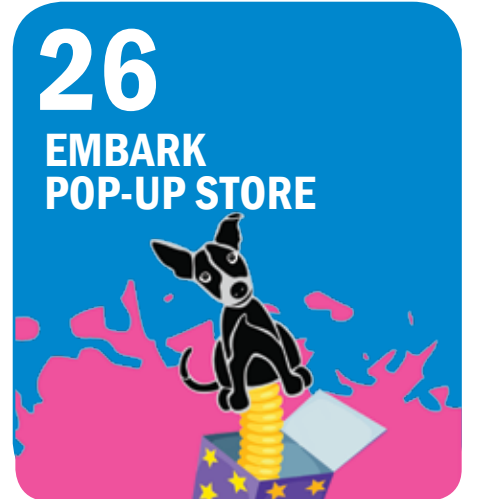


32

ME AND MY DOG



38
CONTACT





The Sri Lankan rice hound



THE SRI LANKAN STREET DOG we know today resides in a public car park, a temple or close to a roadside kadé (shop).

Some of us have welcomed street dogs into our homes, and they have become a part of our families. Whether loved or loathed, these dogs play a significant role in our community, and they have done so for longer than most of us are aware.

The first mention of a Sri Lankan dog is at the very beginning of Sri Lanka's documented history. The Mahavamsa states that one of the first things Prince Vijaya saw when he arrived in Sri Lanka, was a dog. When the Indian Prince Vijaya landed in Tambapanni in the 5th century BC with his seven hundred followers, he is said to have come across a dog, and deduced that 'only where there is a village, are dogs to be found'. The dog led the foreigner to his future wife, Kuveni, the queen of the Yakkhas. The Prince went on to be the first

King of Sri Lanka. King Vijaya's deduction proved to be as accurate centuries ago, as it is today; dogs and people choose to live in close proximity to each other. Dogs found a place beside their human companions and have remained there ever since.

The 'Sinhala Hound' or 'Sinhalese Hound' is a name given to the breed of dog we casually refer to as the 'Sri Lankan Street Dog' today.



Just sitting around. Why do you ask?

COLOMBO CITY, SRI LANKA

The street dogs in Colombo are wise and confident. How they survive among the chaos of traffic and people is more of a mystery. They fit in like they are actually part of the city. Whilst some street dogs do it particularly hard, others work out the system, find the right tea shops, the right corners and go about their daily business. This one for example, who lives close to the main railway station - is totally at home.

Brett Davies

www.flickr.com/people/photosightfaces

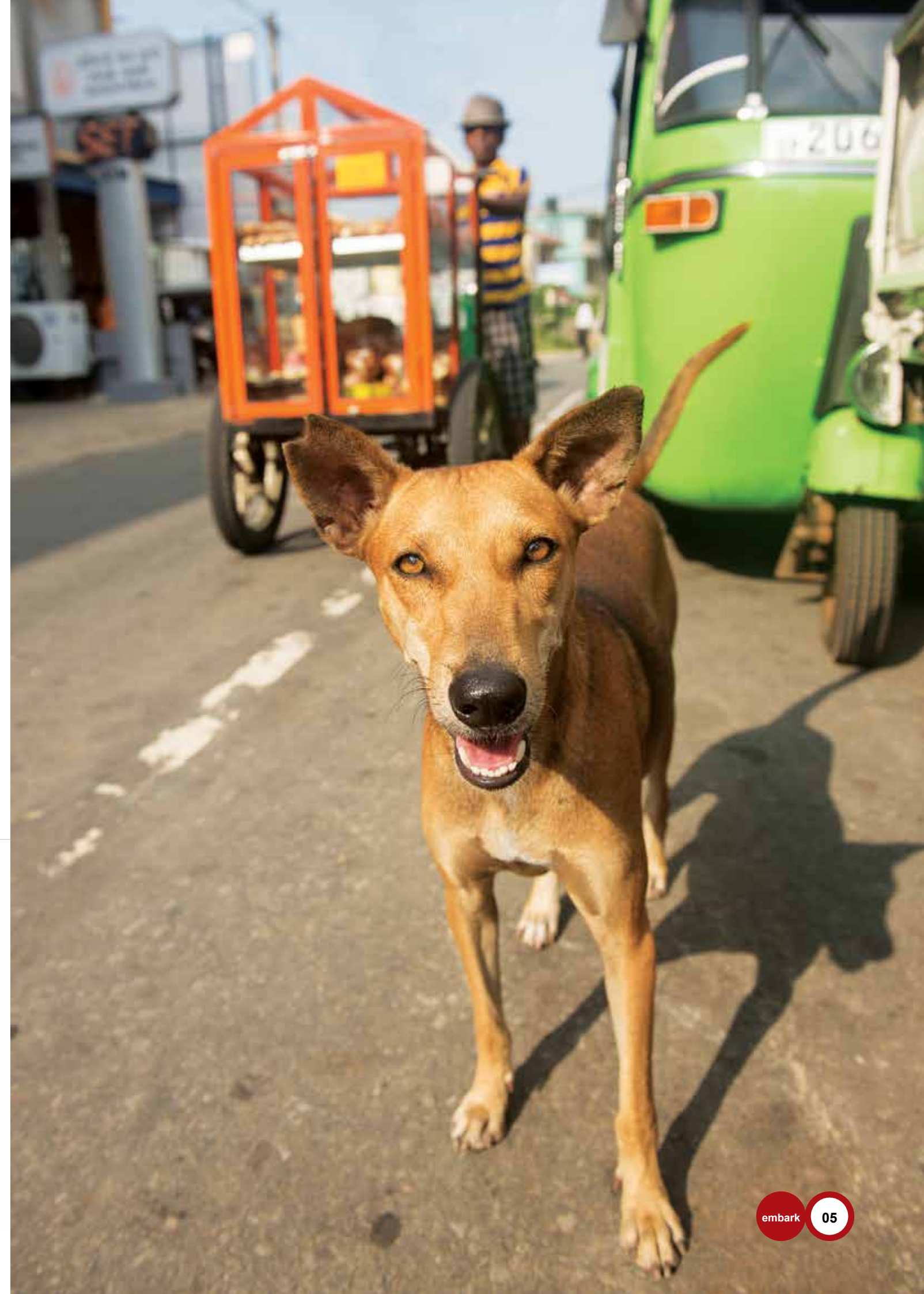


THE SRI LANKAN HOUND IS SIMILAR IN APPEARANCE TO THE KADAR DOG, THE NEW GUINEA DOG AND THE DINGO.

The origins of this breed have been traced to parts of India, where the Indian Pariah Dog or Indian Native Dog has been identified as the original Indian street dog. The Indian Native Dog's descendants have been found not only in Sri Lanka but across South Asia and beyond. The Sri Lankan Hound is similar in appearance to the Kadar Dog, the New Guinea Dog and the Dingo. In cases where native dogs have no mixed blood from European dogs or other breeds, their bone structure bears a strong resemblance to their centuries old ancestors' fossil remains.

The Island of Ceylon is believed to have been colonised by the Balangoda Man in 4500BC. The Balangoda Man has been identified as a group of Mesolithic hunter-gatherers, who lived in caves. The term Balangoda represents the area where artefacts of these dwellers were found. These artefacts indicated that they were the first anatomically modern inhabitants on the island. Archaeologists have found evidence to suggest that the Balangoda people may have kept domesticated dogs to assist them in hunting. Skeletal and fossilized remains of dogs were discovered while excavating pre-historic caves in Nilagala and Balangoda.

The Vedda people who descended from the Balangoda man also used the Sri Lankan Hound for hunting. There is further evidence to suggest that these animals were treated as highly prized companions – to the extent that dogs were given away with daughters at marriage, as a part of the dowry.



STREET POOCH BREEDS IN SRI LANKA



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STREET DOGS CLIMBING THE RANKS

THERE IS SPECIAL APPRECIATION FOR STREET DOGS
AMONG THE OFFICERS OF THE SECURITY FORCE
HEADQUARTERS, KILINCHCHI.

Here, the perfectly trained street dogs work proudly alongside their handlers to carry out surveillance and vigilance duties.

This project was launched to serve the community, for the benefit of civilians and soldiers alike. The 661 Brigade embarked on this project to train street dogs as working dogs, following several workshops on dog care, dog handling, and dog parades. Related preliminary arrangements were discussed with the support of the kennel section of the Commando Regiment of the Army.

Each squad consists of five guard dogs, stationed at each Battalion Headquarters; ten guard dogs at each company; along with one officer, two non-commissioned officers, dog handlers and helpers.

Embark's visit to the Pooneryn Army Camp gave us the opportunity to meet these remarkable dogs with their handlers, and see them in action. Private U. G. C. Bandara stated that his two-year-old, Toga, is just as capable as the 'fancy dogs in other camps', while Lance Corporal Dissanayake believes that the local street dogs are much better suited to the terrain in the region, than dogs brought from elsewhere.

We also heard Major General Sudantha Ranasinghe reminisce about his experiences with street dogs during the civil war, when each bunker would have a 'bunker-balla' (bunker-dog) that became a constant companion to the troops within.

At present, the Pooneryn Army Camp houses three hundred well trained street dogs that are deployed in the Kilinochchi region in various capacities - from accompanying sentry guards to scouting the area.



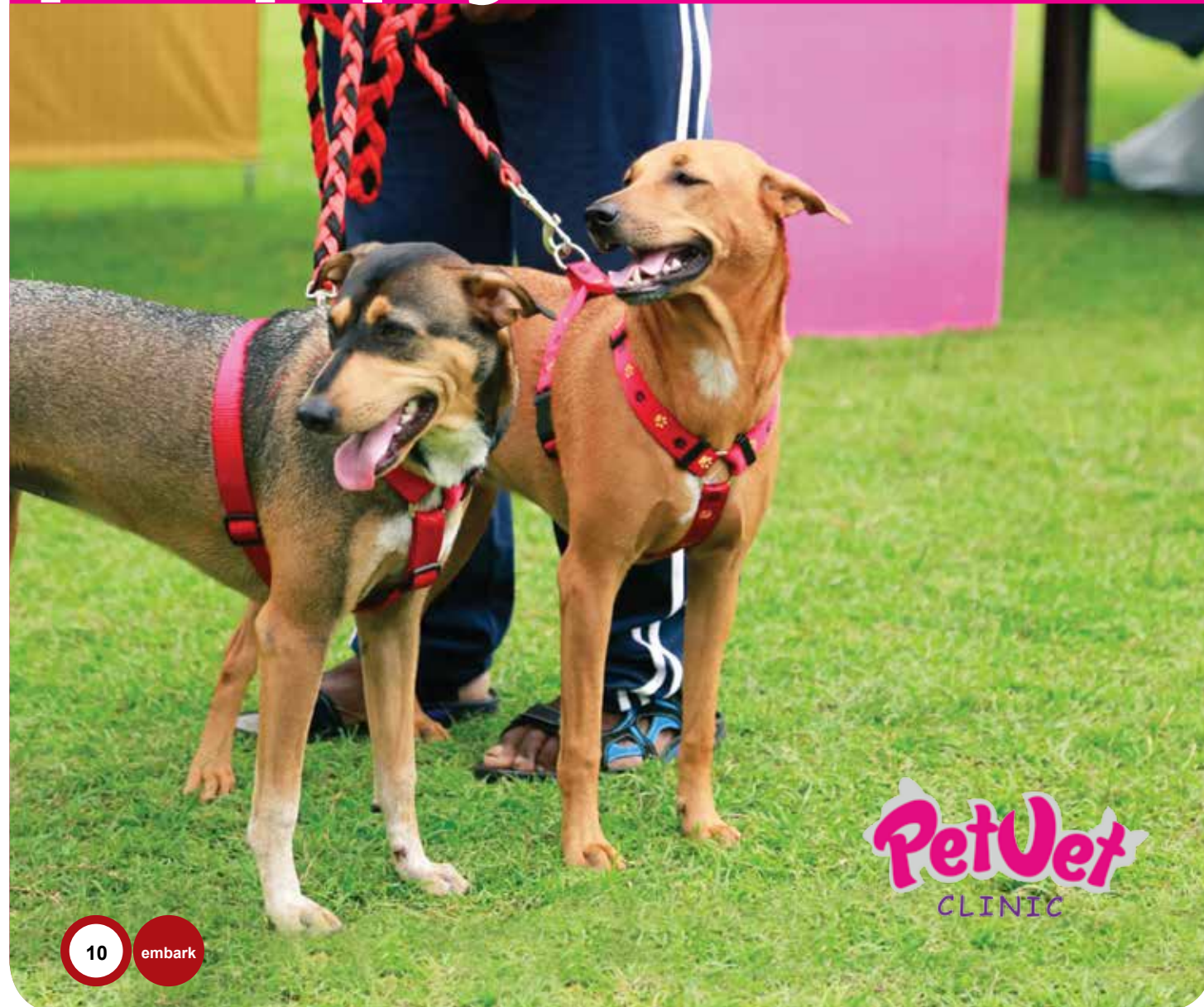
**UNDER THIS PROGRAM,
HUNDREDS OF STREET DOGS
WILL BE TRAINED AND USED TO
FORM COMMUNITY
DOG SQUADS.**

This is one example of how humans can, not just co-exist with dogs, but also live and work side by side with them on a daily basis. It was heartening to see the core beliefs of Embark shared by the camp's occupants; the dogs in the camp are truly being given a better life, with love, respect and a wonderful place to call home!



back to puppy school

Puppy training and socialization



PetVet
CLINIC

Any pup, whether a street pooch or pure bred, requires good quality socialization starting from a very young age of 6 – 8 weeks. From the very start all pups must be exposed to other animals, a variety of people, both adults and children and many variable environments and social situations that will all be part of its future life. This is critical for a normal stable development of temperament. Ensure all necessary vaccinations have been started and take the pup to as many safe but variable environments as possible but under supervision. A pup should never grow up with only your home and garden as his world. This him result in a scared dog any time he is taken out, such as to a vet. Also it will be a boring and uninspiring life for him. Dogs are very intelligent animals and need a fun and stimulating environment to be a really happy dog.



An outside trainer alone will not be effective as the puppy needs to listen to you and look to you for instruction. The puppy must bond with you not just the trainer.



If you have an older puppy that comes from an un-socialized background you then have to put in a well planned extra effort. If the puppy already has a temperament issue such as being extremely shy or afraid or aggressive you may need professional help in order to improve this. There is often a lot you can do to make things better, so don't just give up and ignore it.

In addition, all puppies should undergo basic obedience training; which includes learning to sit, lie down, stay, come when called and walk on leash nicely. If you really want to have fun, add on some tricks. Use lots of rewards (toys, happy voice, treats etc) and patient repetition. Training is a combination or balance between love and rewards with discipline. It is a teaching process. Always be consistent. It is much less confusing and easier for your pet if he knows what to expect. Your pet will be happiest if there is a clear and understandable routine in his life.

There are lots of good books and internet sites on how to train your pup. Almost any method which uses positive reinforcement, combined with your knowledge of your puppies personality and some common sense added in, will work. If you have a good professional trainer who is familiar with modern training methods to guide you that is even better. Nonetheless you should get directly involved in the training process. An outside trainer alone will not

be effective as the puppy needs to listen to you and look to you for instruction. The puppy must bond with you not just the trainer.

Your pet dog should know clearly that you and his human family are very much in control and in charge at all times. That way the dog can relax and enjoy life. If you make him feel that you are not in charge, then your pet will feel compelled to try and fulfill the role of leader and regulate your life. This is a very stressful thing for a dog because it is a role and responsibility that is too great for him to handle. This leads to an unhappy dog and unhappy owner as well as a poor pet person bond. A pet is a family member so teach him to be a well balanced, happy and responsible part of your family.

Dr. Nalinika Obeysekera
BSc. Wildlife, U C Davis, USA
BVSc (Hons), Sri Lanka.



THE JAFFNA ANIMAL PROTECTION PROGRAM



The Jaffna Animal Protection Program commenced in July, with the goal of vaccinating and sterilizing 3500 street dogs in the JMC area.

Jaffna, a thriving metropolis in the north, was devastated by thirty years of civil war. Prior to the war, it was the second most populated city in Sri Lanka (after Colombo), but many of its residents fled their homes as the unrest worsened. The Jaffna Municipal Council (JMC) is now looking to restore the city to its former glory. In this context, Embark was approached by the JMC to help eradicate Rabies and control the dog population in the area. This town's request has given Embark a unique opportunity to play a part in history.

This effort applies a comprehensive and sustainable approach which will reduce the local canine population, eradicate rabies and create a community of responsible pet owners within the Jaffna Municipal Area.

The estimated three year field program will be in conjunction with an education program which will feature presentations by a veterinarian, Embark and the local Public Health Inspector. The program will reach



The project will vaccinate and sterilize 3500 roaming dogs.



Catching nets are used to minimize stress on the dogs.



A successful sterilization— a dog awaits release after surgery.

school children at both primary and secondary levels. The students will learn about Rabies and how to avoid it, staying safe from dog bites and responsible pet ownership.

THE PRESS CONFERENCE

The Jaffna Animal Protection Program is being carried out as a joint effort by Dogstar Foundation, Tsunami Animal-People Alliance (TAPA) and Embark. A press conference was held to launch the program, with Otara Gunewardene, founder of Embark, and officials from the other organizations introducing the program to the local public.

THE PARTNERS

The Dogstar Foundation

This foundation, named after the star Sirius, was begun by Sam and Mark Green. Together with their team of veterinarians, they are on a Mission to transform animal welfare in Sri Lanka.

The Dogstar Foundation is based in Kegalle, and is a registered charity both in the UK and Sri Lanka. Its members do not simply work alongside a community, but live as part of the community and strive to bring about real change.



Otara Gunewardene, CEO of Odel PLC; Yogeswari Patkunarah, Mayor of Jaffna and Mark Green, Deputy Country Director of Dogstar Foundation; at the launch.

Since 2006, the foundation has carried out thousands of sterilisations, vaccinations and treatments on dogs and cats that live on the streets, are owned by poorer families or living in communities/ religious buildings, and being fed by local residents.

This organization has positioned itself as an advocate of these animals, while educating surrounding human communities on animal welfare.

Tsunami Animal People Alliance (TAPA), Sri Lanka

TAPA, which began as a relief effort following the Boxing Day tsunami of 2004, has remained committed to the humane and sustainable care of animals in Sri Lanka, even ten years later.

This locally registered charity's mission is to improve the welfare of the animals and people of Sri Lanka. It achieves this mission through spay/neuter and vaccination campaigns which humanely control the dog population to reduce the threat of rabies, dog bites and animal cruelty by those fearing rabies.

The Jaffna Municipal Council (JMC)

The JMC has played an active role in the project from its very inception. The JMC's support has come in several ways, from the many Jaffna-Colombo trips to the meals provided for the veterinarians at the field clinic. The local support has been truly inspiring, with animal handlers, veterinarians and other staff coming forward to assist with the clinics. The first clinic held in July, attracted many spectators eager to show their support.



In Country Director of Dogstar Foundation, Samantha Green, preps a dog for surgery.

Thus, the Jaffna Animal Protection Program is off to a promising start.

If you would like to follow the progress of the Jaffna Animal Protection Program, please visit our website www.embark.lk

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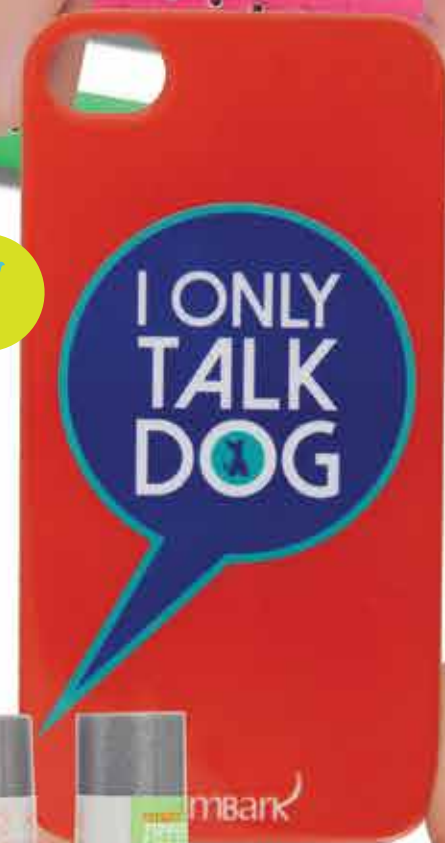
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Kids' PARADE

Children's Fashion Show

The children's talent and fashion show was held at the Colombo Swimming Club on the 2nd of August 2014 when Odel, as a longtime supporter of the Chitra Lane School for the Special Child were proud sponsors, providing clothes for the kiddies to model in with the added bonus of being able to take the clothes home after the show!

The Chitra Lane School was founded over 46 years ago, and having begun with just 2 children now includes as many as 200. The Chitra Lane Resource Center has an annual caseload of over 1500 children and The Chitra Lane Sheltered Workshop provides a caring environment for the intellectually impaired.



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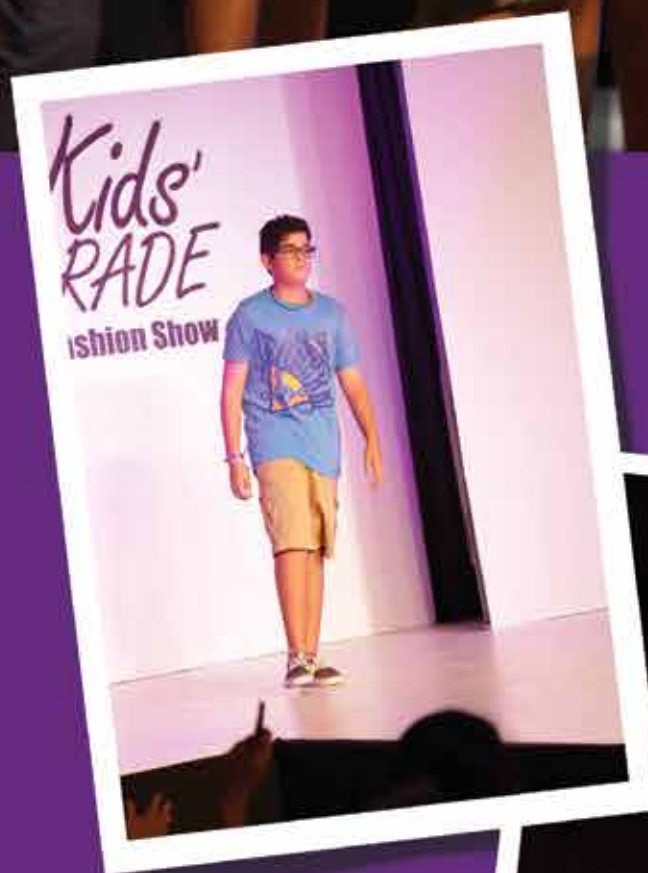
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WEEKLY NEWS







Kids' PARADE

Children's Fashion Show

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Kids' PARADE

Children's Fashion Show

emBark POP-UP



Embark the brand with a difference, has unveiled their novel pop-up store known as 'The Pashionable Zone' at Odel, Alexandra Place. The concept of pop-up stores involve a temporary installation to display and retail an exclusive range of merchandise coupled with an interactive and exciting experience – the Embark pop-up store offers just this and more!



With its inviting interior incorporating vibrant colour and cartoon images of its celebrated Brand Ambassador Niko, the space offers an extensive range of new products such as earphones, mobile phone covers and a brand new collection of its legendary Embark bottles along with a variety of 'back to school' items. In addition, a unique interactive display allows customers to view the latest in the world of Niko, Bandit, Rozzy and their pooch friends via video clips, magazines and features.

The merchandise celebrates 'Fashionable' people who are passionate about spreading the message of Embark and being part of the cause whilst being fashionable. The clothing range features bright hues, catchy slogans and endearing doggie motifs for the fashion forward individual passionate on spreading the message of kindness and contributing to the cause.

Embark's innovative and interactive pop-up store offers an unparalleled selection of merchandise coupled with a unique and fun shopping experience!

The merchandise celebrates 'Fashionable' people who are passionate about spreading the message of Embark and being part of the cause whilst being fashionable.



news & events

JULY



SPREAD THE KINDNESS!

The 'Kindness is Happiness' campaign was launched via radio and print media, to spread awareness about animal abuse, neglect and cruelty. This campaign appeals to the general compassionate nature of Sri Lankans, calling on people to stand together, be the voice of the voiceless and make a difference in the lives of animals around them. Through this initiative, we wish to share our vision of a world where all creatures coexist in harmony; and that this world can be created by kindness, love and compassion.

JULY



JAFFNA ANIMAL PROTECTION PROGRAM BEGINS...

The Jaffna Animal Protection Program got underway in July. The project was launched by Embark, together with Dogstar Foundation, Tsunami Animal-People Alliance (TAPA) and the Jaffna Municipal Council (JMC). The first clinic, held during the fourth week of July, saw 209 dogs vaccinated and sterilized in the JMC area. In addition, an education and awareness program was initiated at primary and secondary schools in the JMC area.

AUGUST



EMBARK VOLUNTEERS IN ACTION

'A Hand to Help a Paw', held on the 30th of August, was a fundraiser organized by the summer volunteers at Embark. On the day, Magic Box Mixup, Sam, Rav David, CC and Minoli rocked Odel!

The event also celebrated some of Embark's wonderful 'special needs' pooches including Randy, Molly, Ally, Widget, Loopy, Hope and others. The afternoon's activities included a tail-wagging auction, which turned out to be a great success.

ADULT DOG ADOPTION DAY

25 adult dogs joined us at Odel, Alexandra Place for an Adoption Day with a twist. This time we focused on just our adult dogs and gave them a chance to shine. Despite the lack of cute puppy yaps and little wagging tails, we ended the month on a high. Our adult dog adoption efforts continue in-store with a unique facility that allows you to visualize one of these lovely pooches in your very own home!



AUGUST



ADOPTION DAY AT K - ZONE, JA-ELA

Embark brought puppy love to Ja-Ela this month, with the area's first ever Adoption Day held at the Odel outlet at K-Zone. 7 lucky pups were the recipients - each of a loving home and family!

AUGUST

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Island Life!



ADAM'S PEAK
Photo By: James Hurst



DAMBULLA
Photo By: Dinouk Colombage



COLOMBO
Photo By: Shehan Peruma



GALLE
Photo By: Brett Davies



Island Life!



HIKKADUWA

Photo By: Brett Davies



KOTTE

Photo By: Shehan Peruma



KOSGODA

Photo By: James Hurst



MARAWILA

Photo By: Cl@udi



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 animal-related 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
Tel: 773 400 800

RAJAGIRIYA VETERINARY CLINIC - COLOMBO

Contact: S. S. Gallage
E-mail: ssudarshanag@live.com
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CONTACT US



Hotline
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General Inquiries
+94 114 625 700



E-mail
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O Tara*