

GOSAC:

Give Our Strays a Chance

We had the pleasure of meeting and interviewing a young, inspirational animal lover called Dean Morris, the creator of GOSAC. At the age of ten, Dean started GOSAC to try to raise awareness of adopting and donating to animal shelters. Now at age fifteen, he has spent the last five years working hard to build up the organisation's profile and raise awareness. He contacts and works with businesses to ask them to donate money or goods to help raise funds for animal shelters in need. We asked him a little about the organisation and what drives him.

What is GOSAC?

GOSAC is a way for me to promote animal welfare, raise funds for various animal shelters and rescue groups and raise awareness to 'adopt not shop' for pets. I go out to businesses to ask them to donate money, pet food, goods or items the shelters need for free. I attend various shows like the Kelmscott Fair or the UWA Open Day, often with animals for people to pet or adopt, and I hand out flyers to everyone. I also run a GOSAC Day at our local shopping centre with a kitten tent to encourage adoptions. It was supposed to be a one-off but was so popular people asked us to come back. At the last fair, we raised \$2000 in cash and tens of thousands worth of goods.

Why did you set up GOSAC?

Five years ago, I saw a picture online of a homeless dog cramped in a cage at a pound with a message to say that he was going to be euthanased today if he wasn't adopted. We went straight to the pound and saw the awful conditions there with dogs in small, cramped cages, and immediately adopted Hooch, the dog we saw online! We absolutely love him! At that time, I was in the GATE (Gifted and Talented Education) Program and we were learning about leadership and so it just inspired me to start GOSAC at that time to make a difference.

What is your proudest achievement?

I think it is simply just educating the public, seeing the best side of humanity and how much people do care, and succeeding in getting businesses to donate. Persistence really pays off and now I have some amazing supportive businesses who donate money or event prizes for GOSAC Day at Forest Lakes Forum. Companies like Better Pets and Gardens who gave us shopping trollies worth of goods, Flight Centre who generously give vouchers, Jesson Flowers and the very kind shopping centre manager at Forest Lakes Forum.



What are your goals for GOSAC now?

Just looking to expand the amount of people we make an impact on and to try to get more people to adopt not shop for a pet, and simply get more organisations on board.

What is a highlight for this year?

I have just been to Mongolia for a month with 16 kids and teachers from our school as part of an expedition with World Challenge. We visited remote communities and helped at schools by building paved areas and benches for children to gather on. We also taught English for a month and the highlight was seeing the kids and how much they wanted to learn. Twenty to 30 children turned up each day to English lessons during their holidays!

While I was away I was so grateful for the stable home I have where everything is available like freshwater on tap and food in the fridge. In Mongolia we had to walk for a kilometre to a stream to collect water, then boil and sterilise it which is a lot of work each day.

What does the next year hold for you with GOSAC?

I'm never sure as opportunities just come up out of the blue but we will continue with GOSAC Day on Saturday 11 May at Forest Lakes Forum – everyone is welcome to come along on the day!

To find out more about GOSAC or contact Dean visit www.gosac.info