

MEDIA RELEASE

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Companion Animal Network Australia announces new charity Ambassadors in mission to bring people and pets together



Leading animal welfare charity Companion Animal Network Australia (Australia CAN) is proud to announce **pet behaviourist and dog trainer Lara Shannon** and **media announcer and presenter John Deeks** as Ambassadors of the organisation in its mission to bring people and pets together.

Australia CAN (formerly Animal Welfare League Australia) promotes the human animal bond and responsible pet ownership through national campaigns, partnerships and initiatives. It also represents the companion animal welfare work of [six member agencies](#) that provide rescue, shelter, re-homing, fostering, health care and enrichment services to more than 50,000 animals every year.

Australia CAN CEO Trish Ennis said she is honoured to welcome the two ambassadors who are supporting the charity's mission in developing and promoting programs that deliver high welfare standards for companion animals, such as [Rent with Pets](#), [Pets in Aged Care](#) and [Pets in Business](#).

Australia CAN's Rent with Pets program works to decrease the number of pet surrenders due to archaic rental laws, whilst bringing landlords and tenants together. The organisation is also working with aged care experts to find ways of preserving the bond between people and pets in the aged care settings.

"Following the increase of pet ownership during the pandemic lockdowns and the isolation of our senior citizens, it's more important than ever to support pets in aged care settings as well as workplaces," said Trish.

"Lara and John spend their time and effort increasing the human-animal bond through building public awareness. They embody our values and are totally engaged to support our mission. Both John and Lara are massive talents, and I am honoured to have them join us."

Lara Shannon, pet behaviourist and dog trainer

A long-time animal welfare advocate, Ms Shannon is an author and the Presenter of Channel 10's [Pooches at Play](#) program which helps to promote responsible pet ownership and pet friendly lifestyles.

"Helping to reduce the amount of companion animals ending up in shelters and being needlessly euthanised is the overall goal for everything that I do," she said.

"Supporting a national organisation like Companion Animal Network Australia that can represent different state bodies is a great way to have a powerful and national impact."



Lara looks forward to working with Australia CAN's programs promoting responsible pet ownership and pets in aged care.

“The aged care is vitally important because people have to surrender their pets when they have to move into aged care facilities. It’s a massive reason why many pets are rehomed. Personally, I wouldn’t be able to cope if I had to go into care without my dog. I know the heartbreak even going into short term medical care can cause,” she said.

“People also need to take responsibility with their decision to get a dog and not give up on struggles without trying every avenue for help.”

John Deeks, media announcer and presenter

A veteran Channel 7 announcer and current presenter on [Your Live Choices](#) podcast, John feels a personal connection to Australia CAN as he has personally seen the positive effect animals bring to human lives, whether it be a family pet or a companion.



John grew up with many pets from guinea pigs to budgerigars and a gorgeous Tabby named Mum. Then came a 6-month-old Border Collie puppy who appeared on his front porch one day and became his faithful friend for many years, followed by a rescue dog from Australia CAN member Lort Smith Animal Hospital.

Today, John is loved by 13-year-old Shih Tzu named Daisy and a Siamese kitten called Simon.

“They are good friends and make wonderful companions for us and indeed for each other,” said John. “It has been scientifically proven that animals bring great benefit to our lives. I want to help raise awareness in my community and work in tandem with Australia CAN in their commitment to promote companion animals within the wider community.”

In a personal mission, John would like to help Australia CAN in the re-homing of animals within the senior community. “Loneliness as we know in the senior community is a major problem and I have personally seen the benefits a companion pet can bring,” he said.

John has also been the voice of JB Hi-Fi commercials for more than 20 years. JB Hi-Fi and staff support Australia CAN and its members through their Workplace Giving program. Visit our [website](#) for a list of all Australia CAN corporate sponsors.

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About Companion Animal Network Australia (Australia CAN)

Companion Animal Network Australia (Australia CAN) is a registered charity representing the companion animal welfare work of our six member agencies. We rally support to develop and promote programs that deliver high welfare standards for companion animals. Together, our members provide rescue, shelter, re-homing, fostering, health care and enrichment services to more than 50,000 animals every year. Through national campaigns, partnerships and initiatives, we celebrate the human-animal bond and promote responsible pet ownership. We use our national voice to campaign for the humane treatment of all companion animals and we rally support for programmes that deliver high welfare standards. To discover more, visit www.australiacan.org.au