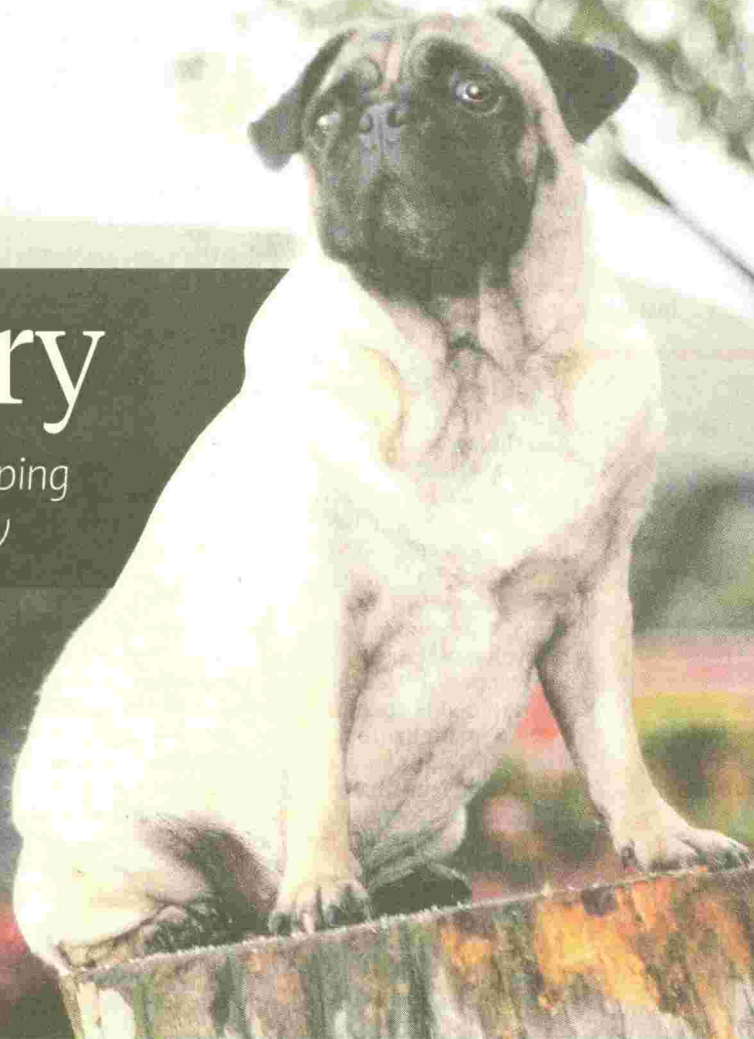


LIFE&TIMES **FAMILY**

A stray love story

Aneeta Sundararaj finds out how an NGO is helping to manage our stray animal population humanely



Tulip the dog.

DO you know that it's possible for you to end up with 67,000 dogs in six years if you do not spay or neuter a pair of fertile dogs? For cats, the number is larger—you can end up with 87,000 cats in six years.

"That is why," says Jean Liew, one of the core members of TNRM, "we're advocating spaying and neutering all your pets."

Trap, Neuter, Release and Manage is an NGO run by a group of volunteers. "We trap stray dogs and cats and neuter or spay them," explains Jean, 30. "Once that's done, we release them, back where we found them, or rehome them. Our aim is to manage the stray population humanely, efficiently and effectively."

TNRM started out as nothing more than two concerned individuals, Stuart Tan and Stewie Dee, who undertook the task of spaying/neutering stray dogs and cats. This was in 2012. By the end of last year, they'd formed this NGO and are now having a fundraiser and pet adoption drive to promote their cause.

While they welcome cash donations, TNRM is also looking for food, cat litter, cages, custom-made dog traps, stand fans, cement and a surgery table. One of the things happening during this fundraising event, scheduled for June 8 in Damansara Performing



TULIP

The Dog that Ate Nightmares

written by Quek Sue Yian
Illustrated by Khairul Azmir Shoib

Proceeds from the book sold at the fundraiser will go to charity.

Arts Centre, Kuala Lumpur, will be a birthday party for another dog, Tulip.

TNRM — Fundraiser and Pet Adoption Drive

Date: June 8
Time: 10am-6pm
Venue: Damansara Performing Arts Centre, H-01, Empire Damansara, Jalan PJJ 8/8, Damansara Perdana, PJ

to TNRM.

HAPPY ENDINGS

To date, one of the most successful TNRM projects carried out involved

what Jean calls the Damai Pack. There was a pack of dogs that used to dwell in the car park outside a Chinese Community Hall. There were six when TNRM took them in. But a few were pregnant. In the end, all 16 puppies of this pack were rehomed. Once all the dogs from the pack were spayed and neutered, they were returned to the car park from where they came. They are now being managed by volunteers from TNRM, with help from some of the members of the Chinese Community Centre.

"These people keep a watchful eye on the dogs," says Jean. "In case the council zeroes in on the dogs. It's very kind of them indeed."

The story doesn't end there, though. "There was one we named Brownie. We did find him a wonderful home. He was happy, but he would run away all the time. Then,



Trapping stray animals is full of adventure, but it can be a harrowing experience.

Jean Liew

one day, I decided to take him back to his pack. The moment the car door opened, he jumped out and the entire pack greeted him," says Jean. "Clearly, he belongs in the street."

Brownie is also the mascot for TNRM.

"We are not a shelter for stray

dogs and cats. We have no space for that," says Jean, who herself has seven dogs. "We're a transit centre. We hold the animals in transition for fasting and recovery before and after surgery prior to releasing them, or pending adoption. Three days for males and seven days for females."

Jean says that most times, there is opposition to spaying and neutering cats and dogs. "One of the strangest reasons was religion. One lady said it's against Buddhism. I'm Buddhist, but I've never heard of such a thing." That said, Jean admits that most times, when given such reasons, it's best not to argue.

Another success story is Smokey, the cat.

Recalls Jean: "He was rescued near Jalan Ipoh when he was a kitten.

He was caged all the time. We couldn't bear to know that he would spend his whole life in a cage. Once we decided to find

him a home, we sent out a request

and Jentia responded to our ad almost instantaneously. We sent him to his new home. Today, he gets to roam freely. No more cages for Smokey."

Then there's Millie who went from being caged to lounging on a bed.

Pengkasian Kucing dan Anjing

Beribu-ribu ekor haiwan peliharaan melarat di jalan. Anda boleh membantu mengelakkan kelahiran anak haiwan yang tidak diperlukan. Sila mandulkan atau kaikan anjing dan kucing anda – inilah cara yang paling berperikemanusiaan.

“Bahawa mengembiri binatang kesayangan (seperti kucing atau anjing) hukumnya adalah diharamkan dengan sebab-sebab tertentu iaitu bagi menjaga masalah ammah.”

—Sumber
Jabatan Kemaian Islam Malaysia

Tuisyen Kemaian Halalan Kibangsaan Malaysia
Majlis Nasional Anjal Wala Farkhan (MNAWF)

For more information, please contact Tel: 03-4043 3113 Email: mnaawf@mnaawf.org.my Website: www.mnaawf.org.my

Elakkan kelahiran anak anjing / anak kucing yang tidak diperlukan

Spaying and neutering your pets is the most humane thing to do and is endorsed by JAKIM.



Millie before (left) and after her adoption.

NOBLE AIM

Trapping stray animals is full of adventure, but it can be a harrowing experience. “We do it knowing the risks involved,” says Jean. “We’ve learnt to read the signs. Some of these dogs are scared or cornered. They’ve had zero human contact. To some, the only humans they’ve known are dog catchers and, therefore, humans are evil. We just have to be patient and not stupid about it. We trap them in a humane way. This may be by spiking their food, using huge nets, etc. We don’t use a noose around them and pull them until they bleed.”

One of the saddest tales Jean tells is the one that happened a couple of weeks ago. “We were told about

a mother and her pups in a residential area. It was night when we went to this abandoned bungalow. We crawled through the rubbish chute. It was like a haunted house. When the mother sensed we were there, she dashed away. But the puppies saw us and I was about to take a step to collect them when another volunteer shouted for me to stop. When we looked down, we saw the carcass of another puppy. We suspect cannibalism — these dogs were so hungry that they’d usually eat the puppy. It was really unusual.”

Ultimately, the work that the volunteers at TNRM do can be summarised in these simple words by Jean: “We couldn’t be happier than to see the animals we’ve helped being well taken care of.”



Teach children road safety as a family.

Road safety for children

WITH increased traffic on the roads, road safety education must start early in childhood. Now that the school holidays are here, it’s time to hit the roads!

Bringing children outdoors gives them some fresh air and the chance to release pent-up energy. It also provides them with valuable exposure to the world outside.

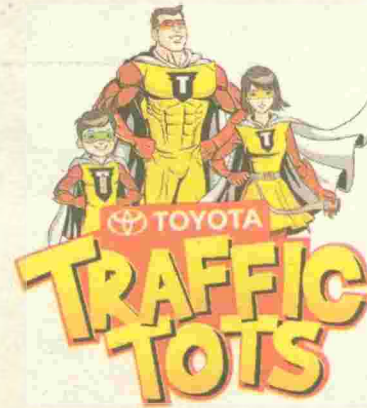
With tech addiction becoming an increasing worry, having your children outdoors also gets them off their gadgets and doing some physical activities.

For most families, this would mean encouraging the children to play outside, whether for a game of football at the neighbourhood field, badminton or cycling in the park. Many would also be travelling back to their hometowns so that the children can enjoy some quality time with grandparents and relatives.

With so much to look forward to, it is easy to forget the one thing that matters most: Safety. When we let our guards down, even for a few seconds, accidents can happen.

Safety must thus be ingrained in children from young so that they will practise caution when on the road whether as pedestrians or passengers in a vehicle.

This is the key message in the Toyota Traffic Tots, part of UMW Toyota Motor’s CSR campaign that started off as the Road Safety Campaign about a decade ago. Since then, the campaign has evolved



into a full-fledged traffic safety programme involving all Smart Readers Kids centres nationwide. Initially targeted at pre-school children, it is now being extended to 10 private schools due to popular demand.

“We believe that road safety must be taught as early as possible,” says Datuk Ismet Suki, president of UMW Toyota Motor. “Toyota Traffic Tots provides lessons on road safety in a

fun and engaging way so that children can relate to the messages being taught.”

The lessons are divided into two categories — pedestrian safety and passenger safety. Using flashcards, songs and role play, children learn about stop, look, go, using traffic lights or safe crossings, buckling up in a vehicle, using safety doors, walking against traffic and more.

The bottom-line is that parents must remember they are role models, he stresses. “What they learn at school is only a fraction of their daily lives. Children learn best by watching, listening and following their parents’ examples,” says Ismet.

Danger lurks everywhere, but practising safety measures on the road will greatly reduce the risk of accidents. This school holidays, drill into your children that safety must be their first priority in every activity outside the house. Have a happy holiday!



Show that you take safety seriously.

TRAFFIC TIPS FOR TOTS

HOW do we talk to children about road safety? Here are some tips:

- Walk the talk! Show that you, too, take safety seriously by not texting while driving, buckling up, respecting traffic signs and keeping within speed limits.
- Age matters. Use age-appropriate language that your child can understand.
- Keep it simple. Start by pointing out traffic signals and discussing what they mean. Older children can be quizzed on common

traffic offences on the roads such as jaywalking, beating traffic lights, not using pedestrian walking, etc.

- Make it a game. On a rainy day, make cars and trucks out of big cardboard and get your child to “drive” them.
- Be vigilant. Always hold your child’s hand when walking on the streets as drivers in big vehicles may not see your child due to his/her small size.
- Play safe. With play areas lacking in most residential areas, many children play or cycle on the streets in the evenings. Instruct them to stay in groups and ensure there are sufficient road humps to slow down

oncoming vehicles.

- Engage their attention. Use computer or mobile phone games to teach them important facts, such as giving way to heavy vehicles because they cannot stop fast enough due to their size and weight, or never stand behind a vehicle where the driver cannot see them.
- Practise ABC (Always Be Careful). Road accidents do happen, but being careful will go a long way in keeping us safe! This educational series is brought to you by Toyota Traffic Tots.