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WORLD ANIMAL DAY - October 4

Pet owners throughout the world will be celebrating on October 4th - World Animal Day, the feast day of the Patron Saint of all animals - St. Francis of Assisi.

St Francis, born in 1182 in Assisi, Italy, was the wealthy son of a cloth merchant. In 1206 he rejected all his worldly goods and founded the order of the Franciscan Monks. He loved all God's creatures and called animals his brothers and sisters and it is this love and respect which is celebrated on his Feast Day.

In Rome on World Animal Day, stray dogs are temporarily spared from the city's dog catchers and offered free bones from the butcher!

In Australia, World Animal Day has been set aside to recognise the important role pets play in the everyday lives of millions of Australians.

Over 64% of Australian households have a companion animal which makes Australia one of the most animal-loving nations in the world.

Research has shown that owning a pet is beneficial to health with pet owners living happier less stressed lives than people who do not include a pet in their lifestyle.

The objectives of World Animal Day celebrations are to highlight the enjoyable aspects of pet ownership and to publicly recognise the important contribution animals make to society, yet at the same time enable groups associated with animals to unite in the promotion of responsible ownership.

Many schools throughout the country will be holding a Blessing of the Animals in conjunction with the Pet Week activities co-ordinated by the Australian Veterinary Association. Pet Week will run from 2nd - 6th October in all States except W.A and Northern Territory when it will be held between 9th and 13th October.

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