

The past month was a whirlwind and it is a relief to have got through it. It was an amazingly rewarding month, which allowed me to catch up with many friends, make new ones and feel proud about what I have achieved. It is wonderful to realise that through your actions you have made impact on others. And while my ego has been stroked with lots of lovely comments coming my way it is grounding to remember why it is I do what I do.

A few weeks back the talk I delivered at TEDx Canberra in early October was posted onto YouTube by the event organisers and I have since been showered in kind compliments and congratulatory messages. Admittedly, I was quite nervous about seeing it as I could not remember what I said and only had the reaction of those present to go on. The reaction from those in attendance had been positive, though apparently I upset some, not because I described unpleasant practices, but because they thought I presented a view that didn't give enough "balance" to the agricultural industry. I'm unsure how much more balanced I could have been when I was only relying on irrefutable facts ... perhaps I made these nameless people uncomfortable? My talk basically followed the path of Outrage, Hope, Action - which is a common engagement tool used by many social change organisations and indeed the model we use at Amnesty International. When the video went up I had wanted to watch it alone but as fate dictated I was in Melbourne at the time it went live, attending a meeting with my Amnesty colleagues from across the country so we crowded around a laptop and watched it together one night. It was a great experience as I felt hands of support on my shoulder throughout and enjoyed a round of congratulatory hugs afterwards. You can view the clip by visiting YouTube and typing in Bede Carmody TEDx Canberra and it should bring up the clip called "A

bird they call dinner".



The Living Green and Cruelty Free Festivals have also come and gone and at both I delivered a presentation entitled "For The Boys", which focused on the plight of the most loathed 'farm animal' of all - the rooster. The talk aimed at trying to enlighten people about roosters as well as giving them some simple tips as to how they can

help some, even if they live in suburbia - that is by vocally speaking out against school hatching projects, which is one way many roosters come into existence in the urban environment.

Unsurprisingly at about the same time, a new guy arrived at the sanctuary, Gerald (pictured left), who is the result of one of these schemes. He was born in a classroom as part of a hatching project and was adopted along with another chick by a family but when he began to crow the family needed to find him a new home. As is usually the case the only people willing to take him were those interested in taking him "for the pot", which horrified the family.

Over the next few weeks Gerald is going to be introduced to the seven youngsters who arrived from another hatching project back in September. They are quickly growing into gorgeous guys and now beginning to enjoy the outdoor experience, albeit behind the safety of a covered run as they are still quite small.

This month started with a lovely surprise as I learnt that A Poultry Place was a finalist in the Vegan of the Year awards in the Outstanding Animal Rescue/Animal Rights Organisation category. I have no idea who nominated us, and although we didn't win, the nomination itself was a win.

November 13 marked four months since five broiler bubs (below left) arrived. The five - three hens and two roosters - have already lived three-times longer than most of their kin, as broilers are usually killed for human consumption between 5-7 weeks of age. They are all giants, compared to the other residents and so far coping with the heat. Thankfully, none have yet displayed any mobility issues which usually results from the way they have been bred to be "meaty" birds which sees their infant skeletons unable to cope with all the extra weight.



The weekend just gone has seen the annual shearing task completed. This year it happened a little later than usual due to October being so hectic. We all seemed to have survived okay including Katie (above right), who at 12-years-old is almost completely blind and the last of the five original lambs I adopted back in 2002. The fact that it rained heavily the evening after the shearing was done and the following day was windy, meant I kept the mob locked into their smaller paddock, where their shed is, to protect them from the elements. Of course they weren't too pleased about being confined to the smaller space but didn't seem to mind the special diet of fruit tree clippings and meadow hay I provided them with during the time. ●

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