



Mutt to the rescue of Kowie canines

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A HIGH-FLYING Cape Town mongrel who has clocked up more than 300 000km since he was rescued from a dog pound seven years ago is visiting Port Alfred to try to save other condemned canines.

Living on borrowed time in a concrete cell at the Cape of Good Hope SPCA, Oscar was just one day away from being dispatched to

AHOUND AHOY: Oscar has been around the world visiting animal shelters

Picture: SUPPLIED

hound heaven by lethal injection when former professional golfer Joanne Lefson visited the inmates on “doggie death row”.

“It was love at first sight,” she explained yesterday.

Since his rescue, the globe trotting mutt – who co-authored a book with Lefson called *Ahound the World* – has become the poster boy for discarded dogs the world over.

With more frequent flyer miles under the collar than most humans, Oscar patiently sits next to Lefson on planes for hours on end – rather than being abandoned to a box in the hold with the cargo.

“He never goes to the toilet on a

flight ... even if we are in the air for 15 hours,” Lefson explained.

However, “he does lift a leg at every landmark he visits around the world”, she added.

From the Great Wall of China to the Eiffel Tower, the Himalayas, Europe and India, Oscar has marked his territory on five continents and even been arrested for taking a dip in Italy’s famous Trevi Fountain.

“I sold my house to fund the world tour to promote dog adoption,” Lefson said.

Inspired by Oscar’s rescue and subsequent adventures, Port Alfred dog lover Sally Greasley in-

vised the pooch and his owner to the seaside resort for a gala dinner tomorrow night to raise funds for the cash-strapped local SPCA.

More than 115 people will go to the party, having bought tickets costing R150 to wine and dine with Oscar, while local businesses have chipped in to keep costs down.

“The local SPCA does fantastic work in our small town, and they are now totally dependent on the locals raising funds so that they can continue their mandate – educating the local population about the care of their animals, and rescuing abandoned and maltreated animals,” said Greasley.

Sunshine Coast SPCA chair Rudene Gerber said: “It is touch-and-go every month ... we are very grateful that Oscar and Joanne are coming to help us.”

Between visits to more than 20 000 “inmates” at more than 65 shelters around the world, Oscar has also fished for piranha on the Amazon, gone hang-gliding in Rio, met lions at the Masai Mara, and even found time to tie the knot in Las Vegas with Lefson.

“We got to Vegas on our world tour and realised we were both single ... ‘Elvis’ married us to promote the fact that dog adoption is until death do us part,” she said.