

Big barbie guests

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A picnic where the dogs have the weight advantage might sound fraught, but a patient Newfoundland should leave your sandwiches alone.

The Wellington branch of the New Zealand Newfoundland Club held its annual picnic at Queen Elizabeth Park in Paekakariki last month.

Among those weighing in for Porirua was Amber Malay-Cooper, 5, from Whitby, formidably flanked by her Newfoundlands Morton, 11 and Vega 4.

Owner Janice Malay says the family and both dogs moved to New Zealand from Maine, America, last April.

"We rented an RV, drove across to LA, then quarantined them for a month," she says.

"We couldn't leave them – they are as much as part of the family as anyone."

She says the Newfoundland



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club really helped them to get to know people, but the dogs are a social boost as well.

"We meet people just walking the dogs, and everyone is so friendly here."

Adding to the mix was the Graeff family from Paremata with Oscar, a two-year old St Bernard, and Clifford, a one-year-old Newfoundland.

Anya Graeff, 9, says they had Clifford first but felt guilty be-

cause he was lonely.

"So we got Oscar on Trade Me – he came from Christchurch."

Branch committee member Netta Cooper, Lower Hutt, says Wellington is almost a "rehouse city" for Newfoundlands, or "Newfs".

Many owners acquire Newfoundlands from a prior owner who no longer wants the dog, or from cases of neglect, she says.

"Looking at our records, for every Newf that people have bought [from a breeder], three are rehoused."

1. SQUASH: Newfoundlands Morton (left) and Vega just make room for family member Amber Malay-Cooper, from Whitby.

2. PARTY GOER: Kayce, 8, from Whitby, waits to be introduced to the crowd.

3. CHUMS: Anya Graeff, 9, from Paremata, is dangerously close to lick from Oscar the St Bernard (left), and Clifford the Newfoundland.

Photo: Andrew Bonallack



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