

## Pets' pals show sign of support



**ANIMAL AID:** Jackson Brown, 11, with Poppy, and his petition. **Picture:** Philip Norrish.

### Emma Pappalardo

ANIMAL lovers have put pen to paper to show their mutual disgust of animal cruelty and support for those fighting against it.

The RSPCA, with the help of its puppies and children from Algester Club Scouts, handed over wheelbarrows of signatures to BLEATS (Brisbane Lawyers Educating and Advocating Tougher Sentences) outside Brisbane's Supreme Court yesterday.

The Justice for Animals campaign — a collaboration between the RSPCA and BLEATS — was launched outside the courts, but began on May 27 with the aim of gaining public support for animal justice.

So far, 2000 volunteers from the RSPCA have collected 13,000 signatures from people pledging support for

BLEATS, as well as \$500,000 in donations towards the campaign.

BLEATS members offer their legal services to the RSPCA by acting as advocates for higher sentencing in animal law cases, as a way of breaking the cycle that uses precedent law for sentencing.

One of its founders, Tracy Lynne Geysen, was horrified when she saw a dog hung from a tree reported on the news.

"I was disgusted by what I saw and couldn't sleep that night. I thought 'what can we do to change this?'" she said.

Ms Geysen, a solicitor, joined forces with work colleagues who were equally concerned about the common issue of animal cruelty.

BLEATS members include about 80 solicitors, more than 50 barristers, and 60 legal administrative staff.