History of the AWLA

Since 1946, the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria has been a resource for our community and a shelter for homeless animals. Through adoptions, spay and neuter assistance, education and community service and outreach, the AWLA plays a key role in promoting responsible pet care across Northern Virginia. The AWLA has contracted with the City of Alexandria to provide animal care, control and sheltering services since 1989. As part of our contract with the city, we operate the Vola Lawson Animal Shelter, an open-admission facility accepting any and all animals brought to us from within the jurisdiction. Our goal is to provide care to animals in need across our community.

We shelter nearly 2000 animals per year, including dogs, cats, rabbits, guinea pigs, birds, iguanas and even chinchillas. Our specially-trained staff also works with local rehabbers to assist area wildlife who have been injured or are in distress, with the ultimate goal of releasing them back into their natural habitat or transferring them to licensed wildlife rehabilitation centers for care and eventual release.

The AWLA has a vibrant volunteer corps of hundreds of animal lovers who support our full and part-time staff. AWLA staff and volunteers demonstrate that love and compassion are just as important as food and water for the animals in our care.

Learn more about our history “Born 70 Years Ago”.