animal welfare manual welfare manual

SUMMER 2017

Aiding in the Prosecution of Animal Abuse and Neglect Cases

Missy, a one-year-old Labrador mix, needed the animal lovers of the City of Alexandria to rescue her—and they did. On March 6, 2017, several neighbors in the City of Alexandria witnessed a man yelling and swinging a dog by her collar into a telephone pole and a wooden privacy fence. They called the City of Alexandria Department of Emergency Communications, which dispatched the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria's (AWLA) Animal Services and the City of Alexandria Police Department. AWLA's Chief of Animal Services Brian Rees immediately responded. Alexandria Police was already on the scene, and APD Officer A. Bauman placed Missy into the safety of her patrol vehicle and initiated an investigation. Rees took Missy to AWLA Animal Champion VCA Alexandria Animal Hospital on Duke Street, where she was examined by Dr. Andrew Ayre. He found that Missy had bruising on her belly consistent with blunt-force trauma, many cuts on her legs and that the nails on her hind feet were shaved to the quick and bleeding. AWLA's Animal Services charged the owner with Animal Cruelty 3.2-6570.

AWLA cared for Missy at the shelter while she healed





from her physical and emotional trauma. We petitioned the Alexandria District Court, and on April 11, 2017, we were awarded ownership of Missy to the AWLA, which meant that we were then able to adopt Missy into a new, loving home!

The criminal trial for Missy's case was held on June 26, 2017. Animal Services Chief Rees, along with attorneys from the Commonwealth's Attorney's Office, the APD officers who responded, Dr. Ayre and all of the witnesses from that day appeared to testify in court. Missy's abuser pleaded guilty and agreed to 90 days in jail (86 days suspended), no ownership of animals for the rest of his life and two years probation.

We see this sentence as a major step forward in the seriousness in which the City of Alexandria and the Commonwealth of Virginia are taking animal abuse and neglect cases like Missy's. In many (continued on page 7)

Animal Welfare

4101 Eisenhower Avenue Alexandria, Virginia 22304 703-746-4774 EIN 54-0796610 CFC 92767 | United Way 8372 AlexandriaAnimals.org

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Hours of Operation

Monday 9:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m. Tuesday 9:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m. Wednesday CLOSED Thursday 9:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m. Friday 9:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m. Saturday 12:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m. Sunday 12:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.

Adoptable animals are available for viewing beginning at noon and online at AlexandriaAnimals.org.

Congratulations to ZOEY, Alexandria's 2018 Animal of the Year, for winning the AWLA's "Click Your Pick" pet photo contest, which raised more than \$60,000 for the second consecutive year! Look for

Zoey's sweet countenance on the cover of the AWLA's 2018 Calendar, available for purchase in October. Thank you to all participants in the pet photo contest for your continued support of Alexandria's Animals!

From the desk of Megan Webb



Megan Webb cuddling Pinkie Pie, one of Kalliope's puppies (see page 7).

I've been working in the animal shelter field for over 15 years, and some of the most difficult situations I've encountered involve caring for an animal after the owner has died. These animals suffer from the loss of their person, their environment and routine. They have often experienced a chaotic scene where emergency personnel have entered their home and may have taken their owner away—and then the animals are captured by strangers in a whirlwind of activity. They are often so upset that they either "shut down" or act out with aggression. These animals have come from homes where they were loved and comfortable,

and no matter how much attention we give them, the shelter environment just cannot compare. Often, their owners were seniors, and the animals who come to us are seniors as well. They may have special medical, dietary or behavioral needs about which we have no information, and we must start from square one.

For years, I have imagined what we could do if we had had the opportunity to talk with these animals' owners before they died. This has been the genesis of AWLA's new program—"A Plan for Pets." We are educating pet owners about critical factors to consider when planning for the care of their pet in the event that they die or can no longer provide that care. City of Alexandria residents can also enroll their pet in the program to enter the pet's information and record their own wishes in our database, for use if Animal Services is called to help the pet. There are of course legal intricacies involved in creating "A Plan for Pets," and I am so grateful to our new board member, estate planning attorney Rachel Baer, who has helped develop the essential documents for the program. For example, she helped to craft the program's "Transfer on Death" form that allows pet owners to grant the AWLA immediate custody of their pet upon their death. Sadly, many animals wait in legal limbo at the

shelter after their owner dies while we try to determine if anyone is claiming ownership of the animal. This "Transfer on Death" form will allow us to immediately "own" the animal and adopt or foster him or her, reducing the time the animal must stay in the shelter.

The program has already made a difference. For example, you'll read in this issue about one pet owner who participated in the program while she was in hospice care. She was able to give us essen-

tial details about each of her four cats and sign a "Transfer on Death" form for each of them. When she died, everything had been planned, and we were able to have

her cats adopted without having to board them at the shelter for even one night.

At the AWLA, we believe in the positive impact animals can have on our lives and that our pets are truly members of our family. We are excited to encourage pet owners to plan for the care of their pets like they plan for the care of a child.



Aslan has been adopted through "A Plan for Pets."









Left to right: Their former owner can be at peace knowing that Aslan, Phineas, Church and Toulouse are thriving in their new homes.

A Plan for Pets

Animal Welfare League of Alexandria

*Here's the Plan!"

EDUCATE ... yourself and develop a plan! In creating a plan for your pets, it helps to become familiar with the resources and strategies available for handling an unforeseen personal emergency. The first step in developing a plan is to review this information and decide what your next steps will be, in consultation with your loved ones and professional advisors. You can learn about available resources and what to do next, including the process of naming emergency caretakers and setting up a care fund for your pets at at AlexandriaAnimals.org/A-Plan-for-Pets. A checklist is also provided later in this publication to help you get started.

ENGAGE... us with your plan! City of Alexandria pet owners can engage the help of Animal Services to ensure that their animals are recorded and the owners' wishes are on file by registering them at the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria (AWLA). Registration does not mean that the AWLA will take possession of a pet if something happens—it is simply a method of compiling information about owners and their pets so that it is easily accessible to AWLA Animal Services in an emergency. Wallet cards and window stickers are provided to City residents by the AWLA so that emergency responders know immediately how to proceed. Should AWLA become involved with an emergency situation, best attempts will be made to follow an owner's wishes using all information in our database pertaining to care and chosen emergency caretakers for registered pets. If the owner passes away, the AWLA will attempt to honor any instructions regarding care and placement.

ENTRUST your pets to us. The AWLA is committed to the well-being of all of Alexandria's Animals. If a City of Alexandria owner wishes to ensure that the AWLA is entrusted with the perpetual care and placement of a pet, a transfer agreement must be completed and filed with the AWLA naming the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria as the legal guardian of a pet in the event of an owner's death. These arrangements are handled on an individual basis. Every attempt will be made to honor an owner's wishes, but decisions regarding a pet's future will ultimately be made in the best interest of the animal.

READY to make an appointment? Contact the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria to schedule an appointment at 703-746-5680 or email planforpets@ AlexandriaAnimals.org.

"A Plan for Pets" Helps Four of Alexandria's Animals

Four cats named Aslan, Church, Phineas, and Toulouse were the first animals to benefit from the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria's "A Plan for Pets," program. While the owner of the cats valued having her cherished pets around her while in home hospice care, she worried about what would happen to them after she died. Through "A Plan for Pets," the AWLA was able to eliminate this concern, working with the owner to learn about her cats' behaviors. personalities, medical histories and special needs and scheduling updated veterinary exams. The owner also filled out a "Transfer on Death" form for each cat, so that upon her passing, the cats would become the legal property of the AWLA.

Without "A Plan for Pets," AWLA Animal Services officers would likely have been called after the owner's death to catch the cats—a very stressful experience for the felines. The cats would have been brought to the shelter and placed in separate cages while our staff pieced together their medical and behavioral needs from observations and examinations over time. They probably would have been in holding for many weeks while the next of kin was determined. (Pets are considered property subject to estate law upon death). (continued)

Making Pet Microchips More Effective

A microchip is a small capsule of electronic circuitry about the size of a grain of rice that can be easily injected under a pet's skin by a veterinary professional. Each microchip transmits a unique identification number that can be read with a microchip scanner and can be used to look up the pet owner's contact information; countless lost pets have been reunited with their owners using this technology.

The AWLA recently offered microchip scanning at two community events, revealing critical issues pet owners should be aware of when using this technology. Of the 64 dogs scanned at these events, 43 were confirmed to be microchipped as their owners thought. Three of the dogs had microchips that were extremely difficult to find, one had a chip that could not be located and one had a chip with a number that could not be traced. Fourteen had chips that their owners were not aware of and therefore had not kept their contact information up to date in the microchip registry.

Here are some common issues with microchipping technology—and how best to handle them:

Issue: Animal has a microchip but it is not found when the animal is scanned.

Solution: Microchips are inserted at the top of the neck in dogs and cats; however, as animals grow, the chip can sometime fall out or "migrate" to other areas on the body and be missed by the scanner, especially if the animal is scanned quickly. AWLA recommends that pet owners have their pets scanned at every regular checkup by a veterinar-

ian to ensure the chip can be found easily.

Issue: The animal's microchip number is found when the animal is scanned, but the microchip number does not correlate with a specific company to call about its registration. Solution: Microchips are now being manufactured with numbering systems that do not necessarily match the company that manufactured them; registration is sometimes handled by a third-party company. To address this problem, a national registry has been established at www. petmicrochiplookup.org. This allows the microchip manufacturer and third-party registration companies to share information. A pet owner should be able to search the pet's mi-



Animal Care Technicians Billy Faxon and Kelley Davis insert a microchip into one of Alexandria's Animals. The microchip registration will need to be updated online by the dog's new owner following adoption.

crochip number in the website and obtain contact information for the microchip company along with information about the pet. Not all microchip manufacturers or third-party registries participate in this, which may yield a "no information found" result on the website. If your pet's microchip number shows up as "no information found," you should also consider registering your pet's microchip with a company like www. foundanimals.org that will then upload your registration to the national registry. This solution can be effective if the animal shelter/veterinary clinic that finds your animal knows to check petmicrochiplookup.org.

Issue: The animal's microchip number is found and is easily associated with a company to call for the registration, but the contact information is out of date or no longer associated with the pet owner.

Solution: A microchip is only as good as the information associated with its number. It is very important to check that your pet's microchip registration information is kept up to date. You may want to consider contacting



Top: The AWLA has offered on-site microchip scanning at recent community events. Above: Look for the sign at future events advertising the service to find out the status of your pet's microchip obtain your own peace of mind.

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Leave a Legacy

As you think about how your estate can make a lasting difference in your community, please consider leaving a legacy donation to the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria (AWLA). You can make a legacy donation using beneficiary forms on your investment accounts, retirement accounts or insurance policies or by naming the AWLA as a beneficiary your will or trust. The AWLA can accept in both monetary and non-monetary assets, although we ask you to consult with us if you are considering a non-monetary donation. Legacy donors who name the AWLA as a primary beneficiary in their estate plan are automatically considered to be a Vola Lawson Animal Advocate. To learn more about planned giving, contact getinvolved@alexandriaanimals.org.

your pet's microchip company once a year to ensure that the primary and secondary contact information is correct and that you have listed an "emergency contact" as part of the registration.

To ensure that pet owners get the best possible protection from microchips, the AWLA recommends:

- ☐ Have the pet scanned at each veterinary appointment to confirm the location of the chip, or bring your pet to the AWLA-operated facility at 4101 Eisenhower Ave. during open hours to have it scanned by AWLA staff. Then make a note of the chip number along with the name of the microchip company and store that information in a safe location.
- □ Call your microchip company and confirm that your contact information is registered correctly. Update your information with the company any time your contact information changes. Add a secondary contact person and an emergency contact to the record, preferably someone who doesn't change addresses often.

□ Enter your pet's microchip number into www.petmicrochiplookup.org and make sure that the information links to a company that has your current contact information. If it does not, consider registering your pet's chip number for free at www.foundanimals.org since they upload this information to the www.petmicrochiplookup.org. •

EIN 54-0796610



"PLAN FOR PETS" (continued)

Without prior knowledge, staff would only have been able to guess that two cats are bonded and should be housed together, and that all require special diets and are very friendly despite an initial fear of strangers. As seniors—Aslan is 15 years old and Church and Toulouse are 11—the cats would have had an especially tough time adjusting to the shelter and taken weeks or even months to get adopted.

Instead, the AWLA was able to get everything in place directly following the owner's passing, making the cats immediately available for adoption. Their story was shared on Facebook, and the Alexandria community responded with an outpouring of support for these cats who had lost their owner: All four cats were adopted without having to stay at the shelter for even one night.

No one expects their pets will outlive them. The AWLA is grateful to have been able to plan ahead for Aslan, Church, Phineas and Toulouse, and wants to help more owners do the same for Alexandria's Animals. If you would like to

learn more about "A Plan for Pets," email planforpets @alexandriaanimals.org.
Be on the lookout at www.
AlexandriaAnimals.org/events for workshops planned for this fall.

Alexandria residents responded immediately to a call on social media to adopt the four cats who had just lost their loved one, proving that strong connections within a community are facilitated by Alexandria's Animals. Top: Toulouse with his new family. Left: Phineas and Church ready for home transport.

A Plan for Pets Checklist

The following checklist will help owners begin to plan for the safety of their pets in the case of an emergency:

- ☐ Ensure that your pets are licensed and microchipped.
- ☐ Choose a trusted friend (or two) who is willing to care for your pets in case you are unavailable.
- ☐ Ensure that your chosen caregivers have access to your home to care for your pets.
- ☐ Give your pets' care providers (dog walker, groom, veterinarian, etc.) your chosen caretakers' names and contact information.
- ☐ Meet with an attorney to set up a durable power of attorney.
 - You can give your chosen caregivers the authority to care for your pets and make decisions regarding their medical care.
 - You can give a trusted friend or loved one (may be a caregiver) the authority to access your financial accounts so that they can pay for your pets' needs.
 - In addition, speak with the attorney about setting up a living trust that would give your trustee authority to care for your pets and pay for their needs according to the terms you put in the trust.
- Register your pets with the AWLA so that your pets' location, care needs and medical information, as well as your chosen caregivers' contact information, are easily available to Animal Services and Emergency Services.
- ☐ Complete and carry the AWLA Emergency Pet Information wallet card so that your chosen caretakers can be contacted in case of emergency.



Be sure to completely fill out an AWLA Emergency Pet Information card and carry it with you; the cards are available at the shelter upon request.



Dog(s) ____ Cat(s) _

is(are) registered in "A Plan for Pets" with

the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria.

Contact Animal Services

24 hrs/day at **703-746-4444**

__ Other Pet(s)

Above: Gather emergency items into a carrier and notify all potential pet caretakers of its whereabouts. **Right: Plan for Pets registrants** receive an emergency sticker to place on a door or window.

- A Plan for Pets ■ When preparing for a natural disaster, ensure that you have food, water, toys and any other items that your pets need in an emergency kit, as suggested by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).
- ☐ In addition to everything else, make sure that your pets are included in your estate plan. Discuss the following with your estate attorney:
 - You can use your will or trust to leave your pets to a chosen friend or loved one, or you can choose for your trust to retain ownership of your pet.
 - You can use your will or trust to set up a care fund (aka "pet trust") to provide for your pets' needs throughout their lifetime so that your chosen caretakers are not overwhelmed with expenses.
- ☐ City of Alexandria owners wishing to ensure that the AWLA is entrusted with the care and placement of their pets can complete and file a transfer agreement with the AWLA naming the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria as the legal guardian of the pets in the event of an owner's death.



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Alexandria Animal Updates

Kalliope's Poetic Journey

When Kalliope arrived at the AWLA from Potomac Highlands Animal Rescue, it was obvious the white-and-tan Labrador mix with perky ears had suffered. Radiographs showed severe breaks of her left forelimb and past injuries consistent with an auto collision.

Surprises continued to be revealed during an exam at VCA Old Town Animal Hospital: The young dog was pregnant! Veterinarians determined that a procedure to amputate Kalliope's shattered leg would need to be postponed until after she delivered. Kalliope gave birth to five adorable pups (including Pinkie Pie, mentioned on page 2) while in the foster care of AWLA Deputy Director Abbie Hubbard, but due to the stress she had endured, Kalliope couldn't produce enough milk to sustain them. Foster "parents" were immediately recruited to house the puppies, bottle-feed and socialize them until they were old enough for adoption.

Meanwhile, Kalliope's injured leg was successfully removed, and she quickly adapted to being a "tripod." Says Hubbard, "She's so lovable that people often don't notice she's missing a paw."

Two AWLA volunteers grew to love her during her time at the shelter and adopted Kalliope last month. "Everyone involved feels very lucky," Hubbard concluded.



Abandoned Reptiles Deliver Learning Experience

Executive Director Megan Webb was the last to leave the shelter one night in April when one of her dogs noticed a cardboard box tucked under a bush on the side of the building. Hearing movement in the box, Webb picked it up and carried it inside, where

she cautiously unwrapped the package. As she lifted the lid and pulled out a towel, she was shocked to be greeted by the open mouth of a large lizard hissing at her. The lizard was approximately 2 feet long and not friendly. There was also a second, smaller lizard inside.

A second box was left at the shelter the following day with two more of the reptiles, now identified as Argentine black and white Tegu lizards. As an open-access facility, the AWLA is prepared to care for animals of all kinds, a challenge that now extended to the new arrivals.

The AWLA reached out to the local group Reptiles Alive for help. Reptile expert Caroline Seitz educated staff



Above left: Kalliope recovering at the AWLA after her surgery.

Above right: Kalliope gets ready to go home with her new family.

on what to feed the lizards, demonstrated safe handling of the Tegus and offered guidance on how to appropriately house them. The cold-blooded animals required regulated conditions in a large aquarium with a lid, with special heat lamps, thermometers and humidity gauges. Further, the lizards had to be soaked in water twice a week to keep their internal and external systems functioning.

The Tegus spent about a month at the shelter while AWLA volunteers socialized them and we worked on finding them appropriate placement. "They needed some work," AWLA Deputy Director Abbie Hubbard recalled. "They were not used to being handled." The process worked, and two of the lizards have been adopted. A third lizard will become an ambassador in Reptiles Alive's humane education program, and the fourth has traveled to Blue Ridge Reptile Rescue to await a home of its own.

The Tegus were fortunate to be left at the shelter rather than discarded or released at large, but the AWLA encourages and welcomes the surrender of any animal during shelter hours, both for the safety of the animal and to collect the animal's behavioral and medical information. "We understand that people run into problems sometimes and need help. We can provide that help," Hubbard says. "That's what we're here for."

AIDING IN PROSECUTION (continued from page 1) U. S. states, this crime would not be prosecuted. We are pleased that through our expanding relationship with the City of Alexandria and the Commonwealth of Virginia, we have been able to cultivate a more progressive attitude and legal approach toward crimes of this nature.

In the meantime, Missy is enjoying life with her new family. They have shared that she "is doing very well in her new home with our three boys. She is extremely social and playful." The whole family is grateful to everyone who supported Missy and helped her become part of their lives. Thanks to the support of the Alexandria community, Missy will also be featured in our 2018 annual photo calendar, and the funds raised from those who voted for her will support animals in need in Alexandria, including animals like Missy.

2017 VOLA LAWSON ANIMAL ADVOCATES

AWLA extends a special welcome to the **2017 Vola Lawson Animal Advocates** (VoLAAs) for their contributions during the period of January 1 - June 30, 2017. Thank you to the City of Alexandria, which allows us to continue to provide care, control and sheltering services to Alexandria's Animals. **In-kind contributions will be announced in the annual review.**

Animal Guardians \$25,000+

Estate of Deborah DeSantis Estate of Darla Cherie Ellis H.N. (Jay) Hoffman III

Animal Champions \$10,000+

Kirk Fedder Suzanne Fedder Estate of Beverly Kimes Estate of Michael & Ginny Royal

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Christopher Aluotto Rich Davis Laura Giza Rafael Maldonado Vicki Smith WOOFS! Dog Training Center, LLC, Shirlington Campus

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Abbie Hubbard
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Sarah McKinney Janice Menges Linda Michael Arnold Miller Julie Moses Alyssa Murrav **Musser Family Fund Amy & Shelby Nicholas** Jennifer O'Boyle Lael O'Shaughnessy **David Pierce** & Lilly Doggendorf Pierce Suzanne Post Katydean Price Ruben Rector Marlene Roesen Anne B. Sanchez Jennifer Sebolt Keenan Ynette Shelkin James Shera Karin Stack Christine Stillwagoner Lita Valdez Sharon L. Vannucci Claire Vinocur Laina Vittone **Brittney Waranius** Julian & Elizabeth Watson **Judy Weiner** Nantana Wongtanasirikul

Joan McCormack Ferrill

Thank you also to our many charitable giving partners, who work with individuals and employers in the community to raise and provide funds to support the AWLA. These partners include ACT for Alexandria, America's Charities, Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund, Schwab Charitable Fund and United Way of the National Capital Area.

2016 GUARDIANS AND CHAMPIONS

Linda Coleman, Donna Dawe, Kirk Fedder, Suzanne Fedder, Yolande Frommer, H.N. (Jay) Hoffman III & Arline M. Hoffman, Jodi Horton, Ty & Linda Hosler, Tara Zurawski; the Estates of Daniel T. & Barbara Chapman, Constance Virginia Doberenz, Gloria Petersen, Winifred Williams Rabbitt, Michael & Ginny Royal, and William S. Torrick; and:

























MOUNT VERNON VOICE















Tribute Donations

Thank you to everyone who donated in honor or memory April 1– June 30, 2017. AWLA mails a card to the recipient; donations of \$250+ are recognized here.

In Honor of ...

Megan Webb by Rafael Maldonado

In Memory of ...

Miss Grey by Ann Carney Abby by David & Rebecca Francis Jasmine by Drew Kahle Ellie Mensh by Lee Larkin Doc by Stephanie Pankiewicz Christmas Cheer, Noel, Blue and Dreamer by Theresa & Randall Walker

Vola Lawson Animal Advocates (VoLAAs) are recognized individuals and businesses who give support at the highest levels. The program includes several levels of recognition for monetary donations and volunteer hours as well as in-kind donations made fiscally. Animal Guardian—\$25,000 or more financial or in-kind support or 5,000 volunteer hours; Animal Champion -\$10,000 or more financial or in-kind support or 1,000 volunteer hours; Animal Friend—\$5,000 or more financial or in-kind support or 500 volunteer hours; Animal Companion—\$2,500 or more financial or in-kind support or 250 volunteer hours: and Animal Advocate -\$1,000 or more or 100 volunteer hours. Legacy Donors have made provisions for Alexandria's Animals through planned giving. For more information about becoming one of Vola Lawson's



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