



# The Animal Welfarer



Animal Welfare League of Alexandria, Va., Inc.  
910 South Payne Street 22314 Tel: 391-6597

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TO OUR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS: At this time of remembering the many kindnesses of the past year, we thank you for your help, through us, to animals -- the homeless dogs and cats that have been adopted from our Shelter, those we have been able to rescue or protect from man's cruelty, the lost pets who have found a temporary haven with us and a safe return home, and all the others that have benefited in some measure from our efforts, and yours, to improve the welfare of all animals.

We are often so busy with animals that we seem to forget our human friends. That's why we've revived our all too infrequent "Animal Welfarer" -- to tell you a little about what the League is doing and of some of the things that you are making possible. You have our deep appreciation and our warmest wishes for everything good during the holidays and in the New Year for you and your pets.

CHRISTMAS AT THE ANIMAL SHELTER. Attractive gift certificates will be available at the Shelter after December 19 to reserve a puppy or kitten to be picked up on December 28. Animals will not be released to new homes between those dates. Our shelter and others have learned that unfortunately a pet selected as a last-minute gift is often injured or becomes sick in the excitement of Christmas Day in a new home. And once the excitement of giving or receiving a live animal wears off, the animal frequently is returned to the Shelter.

To avoid these experiences, we recommend giving one of our certificates, packaged with a collar, brush, or other pet accessory as a token of the best yet to come. Our year-round adoption rules require that an animal must be at least four months old if it is going to a home with children under five years old. And persons adopting dogs must have a fenced yard or other humane means of confining the pet. All female animals must be spayed, the League contributing part of the cost.

MANY THOUGHTFUL ALEXANDRIANS remember the Shelter animals during the holidays with gifts of special delicacies or cash, to help make their time with us a little happier. This year the Shelter has an additional project. Mrs. Edna Cooke, Shelter Supervisor and Humane Officer, reports as a result of cruelty investigations that "our biggest problem is lack of humane housing for dogs." She brought cruelty charges against one owner who kept a dog permanently chained inside a crate, with little water and only an occasional meal. This dog was released to the Shelter, and fortunately is being rehabilitated in a fine new home.

In less extreme cases, Mrs. Cooke is attempting to help owners provide humane homes for their dogs by explaining the dog's need for proper care, and supplying dog houses, at a nominal cost, to persons complying with her advice. Volunteer woodworkers who can build at least one house, to League specifications, for this project are invited to call Mrs. Cooke at the Shelter.

DOG OBEDIENCE TRAINING CLASSES will be resumed after the holidays if there is enough demand. Four Fall classes, averaging 10 dog-owner teams each, were graduated last month. With two trainers -- Mrs. Joan Jul and Mrs. Doris Baster -- handling small classes, each student receives much individual attention. Class times are on Saturday mornings, or Tuesday or Wednesday evenings, depending on demand. The 7-week course costs \$15.00, the proceeds going to animal welfare. For further information, call the Shelter.

THE LEAGUE'S JUNIOR MEMBERS were entertained and educated at their Fall meeting, November 4, at the Alexandria Library, by Smokey Bear's creator, Artist Rudolph Wenderlin of the Forest Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture. Juniors with lucky numbers were given animal sketches drawn by Mr. Wenderlin as he talked about conservation. An almost life-size drawing of Smokey inscribed to "all my friends in the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria" is now on display at the Shelter.

Mrs. William Hunley is the League's very active Junior Program Chairman, and has the most welcome assistance of Mr. Hunley. They're planning an expansion of their fine work next spring to include an Animal Care Aide Award program for Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts. Young people through age 17 are invited to join our junior group.

NEW NIGHT EMERGENCY ARRANGEMENTS have been in effect at the Shelter for several months. Mr. Willie Mudd, who for some 15 years has answered emergency calls before and after Shelter hours, had to give up this part of his job for health reasons. Because other employees then had to take turns to provide 24-hour assistance, the League employed an answering service which takes calls on the Shelter number before 9 a.m., and after 5 p.m. We will welcome any comments our members have on this service -- in fact, on any Shelter services. Compliments and complaints -- preferably in writing to the Corresponding Secretary, please -- are equally helpful in letting us know whether we are providing effective, humane service.

PLANS FOR A "NEW ANIMAL SHELTER" are now on the drawing board! How far the plans can be carried out depends on the amount of money available from the City and the League. As you may know, the present building went up in three stages between 1951 and 1957, and was financed jointly by the City and the League. After 10 years the League finds it almost impossible to operate in overcrowded quarters at the standards of humaneness and efficiency it strives to maintain. The plan is to remodel the present structure to meet modern animal care standards and to provide for additional services in a new wing. Details will be made public at a membership meeting early next year. "Cat-people" in our membership (who may think this newsletter has gone to the dogs) will be heartened to know that we're planning greatly improved feline quarters.

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