



THE ANIMAL WELFARE LEAGUE OF ALEXANDRIA

SPOTLIGHT o.n a.n.i.m.a.l.s

IN OUR 41st YEAR

FALL 1987

This is the season when the furriers and large department stores are stressing the elegance and sophistication of owning a fur coat. Before you buy a fur, think about where that pelt came from. It was part of the body of a beautiful, living, breathing little creature who wanted nothing more than to be left alone. Consider the horrible suffering of that defenseless animal when a steel jaw trap snapped closed on his leg and he was held for days until he was clubbed to death. Elegance and sophistication????

The suffering and neglect of animals unfortunately will still be occurring after you are gone. One way to assist in the continuing struggle to eliminate the terrible abuse of animals is to remember the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria in your Will.

Be part of the solution, not part of the problem! There is a tremendous overpopulation of dogs and cats; thousands are euthanized every year right here in Alexandria because there are no homes for them. Please, if your animal has not been altered, take advantage of the League's low cost spay/neuter program. Call 838-4775 for details. Be a responsible pet owner.

The holiday season is rapidly approaching. Please do not give an animal as a "surprise" gift to someone. The person might not really want a pet, or even if he/she does want a pet, it might not be the size, breed or gender that you select. A kitten or a puppy is going to require 10 to 15 years of love and care. Many people can't make that type of commitment to an animal, and the poor creature that looked so cute with a Christmas ribbon winds up a few months later in the Shelter.

ANNUAL DINNER AND MEMBERSHIP MEETING

National Zoo Director to Speak at Annual Dinner



*Dr. Michael H. Robinson
Director of the National Zoo*

The Animal Welfare League of Alexandria will hold its annual dinner and membership meeting on Thursday, October 29, 1987. As in previous years, the dinner will be held at the American

Legion Banquet Hall in the Gadsby's Tavern Building in Old Town.

The guest of honor and principal speaker will be Dr. Michael H. Robinson, the Director of the National Zoo in Washington, D.C. Dr. Robinson is internationally recognized as an expert on animal behavior and the role of zoos in modern society. After graduating from the University of Wales, Summa Cum Laude, he received his Doctor of Philosophy from Oxford University. He has traveled extensively throughout the world studying animals and their habitat. Since his appointment as Director of the National Zoo, Dr. Robinson has been lauded for his efforts to establish more natural settings for zoo animals. In addition to his reputation as a preminent zoologist, Dr. Robinson is nationally recognized as a spell-binding lecturer and after dinner speaker.

The evening's festivities will begin with cocktails at 6:30 p.m. followed by dinner. After dinner there will be a short business meeting including the election of the Board of Directors. Dr. Robinson's talk will be the highlight of the agenda and will conclude the evening's activities.

A large turnout for the dinner is expected, so early reservations are suggested. For additional information and to make reservations, please call Lee Gough at 931-8771 or Vivian Willis at 549-8962.

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Preventive Health Care Program for Kittens and Puppies

by Mary W. Keisler, DVM
Old Town Veterinary Hospital



As Christmas approaches many people will begin considering a new puppy or kitten as a gift for themselves or a loved one. A new pet can provide many years of companionship, devotion and affection. They need in return a responsible pet owner to care for their physical, emotional and medical needs. To ensure you and your pet get off to the right start, an early as well as regular visit to your Veterinarian is very important. The following paragraphs will help explain the medical attention your new puppy or kitten will require.

Kittens. Kittens and cats can be uniquely suited to the fast paced life-style of many Northern Virginia residents. Although cats may be more self sufficient than dogs, they do need regular attention and affection. To assure your new kitten is healthy, and remains healthy, an early visit to your Veterinarian is recommended.

Your first visit to the Veterinarian should include a complete physical examination, a fecal examination, and an establishment of a vaccination schedule. Questions should be answered concerning nutrition, surgical neutering, and any other subjects deemed necessary.

Vaccinations. A vaccination schedule for your new kitten will be provided depending upon the age and previous vaccination history. It is important to bring any records of previous vaccines.

A three-in-one vaccine (feline distemper or feline panleukopenia, feline viral rhinotracheitis, and feline calici virus) should be started at the first visit or eight to nine weeks of age. Vaccines should be repeated every three to four weeks until the kitten is 14 weeks of age or older. An annual booster is necessary thereafter. At least two doses of vaccine at 2-3 week intervals are necessary

initially. Kittens receive a certain amount of protection against some viruses from their mother through their first milk. This protection from their mother not only will protect the young kittens against the virus, but also will interfere with vaccination. For this reason it is important to continue the vaccination schedule until maternal protection is no longer present (at about 14 weeks of age). As these three viruses are highly contagious, all kittens, both indoor and outdoor, should be vaccinated.

Considering the very high incidence of rabies in the Northern Virginia area, the rabies vaccine is very important. Rabies is a fatal virus which attacks the nervous system of many animals, including man. The virus is transmitted by the bite of an infected animal. Any kitten who may be in contact with another animal should be vaccinated against rabies between 3 and 4 months of age. A cat vaccinated between 3 and 12 months should be revaccinated one year later. Once a year to once every three year vaccines should then be administered depending upon the advice of your Veterinarian.

Feline leukemia is a fatal viral infection which can be transmitted from the mother or through the saliva, urine or blood of an infected cat. Considering the serious nature of this disease, I recommend testing all new kittens. A screening blood test can usually be performed within a few hours at your veterinary hospital. A negative status is especially important before introducing your kitten into a multicat household. A vaccine is available to help protect against feline leukemia. The vaccine can be initiated as early as 9 weeks of age. The series includes 2 initial vaccines 2-3 weeks apart with a booster at 3 months. Annual vaccination thereafter is required. Your Veterinarian should decide if a feline leukemia vaccination is warranted for your kitten.

A feline pneumonitis vaccine is necessary in a small percentage of kittens. Your Veterinarian will recommend this if he or she thinks it is necessary.

Parasites. Internal ("worms") and external parasites (fleas, ticks, and lice) can be very harmful to your new kitten. A microscopic fecal (stool) examination is necessary to look for coccidia, hookworms, roundworms, and tapeworms. As different deworming medications are necessary depending on the parasite present, a stool sample should be brought along on your first visit, regardless of the previous worming history of your kitten. If "worms" are present, multiple dewormings may be necessary. External

parasites can be diagnosed by examination from your Veterinarian. Certain insecticides can be toxic. Your Veterinarian should be consulted prior to their use.

Nutrition. Feeding your kitten or cat properly is a key factor in promoting good health, performance and longevity. A kitten needs a highly digestible food formulated to meet their high energy needs and to provide the right nutrients for optimum growth and development. Dog food and table scraps are not acceptable for a kitten's diet. As kittens have different nutritional requirements than dogs and humans, serious deficiency diseases can develop. Milk should not routinely be provided to your kittens. Many lack the enzyme needed to digest milk and diarrhea can occur. Your Veterinarian should be consulted in formulating the proper diet to meet your kitten's needs.

Neutering. Neutering or spaying (removal of the testes or ovaries and uterus) of your cat is important to help prevent uterine disease, breast cancer, unwanted pregnancy, and undesirable behavior (i.e., spraying or urine and aggressiveness). If you are not planning to breed your cat, six to eight months of age is the optimum time for neutering.

Puppies. There are many different roles which a puppy or dog can fulfill. For most of us the dog makes its greatest contribution as a loving companion. In return for this devotion, dog owners must provide good nutrition, shelter, and proper Veterinary medical care. A preventative health care program can increase the quality and length of your dog's life. To assure the good health of your new puppy or dog, an early visit to your Veterinarian is essential.

Vaccinations. A five-in-one vaccine (canine distemper, hepatitis, leptospirosis, and parainfluenza and parvo virus) should be started on the first visit or at six to eight weeks of age. Vaccines should be repeated every three to four weeks until the puppy is sixteen weeks of age. At least 2 doses of the vaccine are necessary initially. Like kittens, puppies receive a certain amount of protection from their mother's milk. As this protection can interfere with the vaccination, it is important to continue the vaccination until 16 weeks of age.

Rabies vaccination is as important in dogs as it is in cats. Considering the extremely high incidence of rabies in the Virginia area, I recommend vaccinating all puppies at 4 months of age. Any puppy vaccinated between 4 and 12

RABIES VACCINE UPDATE

by Mary W. Keisler, DVM

Rabies is a viral disease which causes an infection of the brain. It is spread through saliva, and all warm-blooded animals, including humans, are susceptible. Skunks, foxes, and racoons are the major carriers. Considering the high incidence of rabies in this area, and the seriousness of the disease, all cats and dogs should have a current rabies vaccine.

Several laboratories currently produce the rabies vaccine. Recent tests have questioned the protection provided by the Norden Laboratories' vaccine "Rabguard-TC" and "Endurall-K". Considering the questions raised, the following recommendations have been made:

Cats: Any cat vaccinated subcutaneously (underneath the skin, usually in the shoulder region) with the Norden Vaccine should be revaccinated one year from the date of his or her previous vaccination.

Dogs: Any dog vaccinated subcutaneously with the Norden Vaccine should be revaccinated as soon as possible.

Anyone not previously notified should contact his or her Veterinarian to verify their current rabies status. If deemed necessary, a rabies booster should be administered.

Feeding Our Feathered Friends



by Eva Bell
Wild Bird Rescue League
of Northern Virginia

Thinking about feeding the birds this winter? If so, you will find these tips helpful, especially if you are a "beginner."

Start out with leftovers. Many dinner-table scraps—such as bakery products, meat trimmings, vegetables and fruit—are excellent wild bird fare. You can include your dog or cat's leftover dinner, too—wet or dry. Excess beef fat and/or suet (which can also be purchased at the meat counter for a modest price) is a good cold-weather energy booster. Birds can profit when you clean out the pantry. They will readily accept stale cereal, old raisins, nuts and snack food. Don't, however, feed birds spoiled or moldy food and be sure to pick up uneaten scraps before dark to avoid attracting rats or mice.

In selecting seed, begin with the standard mixes sold at supermarkets and hardware or feed stores. Supplement this, if you desire, with extra sunflower seed, a favorite with many species of birds. Peanuts (preferably unsalted) are often appreciated, too—in or out of the shell. Feed early so that all food is consumed before dark. You will soon learn by observation, as well as trial and error, which foods your bird visitors like and about how much they will eat in a day.

Feeding birds can be expensive, both quantity- and quality-wise. There are many bird specialty foods now on the market. They are excellent but costly.

Before buying any of these, I advise you to learn what kinds of birds live on or near your premises. Investing in a good basic field guide and a simple pair of binoculars will not only help with this but will give you many hours of pleasure as well. Regarding quantity, don't let your feeder guests intimidate you. Determine how much seed, etc., your budget will allow and dole it out accordingly. Your feathered friends will be grateful for whatever they get.

Speaking of feeders, these, too, can be expensive. Homemade devices (safe and sturdy) can do the job just as well as store-bought ones. An old stump or hollowed-out log works fine or, of course, you can always toss your bird food on an open spot on the ground. If you decide to buy a feeder, I suggest a wooden hopper-type that sits on a pole above a curved metal baffle. It will serve you well for many years. Locate your feeder in the open, away from shrubs where cats can hide and low tree limbs or roof edges that squirrels can use as springboards. (Yes, I love squirrels, too, but they can devastate a wooden or plastic feeder!) Wait to buy fancy feeding devices until you learn what you are doing.



One more thing that's very important—don't forget the water! It may turn out to be even more popular with the birds than food. A cement birdbath, available at garden shops, is good for warm-weather use but it is easily cracked by ice. Unless you want to use a birdbath heater (outdoor outlet required), set out plastic pet bowls, cake tins or old trash can lids and replenish them with water several times a day.

If you have questions about birds, I or other volunteers will be happy to advise you. Just call 241-0028 or 690-7491. Enjoy watching and helping the birds!

MAIL TO:

Animal Welfare League of Alexandria
P.O. Box 20050
Alexandria, VA 22320

YES, I CARE ABOUT ANIMALS AND I WANT TO SUPPORT THE LEAGUE IN ITS WORK.

Enclosed is my check for my 1987 membership dues.

\$15 Individual \$25 Family _____ Special Gift

Name _____

Street _____ Apt. No. _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

The League is a non-profit, tax-exempt organization established in 1946.

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Jack Steele. President
William Fleitz. Editor

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months should be vaccinated one year later. Once a year to once every three year vaccines, depending on your Veterinarian's preference, should be instituted after the first booster.

A vaccination against Bordatella bronchiseptica (kennel cough) may be deemed necessary by your Veterinarian. One or two initial vaccines may be necessary depending upon the route of vaccination chosen. An annual booster is required. These vaccinations can be given as early as nine weeks of age.

Parasites. Internal (intestinal parasites and heartworms) and external parasites (fleas, ticks, and lice) pose a threat to your puppy. The life cycle of intestinal worms (coccidia, hookworms, roundworms, tapeworms and whipworms) tends to promote re-infestation. Puppies may be born with certain intestinal worms or receive the larvae in their mother's milk or feces. Tapeworms are carried by fleas. Considering the potential for infestation, a fecal sample should be submitted on your first visit. Depending on the intestinal parasite identified, different deworming schedules will be initiated. Multiple dewormings may be necessary. Heartworms live in the heart and lungs. These are transmitted by the mosquito. Prevention of these worms is preferred over treatment. Puppies under 6 months of age should be started on heartworm prevention. The dosage will be adjusted as the puppy gains weight. Any puppy over 6 months of age must be tested negative via a blood test prior to starting the prevention. External parasites, especially fleas and ticks, pose a significant problem for puppies during the summer and fall months. A specific prevention schedule should be discussed with your Veterinarian.

Nutrition. A puppy like a kitten needs a highly digestible food formulated to meet their specific energy and nutrient needs. Three times per day feedings give the puppy as much food as he or she will consume within a specified period of time, usually 20 minutes. A puppy should be fed at least 3 times a day until they reach 6 months of age. After 6 months, 2 times per day feedings will suffice. Vitamin and mineral supplements are not necessary unless they are recommended by your Veterinarian for the management of a specific condition. Table scraps or snacks are not necessary and can often lead to problems.

Neutering. Neutering or spaying of your dog is important to help prevent uterine disease, breast cancer, prostate disease, unwanted pregnancy or unwanted behavior. If you are not planning to breed your female, it is preferred to spay her before her first heat cycle but not until 6 months of age. A male can be neutered any time after 6 months of age, although the exact age may vary depending on the breed.

Shelter. Whether a puppy is to be indoors or outdoors, it is important to

provide a place of shelter or refuge. Indoors a puppy needs a haven to which it can retreat when it is tired or wants the security of being out from underfoot. Dogs kept outdoors need special attention to shelter. An enclosed dog house is a must to protect from the sun, wind or rain. All dogs, however, may need to be indoors in extreme weather.

If you are adding a new kitten or puppy to your household, it is important to insure good health from the beginning. A preventive health care program can increase the quality and length of your pet's life. An early as well as regular visit to your Veterinarian is essential.

The First Friend

*When the Man waked up he said,
"What is Wild Dog doing here?"
And the Woman said,
"His name is not Wild Dog any more,
but the First Friend,
because he will be our friend
for always and always and always."*

— Rudyard Kipling

EQUIPMENT DONATIONS NEEDED!

The League needs the following equipment:

16 MM MOVIE PROJECTOR REPRODUCTION MACHINE (COPIER)

The movie projector will be used by our education officer to show animal welfare and anti-cruelty movies in schools, youth groups and clubs. The reproduction machine will be used in our office to reproduce educational material, flyers, forms, etc.

If any business, civic organization or individual is willing to donate either of these items (new or used), please call the League at 370-4498 or 370-6677. We will arrange to pick up the equipment.

Remember, the League is a non-profit, tax-exempt organization, and all donations are tax deductible. Receipts will be provided.

The Animal Welfare
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