



IN OUR 43rd YEAR

FALL 1989

Did you know that the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria was established in 1946? That's right, for 43 years your League has been working hard to provide care and comfort to injured and homeless animals.

What is the League doing now—in 1989? The League provides a multitude of animal welfare programs for Alexandria. We operate the Animal Shelter; we provide animal control services; we have a humane education program, and a wildlife assistance program; we also provide veterinary services to sick or injured stray animals; we conduct animal cruelty investigations; we operate one of the finest animal adoption programs in the area; and if a stray animal is injured we dispatch a trained animal technician to pick up the animal, and then if its injuries are too serious for the technician to handle, we rush the animal to the veterinarian, and then we pay the bill.

As hard as we all try, there is no end in sight to the terrible abuse inflicted on animals every day. Please consider remembering the Animal Welfare League in your will. It would be a wonderful way for you to participate in the struggle against animal suffering, even after you are gone.

We began publishing our newsletter SPOTLIGHT ON ANIMALS, two years ago. At that time we printed 2500 copies; our circulation has grown in the last 24 months to 14,000, and we have plans to expand it even more—both in content and circulation. And we need help!! We would like to find a volunteer who has some experience with animal issues, and also has some writing experience—perhaps working with a newsletter—to become the editor of SPOTLIGHT. We also need a few volunteers who have writing ability who can assist the editor.

If you are interested, please call the Shelter at 838-4775, and leave your name and number. We'll get back with you and arrange an interview.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Oct. 26, 1989 - Annual Dinner

Oct. 26,27,28 1989 - Portraits

by Michael

Dec. 2,3, 1989 - Photos of Your Pet with Santa

March 17, 1990 - Fun Dog Show

Everyday - Be Kind To Animals!

City Awards Contract to AWLA

LEAGUE OPERATES SHELTER

The Animal Welfare League of Alexandria began operating the Alexandria Animal Shelter on September 1, 1989. For many years the City of Alexandria operated the Shelter, and the League managed the animal adoption program, night emergency service, humane education, help for wildlife, veterinary care for injured animals, and a low cost spay/neuter program. In early spring of this year, the City decided to "contract out" the operation of the Shelter, and after a lengthy selection process, the City Council on June 27, 1989 unanimously voted to award the contract to the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria.

In order to be able to provide immediate "top-quality" care for the Shelter animals entrusted to the Alexandria League, the Board of Directors decided to sub-contract the sheltering and animal control functions at

the Alexandria Shelter to the Animal Welfare League of Arlington, which has decades of experience operating the Arlington County Shelter. The Arlington operation is considered an outstanding example of a modern, extremely well-run shelter. Almost an entirely new shelter staff has been hired for the Alexandria Shelter, including a new director, Mr. Guy Bush, and a new assistant director, Ms. Brenda Purvis.

The League is proud to assume this new responsibility and looks forward to the challenges and opportunities ahead. As it has through its 43 year history, the League's primary concern will be the alleviation of animal suffering, cruelty, and abuse. In cooperation with the City, and with the Arlington League, we fully intend to operate one of the finest animal shelters in State.



James P. Moran, Jr.
Mayor

City of Alexandria, Virginia
September 26, 1989



(703) 838-4500
Fax (703) 838-4948

I would like to express my very best wishes to the members of the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria as you take on your new role of operating the Animal Shelter. Throughout your 43-year history of dedication to animals, you have established yourself as one of the premiere humane societies in the region.

The City is very proud to have an organization such as the Animal Welfare League as an integral part of our community. On behalf of the City I thank you for your past efforts, and I look forward to your continued success in caring for homeless and injured animals.

Sincerely,

James P. Moran, Jr.
Mayor



DON'T POISON YOUR PET

by Ellen Evans, DVM
Elpaw Veterinary Clinic

Dr. Ellen Evans is one of three veterinarians at Elpaw Veterinary Clinic in Alexandria. She received a bachelors degree in Modern Languages from the College of William and Mary. The adoption of Sophia, a cat with many health problems, from the Fairfax County Shelter gave her the incentive to pursue a career in veterinary medicine. She received her DVM degree from Virginia Tech. in 1985 where she was a member of the Honor Society of Veterinary Medicine. Dr. Evans is married and has a one year old son who loves dogs and cats. The Evans family has four cats, including Sophia who is now almost 12 years old and who rules the house.

Veterinarians receive many frantic calls about suspected or known ingestion of poisonous substances by household pets. This article will address some of the hazards companion animals are exposed to.

The first rule in preventing exposure to hazardous substances is: don't give any medications, prescription or "over the counter," to your animals except on the advice of a veterinarian. This includes drugs and chemicals sold in feed stores and pet shops! At best, the dose may be incorrect or the drug may not be appropriate for the condition. More seriously, the drug or chemical may interact with medications the animal is already on. This is especially true of flea products. Also, a chemical or drug intended for one species may harm or even kill another. Cats are particularly susceptible. For example, they don't tolerate aspirin except in tiny, infrequent doses. You should NEVER give Tylenol, Panadol or any acetaminophen-containing drug to a cat!! Even very small amounts can be fatal. Phenol containing compounds found in topical medications and cleaning supplies are also harmful to cats, and the chemicals are readily absorbed through the skin.

We occasionally see poisonings from fly bait and rodent poisons. These compounds are especially risky to have around because they are prepared with appetizing flavors. Animals can also become poisoned by eating the dead rodents. (There are more humane methods of rodent control, anyway. Contact the Humane Society for details).

Remember to keep houseplants, paints,

electric cords, toys with small pieces, and other small objects from your friend's reach. Pets can even develop heavy metal toxicity from such things as zippers and pennies!

Beware of automotive products also. Antifreeze is especially dangerous because it has a sweet taste. It causes severe kidney damage, seizures, coma, and painful death. Early diagnosis and aggressive therapy will save some animals, but antifreeze toxicosis is usually fatal. When changing your radiator fluid or repairing leaks, be sure to dispose of the fluid safely.

The most common poisoning of all is garbage intoxication. Rotting foods, fatty meat scraps, and bones in your, or your neighbor's, garbage can wreak havoc with your pet's digestive system. Some of the fungi and bacteria which grow in rotting food can produce dangerous toxins which act on the nervous system, liver, and/or other organs.

Cigarettes (even the butts) can be toxic, even fatal, if enough are eaten. The same goes for chocolate! Theobromine in the chocolate can cause serious nervous system disorders and death.

If you suspect your pet may have gotten into any toxic material, call a veterinarian immediately. Especially if he has consumed antifreeze or fly or rat poison (or tylenol if he's a cat), don't wait until you see symptoms—it could be too late! You may be advised to induce vomiting before you leave home unless the material was caustic. Try to determine how much was consumed and bring the container with you.

It's easiest to keep potentially dangerous things out of your pet's reach and not to feed table scraps or give any drugs without veterinary advice. If your pet requires medical attention, be sure the veterinarian is aware of all medications your pet is on before treatment is prescribed.

We Need Your Help

VOLUNTEERS

Yes, we need you to help us operate the shelter. We believe that we have one of the best shelter staffs in the region, but to give to "our animals" the kind of love and care that they deserve, we need volunteers to help us.

What kind of volunteers do we need?

We need people to walk the dogs, to bathe and groom the dogs, to help with clerical work, to assist in feeding the animals and cleaning the kennels, and to help with our adoption program.

If you can give us just a few hours every month, call Karen Martin at 931-9241. Our volunteer coordinator will discuss the volunteer program with you.

PET PORTRAITS BY MICHAEL

What better way to preserve memories of our families as they grow and change than through professional photographic portraits? October 26, 27, and 28, 1989, we will have the opportunity of doing just that. And, of course, no family portrait would be complete without including our finned, furred, and feathered family members. Michael Joseph, a professional photographer who has photographed over 10,000 pet sittings, will be in Arlington, Virginia to see that our pets are not left in the dark.

For a sitting fee of \$9.95, all of which is donated to both the Arlington and Alexandria Animal Welfare Leagues, Mr. Joseph will spend ample time to capture 6-8 views of your family and pet, both together and separately. This fee covers a maximum of 4 family members and 2 pets: additional people or pets can be included for \$3 each. There are no free portraits included; however, 7-10 days after your sitting you will have the option of purchasing a variety of sizes and styles of portraits.

The three-day event will take place at the Arlington Animal Shelter at 2650 South Arlington Mill Drive. Appointments must be made in advance by calling the Arlington Animal Shelter at 931-9241 between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday through Saturday, Tuesday and Thursday until 8 p.m. This is a wonderful opportunity to obtain a beautiful portrait of you and your pet, and at the same time to help the many activities and programs of the Arlington and Alexandria Animal Welfare Leagues.

MYTH/FACT

MYTH We are going to breed our dog because I know we can find a good home for every puppy in the litter.

FACT Perhaps you will, but how many of those puppies will have a good home in a year or two? And how many litters will each of your puppies have? And how many litters will those puppies have? You could be talking about hundreds of more animals—how many do you think will get good homes? Remember, too, that each one of your puppies that you place, will take a home that could have gone to a homeless puppy in an animal shelter.

Be a responsible pet owner—don't breed your pet!

The Animal Welfare League of Alexandria SPOTLIGHT ON ANIMALS is published four times a year and has a circulation of 14,000. Address all correspondence to: The Animal Welfare League of Alexandria, Va., P.O. Box 20050, Alexandria, VA 22320.

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The Animal Welfare League is again selling Entertainment discount books. These books contain discount coupons for area restaurants, theaters and sporting events.

Entertainment '90 is bigger and better than ever! This year's edition is worth over \$8000 in discount savings. Your local veterinarians and pet grooming stores have these coupon books available. All profits will go to the League. Help yourself to a good bargain and help the animals at the same time!

Fun Dog Show

We are still in the middle of a beautiful autumn, but the League is looking forward to next March. Planning has already begun on our St. Patrick's Day Fun Dog Show, scheduled for 10:30 a.m., Saturday, March 10, 1990. The show will be held again in Market Square in Old Town Alexandria. It's not too early to mark your calendar. Remember, it will be a FUN dog show. Everyone is welcome and certificates and ribbons will be awarded to entrants in the various categories.

Christmas Is Coming

Photo of Your Pet with Santa

Mark Saturday, December 2 or Sunday, December 3, on your calendar. Those are the dates that a professional photographer will be at the Olde Towne School for Dogs, 529 Oronoco Street, to take pictures of your pet with Santa Claus. In view of the large turnout expected, it is necessary to make appointments. Please call the Olde Towne School at 836-7643 for more information, and to schedule an appointment.

The entire proceeds from the event are being generously donated by the owner of the Olde Towne School for Dogs to the Animal Welfare League for its fund to help injured and homeless animals.

Call for an appointment today!

ADOPTIONS SOAR TO NEW HIGH

The League's adoption program continues to set new records for the number of animals adopted. In July, 85 dogs and cats were placed in good homes. In August, 71 animals were adopted, and in September we placed 80 animals. Prior to July the highest number of animal adoptions occurred in January 1989 when 68 animals "went home."

While we are extremely pleased with the high number of animal adoptions, we are equally pleased in knowing that every animal we place is going into a good home. We screen every adopter to ensure that she/he is

aware of the responsibilities of pet ownership, and we conduct a "home visit" prior to each adoption. The "home visit" is intended to ensure that the animal is going into an environment where it will receive proper care for the rest of its life. The League adoption officer who conducts these "home visits" also offers advice on training, nutrition, and behavior.

If you know of anyone who is considering adding a pet to the family, please encourage him/her to visit the shelter. We have healthy dogs and cats of all breeds and sizes eagerly waiting for someone to take them home.

A Very Serious Problem

PET OVERPOPULATION

Many people do not realize how serious the pet overpopulation problem really is. The Humane Society of the United States estimates that over 70,000 puppies and kittens are born every day in the United States. There is simply no way for all these innocent creatures to find good homes.

Many will be abandoned and will ultimately die of disease, starvation or will be hit by cars. Others will be turned into animal shelters, but as hard as shelter staffs try to find homes for these unfortunate animals, the numbers are too overwhelming. Right here in Alexandria where we have one of the best and most active adoption programs in the region, the sad fact is that over 1,500 dogs and cats had to be euthanized last year.

Of course the answer to this problem is the spaying or neutering of as many animals as possible. To help reduce the number of unwanted animals, the League sponsors a low cost spay/neuter program in cooperation with many area veterinarians. If your pet has not been spayed or neutered, please consider having the surgery done as soon as possible. The operation is safe and simple, and the benefits to your pet in the form of a longer, healthier life far outweigh any short term (a few hours) mild discomfort your pet might experience.

Be a responsible pet owner. Have your pet spayed or neutered. Talk to your veterinarian today!

Oct. 26th At Gadsby's Tavern

ANNUAL DINNER

The Animal Welfare League will hold its Annual Dinner and General Membership Meeting on Thursday evening October 26, 1989 at the American Legion Banquet Hall in the historic Gadsby's Tavern building, 401 Cameron Street in Old Town, Alexandria. The evenings festivities will begin with cocktails at 6:30 p.m., followed by dinner at 7:30

p.m. After dinner there will be a short business meeting, including the election of the Board of Directors for next year. This is not a fundraiser, and the \$15 per person cost is intended to cover the evenings expenses. For more information and to make reservations, please call Mrs. Walter Willis at 549-8962.

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 1989 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.

Alexandria Animal Shelter New Expanded Hours of Operation

Receiving Animals:
8 am - 8 pm. Daily

Adoptions:
Mon., Tues., Thurs., Sat., 11 am - 4 p.m.
Wed., Fri., 11 am - 7:30 pm

Emergencies:
24 hours Daily: Call 838-4775

THANKS!

As the Alexandria League assumes its new responsibility of operating the Shelter, it is appropriate to recognize those individuals who have contributed in the recent past to make the Shelter a comfortable refuge for homeless and injured animals, and also to recognize those people who made the transition from City management to League management a smooth one.

First, there is the previous Shelter Staff which worked very hard, day after day, under very difficult conditions to provide care to the animals entrusted to them. Then, there is the

Police Department which provided superb management for the Shelter during the past four years.

A special note of thanks go to Chief Gary Leonard, Deputy Chief John Streeter, Lt. Ken Howard, and Lt. Harry Lane. Of course, deserving special thanks and recognition are Sgt. Kathy West, and Officer Don Stevenson, who for the past seven months provided the day-to-day supervision at the Shelter.

To all of these people, the League expresses its very sincere appreciation. Thanks for a job well-done!

The Old Cat

*No more to scale the heights
of dresser tops,
limp as an old sweater:
curled fetus-tight
he sleeps the day away.*

*Old pleasures fade:
A drinking straw is no
longer a stiff snake, to be
pounced upon in the wilds
of the hallway;*

*The can opener no longer
sings a siren song;*

*The opening of the
refrigerator door
is not enough to rouse
arthritic bones from
well-deserved rest.*

*But the sounds of birds
can still evoke
a tail twitch or two;*

*A gentle stroke will yet
unleash a lazy song of love.*

—by S.J. Nasea

ABOUT CATS

"I can't keep my cat in."

It can be a challenge, especially at first. Put screens on windows, close doors carefully and teach family members to do the same. Once your cat is used to the indoor life she won't try so hard to get outdoors.

"I want my cat to go outdoors so we won't need a litter box in the house."

If your cat's well-being is important to you, the outdoor risks just aren't worth taking. Besides, the litterbox helps you keep tabs on the cat's health.

"My cat knows how to avoid cars."

All it takes is a bit of blowing paper, a dog or another cat to send your cat into the street.

"We live on a safe cul-de-sac."

"We have four acres."

It only takes one car, one instance of bad timing and one cat for a fatality to occur.

"My last cat lived to be 18 and he went outdoors."

The fact remains that the odds are very, very heavily against an indoor/outdoor cat living to old age.

FACT: We pick up dozens of dead cats from the streets of Alexandria every month. Don't take a chance!

THINGS WE CAN USE AT THE SHELTER

We always need things at the Shelter that most people throw away. If you have any of these items and wish to donate them to us, bring them to the Shelter any day from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., or if you live in the City of Alexandria, call us at 838-4775 and we might be able to pick them up.

Thanks!

Towels, blankets and bath mats

Plastic garbage bags

Dog and cat toys, including:

rawhide chews

hard rubber balls

ping pong balls

pipe cleaners

CANNED dog and cat food

Sky Kennels (Vari-Kennels)

Hand tools (pliers,

screwdrivers, etc.)

Electric Drill

Garden tools

Bird cages

Bird seed and dried fruit

Heat lamps, heating pads, hot water bottles

Portable radios (for the kennels)

MYTH/FACT

MYTH My pet will become fat and lazy once it is sterilized.

FACT Your pet will actually benefit from spaying or neutering because it will lead a healthier, longer life. Spaying a female eliminates the possibility of her developing uterine or ovarian cancer and greatly reduces the chances of breast cancer. Neutering a male reduces incidence of prostate enlargement and prostate cancer later in life, and will make him more affectionate. Pets become fat and lazy as a result of overeating and lack of exercise, not from spaying or neutering.

Discuss spaying or neutering with your veterinarian.

The Animal Welfare
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