



THE ANIMAL WELFARE LEAGUE OF ALEXANDRIA

# SPOTLIGHT on animals

IN OUR 47th YEAR

FALL 1993

*In 1992, the League found homes for 1,269 animals—a record for the Alexandria Animal Shelter. This year's totals could be even better, thanks to community awareness and support of our services and programs. If you're considering adding a four-legged companion to your family, please come to the Shelter.*

*There are many bright, healthy, personality-plus animals who need good homes. The Shelter is open every day of the week, and three evenings. Call (703) 838-4775 for more information.*

*The gratifying success of our programs is attributable in large part to the many dedicated volunteers who are committed to improving the lives of animals in our community. But there is still much to do. If you would like to help, please call our Volunteer Coordinator at (703) 838-5042 today.*

*You can continue to help homeless and injured animals even after you're gone. You may wish to consider a planned gift or bequest through a provision in your will. Suggested language might read: "I give \_\_\_\_\_ to the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria, Inc., having its principal offices at 910 S. Payne Street, Alexandria, VA 22314, for its general purposes."*

*Spaying/neutering not only is key to alleviating the tragedy of pet overpopulation. It can improve your pet's chances of a long and healthy life.*

*The procedure is painless and carries a low risk of complications. Please ask your veterinarian about this important surgery.*

## AWLA's Annual Dinner Moves to Larger Quarters

It was the kind of dilemma we'd almost looked forward to facing: After holding many memorable Annual Dinners at the Legion Hall in historic Gadsby's Tavern in Old Town, we discovered that interest in the event had grown so much that we would have to find a new location with a larger seating capacity.

This year, for the first time in many years, the Annual Dinner has been moved to a more spacious location which can accommodate up to 200 of the League's friends and supporters.

The event will be held on Thursday evening, October 21, at the VVKR Building at 901 N. Pitt Street in Alexandria. There is ample, well-lighted free parking just behind the building and on the street.

Our featured speaker at the dinner will be Holly Hazard, who since 1987 has served as Executive Director and Legislative Counsel for the Doris Day Animal League, a national humane organization with 100,000 members. She is the organization's chief lobbyist for animal protective laws at the federal, state and local level. Ms. Hazard is an outstanding speaker you are sure to find entertaining and informative.

Ms. Hazard, an attorney, has been involved for many years in humane organizations. Since 1986 she has served on the Board of the Washington Humane Society. In addition, she



**Holly Hazard, Executive Director and Legislative Counsel for the Doris Day Animal League, will be the keynote speaker at this year's Annual Dinner.**

•••••  
• Come to the Doggie  
• Dash on November 7!  
•••••



••• details on page 3 •••

Continued on page 8

# Skin Disease in Your Pet

by Theresa Donohue, DVM

One of the most common reasons that people bring their pets to the veterinarian is for treatment of skin disease. Both dogs and cats (as well as our more exotic pets) can have skin problems, ranging in severity from a mild irritation to an almost debilitating condition.

The signs of skin disease are many and varied. Some behavioral signs include scratching, chewing at skin and paws head shaking, pacing, crying, and constant licking. Actual lesions may include redness, scabs, bumps, flakes, and hair loss.

The causes of skin disease are as varied as the symptoms and include flea infestation, food allergies, mites, inhalant allergies (called atopy), ringworm, and, less common, hormonal or metabolic disease.

Your veterinarian's single most important tool in diagnosing the cause of skin disease is a good medical history and physical exam. Some causes of skin disease have characteristic signs and patterns that can help your veterinarian to diagnose a specific problem. For example, if your animal gets skin irritation at the same time every year, an inhalant allergy is the likely culprit; if your pet first got itchy after you introduced a new diet to him, a food allergy would be suspected; or if a new cat was brought into the household a month ago, and now two of your other cats have circular, hairless lesions on them, then ringworm would be strongly considered as the cause of the skin disorder. After the initial exam, your veterinarian may

elect to perform skin scrapings, fecal exams, ringworm cultures, or bloodwork to further diagnose the problem.

Treatment of skin disease is aimed at eliminating the primary cause of the irritation (dermatitis). This can be either very easy, or extremely complex and difficult. Some skin diseases, such as those caused by mites, can often be completely cleared with no relapse. Others, such as allergic skin disease, are often never completely



## Vet's Corner

cured and the treatment plan is aimed at controlling the irritation and keeping the animal comfortable during the allergy attack.

Anyone who has allergies knows that sometimes the allergic reaction cannot be easily suppressed, and a human or pet may find himself on a lifelong regimen of allergy shots, antihistamines, antibiotics and trips to the doctor.

However, by working closely with your veterinarian, you will be able to keep your pet's skin as healthy as possible with a treatment protocol specific to your pet.

If you notice any unusual signs in your four-legged companion, or suspect a skin problem, remember that the earlier you act the sooner a diagnosis can be made so that your veterinarian can recommend an appropriate treatment.

*Dr. Donohue practices at the Old Town Veterinary Hospital.*

## Holiday Safety for Pets

With the holidays approaching, it's worth keeping in mind a few basic considerations to ensure your pet's safety and well-being:

- Chocolate, even in very small amounts, can kill your pet. So if you want to give him a holiday treat, make it rawhide chews or some other food specifically formulated for animals.

- Be watchful of your pet and the lights on the Christmas tree. He may think it's a new toy to chew on and bite into the wires or bulbs.

- If swallowed, ribbon, tinsel, string, thread or dental floss can seriously injure your pet.

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Jack Steele, *President*  
Joyce McDowell, *Editor*

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## Publications of Interest to Animal Lovers

The Virginia Division of Tourism has produced a guide for travelers who don't want to leave home without their four-legged family members. Lynn Bostain, whose Shelter Success Story appeared in the Spring issue of *Spotlight*, prepared ***Traveling with Pets*** as a memorial to her beloved dog, Buttons, who died two years ago.

This free publication is a valuable resource containing over 175 listings of hotels, motels, and bed and breakfast facilities in Virginia which accept pets. Noted with each listing are any special restrictions which may apply, such as deposits required or size limitations, as well as kennels in the surrounding area.

To receive your copy, write to the Virginia Division of Tourism, 1629 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20006, or phone (202) 659-5523.

• • •

Piccolo Press, an Alexandria publisher, has introduced a well-received book called ***Finding Fun & Friends in Washington: An Uncommon Guide to Common Interests***, a guide to more than 900 clubs and organizations in the Washington metropolitan area. According to the publisher, response to the book has been "overwhelming," and a second edition will

be issued late this year. Whether your own special interests are culinary, artistic, educational, literary, musical, outdoors, historical, sports- or gardening-related, you can find kindred spirits through the organizations listed here.

Now, Piccolo Press has pledged to donate to the League between 30 and 50 percent of monies generated by the sale of this book through *Spotlight*. To order your copy of ***Finding Fun and Friends in Washington***, please send your check made payable to Piccolo Press in the amount of \$16.62 [\$14.95 plus \$1.00 shipping/handling, plus 67 cents Virginia sales tax] per book to the Piccolo Press, 901 King Street, Alexandria, VA 22314. Be sure to mention the League when you order.

• • •

Dog lovers now have available a single resource containing a comprehensive listing of service providers providing quality care for your canine, whether your dog is a family pet, a show ring champion, or a working dog. ***The Dog Owner's Guide to Washington***, by Mary Edington Rand and former kennel owner Irene T. Burger, is an easy-to-use guide which contains:

- more than 1,000 professionals, clubs, and organizations that ca-

ter to dog owners in the Washington area, including suburban Maryland and Virginia;

- hundreds of sources for finding the right dog, including animal shelters and rescue leagues;
- chapters on training, grooming, pet sitters, lost and found pets, licensing, pet cemeteries, kennels, pet stores, apartments that accept pets, and annual events for dogs;
- an index by breed to help you easily locate specialty resources for 92 different purebreds; and
- more than 200 veterinary clinics and useful information on specialists, spay/neuter programs and services, holistic medicine, and mobile veterinary services.

***The Dog Owner's Guide to Washington*** costs \$14.95 and is available at area book stores. It may also be ordered from Edington-Rand Inc., at P.O. Box 511, Riverdale, MD 20737.

### 'I've Lost My Pet!'

The Shelter staff hear this countless times every week. Someone is desperate to find a pet who has wandered from home, perhaps in search of romance, chased from his safe yard by a pack of dogs, merely exploring—the possibilities are endless.

If you lose your pet, follow these steps:

1. Call the Animal Shelter and describe your lost pet. The shelter staff will be on the lookout for him when a good-hearted citizen brings him in or reports a stray.

2. Call the veterinarians in your area. Briefly describe your pet and leave a phone number where you can be reached. If your pet is injured, sometimes a good Samaritan will bring him in for medical treatment.

3. Search the newspaper lost and found ads. You should consider placing a "lost" ad of your own while searching the "found" ones.

4. Make posters and distribute them. A picture of your pet is very helpful.

5. Once the animal is found, advise everyone who has been trying to help you so they can remove your notice, and cancel any lost-and-found ads you may have placed in the newspapers.

Try not to give up hope. Remember, your family pet may be in an unfamiliar situation and may be confused. He is looking for you, too.

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## The '93 Canine Games: An Olympic Success!

For a little while, it appeared that the 1993 Canine Olympics would be rained out. But despite threatening skies and intermittent showers, intrepid dog lovers turned out in force, and the September 4 event turned out to be the biggest fundraiser in the League's history.

Some 153 dogs were registered for the Canine Olympics—topping even last year's impressive totals—and an estimated 250 humans came to cheer on their four-legged champions.

Alexandria Mayor Patsy Ticer and Congressman Jim Moran were on hand to introduce five Shelter dogs in search of good homes and to participate in the day's festivities.

One canine athlete, a mixed shepherd named Sage who as a Shelter dog was introduced at last year's Canine Olympics, returned this year as a contestant and walked away a medal winner in the 30-yard dash.

Throughout the day's events, the human contingent was feverishly buying raffle tickets, hoping to be the lucky winner of tickets to the Redskins-Cowboys game on September 6 or one of the other great prizes donated by area businesses.

The real winners, of course, were the dogs themselves. Congratulations to all the four-legged athletes who competed in the events. In our book, every one was a champion.

Finally, we recognize Millie Bobbitt, who for the second straight year organized this event. Everyone who worked with her on the planning committee knows she deserves the Purple Heart, and we are indebted to her for all her hard work in making it all come together.

**Be a responsible pet owner—  
spay or neuter your pet!**

## THANK YOU!

*We are indebted to the following individuals and area businesses for their role in making the 1993 Canine Olympics a huge success!*

### GOLD SPONSORS

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Lisa Brock  
For Pet's Sake Grooming  
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**And hats off to the following League supporters who sold record numbers of raffle tickets for the Canine Olympics drawing:**

For Pet's Sake Grooming  
Pat Bowen  
Patty Neece  
Cindy Miles  
Olde Towne School for Dogs  
Laura Kipp  
Les Blankenship  
Jeanine Clark  
Randi Miller

Shelter Success Story



My Best Buddy

by Susan Murray

“Susan, I think you’d better come over right away. Flopsy is very sick, and I don’t think he’s going to live much longer.”

I will never forget the quiet urgency in my mother’s voice the early morning of January 16, 1992. Our beloved family pet of 17 years, a small black terrier mix, left us that day. The void I felt seemed so great that I was certain we would never own another dog. Every dog I saw reminded me of the many wonderful years we had with Flopsy.

Eventually, though, I gathered up my courage shortly before Christmas 1992 and visited the Alexandria Animal Shelter, where I instantly fell in love with a black nine-month-old lab-doberman mix named Buddy. His tail wagged relentlessly and he wore a big dog smile that just wouldn’t quit.

Buddy was not my first choice. I had initially been attracted to a younger puppy who closely resembled Flopsy; but it was Buddy whose personality won my heart.

Every day of my life with Buddy has been blessed in so many ways, even when his penchant for chewing put my patience to the test.

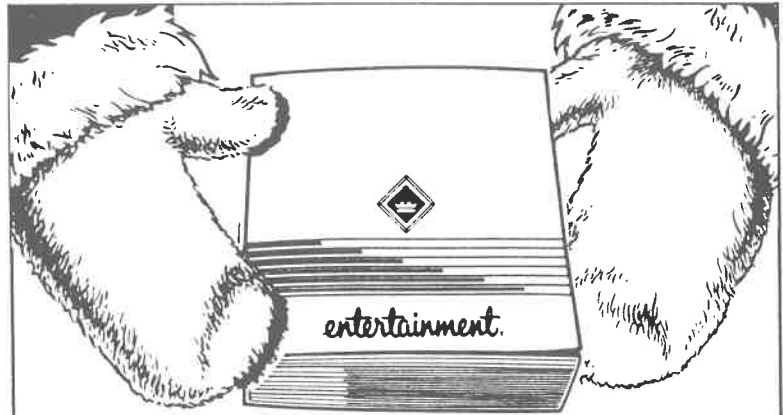
I cannot say enough good things about my experience with my dog or the Shelter. I was impressed with the interview process that all prospective owners must go through; this is essential to ensure that the animal is placed in a loving and attentive envi-

ronment.

I was lucky enough to adopt a neutered, housebroken and somewhat trained dog whose boundless love for everyone and everything is truly infectious. I cannot convey how heartwarming it is to come home to a dog who is so noisy and wiggly, so happy

to welcome me home, that it still takes him several minutes to calm down.

If Buddy could talk, I know he would ask me to urge all you wannabe dog owners who may be hesitating: Please come to the Shelter for a look. You—and some lucky animal—will be glad you did!



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## A Dozen Good Reasons to Donate to The Animal Welfare League of Alexandria

by Cynthia Miles

If you're considering a year-end donation to a worthy cause, won't you consider remembering the unfortunate animals who, through no fault of their own, are homeless or injured and in need of care? The Animal Welfare League of Alexandria relies heavily on the generosity of people like you to further its programs of adoptions, humane education, low-cost spay-neuter programs, emergency medical care, wildlife rehabilitation. Here are a few good reasons to remember the League:

1. In memory of a beloved pet.
  2. In memory of your parents, who taught you to love and care for animals.
  3. Designated memorial gifts.
  4. A donation in the names of friends or relatives "who have everything" on birthdays or other special occasions.
  5. A donation from your child. Small amounts of money from his or her allowance or earned from odd jobs can teach children the rewards of giving.
  6. Businesses and organizations can donate a total sum from their employees instead of giving individual gifts and sweets on birthdays or holidays.
  7. Your own personal satisfaction, and the spiritual rewards of knowing you are helping the creatures who share our world.
  8. In memory of an abused or neglected animal that you read about, or a situation of which you personally are aware.
  9. A donation in the name of someone you would like to remember but don't know well. For example, your boss, your in-laws, a favorite teacher, a co-worker, or a neighbor.
  10. A bequest to work for homeless animals even after you are gone.
  11. A special gift that enables low-income families to have their pets spayed/neutered.
  12. A donation to help make 1994 a prosperous year for the Shelter.
- If you would like to help, please send your tax-deductible gift to the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria, 910 S. Payne St., Alexandria, VA 22314. A form is provided below for your convenience.



Photograph of Rachel McCun by Myra McGovern

Community support made it possible for the League to find loving homes for over 1,200 animals in 1992. Everyone benefits: the animals and the people whose lives are enriched by them.



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City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**Please make checks payable to Animal Welfare League of Alexandria and mail to:**

**910 S. Payne Street  
Alexandria, VA 22314**

Please check here if you would like information on how you can become a Volunteer.

# Pet Photos With Santa Returns, Dec. 4-5

Once again, the League, in cooperation with the Olde Towne School for Dogs, will offer Pet Portraits with Santa, a popular annual event commemorating the holiday season. Sitings will be conducted on Saturday and Sunday, December 4 and 5 at the Olde Towne School for Dogs, 529 Oronoco Street in Alexandria.

For the past several years, pet owners have been bringing their companion animals to the School to have their pictures taken with Santa Claus in front of a scenic Christmas backdrop. All pets are invited.

A professional photographer will be on hand to capture your pets—with or without human family members—on film. As always, Carlos Mejias, owner of the Olde Towne School for Dogs, will pose every animal to achieve the best effect possible. Several shots will be taken of each animal or group, and the best will be selected for you.

For a \$24.95 sitting fee, you will receive one beautiful 8" X 10" color photo, two 5" X 7"s, and four wallet-sizes, as well as the negatives. You will be able to pick up your packet at the School just in time for the holidays—they make perfect Christmas gifts or cards. All proceeds will go to the League to help homeless and injured animals.

Sittings are by appointment only, and due to the popularity of this event



**Pet Photos with Santa make great holiday greeting cards. (P.S.—The antlers are optional.)**

you will want to make yours early to avoid disappointment. Please call (703) 836-7643 **after November 1** to schedule your sitting.

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The holidays are approaching fast. Call to receive holiday reservation forms now.

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from page 1

has testified before U.S. Congressional committees and other agencies.

Invitations to the Annual Dinner were mailed in mid-September. Please complete and return your response card promptly, to ensure your reservation. If you did not receive an invitation and wish to attend, please call Joyce McDowell at (703) 820-6639 before October 19.

Reservations are \$20 per person, and chicken, vegetarian or vegan options will be offered.

### Cold Weather Alert

Please don't endanger your pet by leaving him outside in cold weather. Even his "built-in fur coat" is no match for the frigid temperatures which are often typical of our area in winter.

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