



THE ANIMAL WELFARE LEAGUE OF ALEXANDRIA

SPOTLIGHT on animals

IN OUR 48th YEAR

FALL 1994

Many thanks to all who remembered the League through their Combined Federal Campaign pledge. If you have not yet made your designation, please consider donating at least part of your contribution to the League. Thanks to your support, the League placed 1,136 animals in good homes last year; 871 have been placed in the first nine months of 1994. The League is listed as No. 7006 in your CFC catalog.

Often people who say they "don't like animals" are actually reacting to irresponsible pet owners. Do your part to foster peaceful coexistence with your neighbors by always picking up after your dog, and obeying the laws requiring that he be leashed in our public parks. This demonstration of respect for others will add to the quality of life for all concerned in our community.

These days we see many dog owners are jogging with their pets. If you like to exercise with your dog, please ensure that he is physically fit for this type of activity. Also, we do not recommend that dogs be run on a leash while their owners bike or skate. Dogs running in the street are vulnerable to injury from cars or other threats.

Looking for a perfect holiday gift? The Entertainment Book is bound to be a hit with everyone on your list. The 1995 edition contains over \$9,000 worth of discount coupons honored at theaters, sporting events, and local restaurants.

You can purchase it at the Animal Shelter at 910 S. Payne St. or at a participating veterinary clinic. Proceeds go to support League programs to benefit homeless and injured animals in our community. The cost: just \$35.

League Annual Dinner Slated for Thursday, October 20, in New Location

Once again, the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria will move to larger quarters to present its Annual Dinner on Thursday, October 20.

Last year's dinner was moved from historic Gadsby's Tavern to an elegant new location to accommodate our growing membership. But due to the success of that event, we're compelled to move to even larger quarters in 1994. This year's dinner will be held at the Ramada Hotel at 901 N. Fairfax St. in Old Town.

The League is planning a program that is sure to inform and entertain you. Our guest dinner speaker will be Kate Rindy, Director of Overpopulation Issues at the Humane Society of the United States.

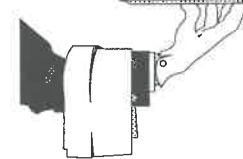
Ms. Rindy, a native of North Dakota, moved to this area in 1985, and has worked for HSUS ever since. Her activities at that organization are focused largely on dog and cat overpopulation. Immediately prior to moving to Washington, she served as Director of the Humane Society of Grand Forks, North Dakota.

Ms. Rindy will discuss the cooperative roles of animal welfare organizations and citizens of the community in addressing the needs of the animals in our care.

Invitations to the Annual Dinner were mailed in late 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 10.

Reservations are \$20 per person, and chicken, vegetarian, and vegan

*You're
Invited*



options will be offered. Wheelchair access and free parking are available.

This event is not a fund-raiser, but an opportunity for members of our community who care about animals to get together for an evening of fellowship and entertainment.

A new feature at this year's event will be a display of photographs of pets adopted from the League. You are invited to send us a photo of your "Shelter Graduate" with two or three sentences on how the pet has enriched your life. Some of the submissions also will be included in the League's 1995 Annual Report. Mail or bring yours to the Shelter, 910 S. Payne St., Alexandria (22314) by October 10.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE . . .

- Know When to Call a Vet (p. 2)
- Doggie Dash (p. 3)
- Don't Be Cruel (p. 4)
- Canine Olympics: A Gold-Medal Event! (p. 5)
- The Man Who Didn't Like Cats (p. 6)
- Pet Photos With Santa (p. 8)
- Avoid Holiday Hazards (p. 8)
- . . . much more!

Your Pet's Health: When In Doubt, Seek Help from a Veterinarian

by Jerry Hinn, D.V.M.

Our pets are amazing in more ways than one. Because their brains seem to produce higher endorphin levels than those of humans, they seem to take many of their injuries and illnesses in stride. This chemical, secreted in the brain, has pain-relieving effects very similar to that of morphine. As a result, an animal's capacity for producing this natural pain-killer sometimes makes it seem he is doing great one day before suddenly becoming ill the next. His owner may ultimately discover that his beloved companion has been living with a devastating disease, such as cancer. It is important for the pet owner to understand this phenomenon, and be alert to danger signs that signal a need for professional help.

How can you tell when you should consult a veterinarian for your pet?

At the risk of sounding overly cautious, I suggest that if you are in doubt, you should call for advice. Veterinary hospitals can often give you guidance by phone, but they may need to see your pet to determine the best approach to his problem.

In general, some signs that veterinary care is warranted are the following:

- **Not eating and/or drinking**, especially if it lasts over 24 hours. You should take into account the pet's normal appetite and thirst patterns and the relationship of his physical size and his stored nutrition reserves. Lift the skin at the top of his neck to judge the level of hydration; the lifted skin should rapidly spring back into place.
- **Bleeding**. If possible, look at the tongue, gum, and conjunctival mucous membranes. The color should not appear pale or white, but pink.
- **Continuous coughing, choking,**

or difficult/exaggerated breathing. Again, the mucous membranes should be pink; a blue color could indicate an airway obstruction.

■ **Acute injury resulting in a laceration, lameness, or pain**, or the lack of feeling in the limbs, as might be expected from an intervertebral disc herniation or a spinal problem. Any prolonged pain should be addressed.

■ **Prolonged vomiting or diarrhea with or without blood.** I favor aggressive intervention, and do not allow these events to occur for longer than 12 to 24 hours.

Vet's Corner

■ **Injuries to the eye, or infection of the eye** as indicated by a yellow or green discharge, including redness.

■ **Skin and ear problems** leading to hair loss, redness, odor, and including self-trauma as well as continuous scooting as though the anal glands are in need of attention.

■ **Tumors**, increasing in size, bleeding, or ulcerating and especially those that seem firmly attached.

■ **Straining to urinate** in both males and females; and a purulent discharge with or without blood found on the vulva of the intact female. Continuous non-productive straining in the pregnant female in delivery would also have to be included here, particularly beyond four hours or if there are any signs of exhaustion.

■ **Ingestion of a toxin or an object** likely to become lodged in or be sharply traumatic to the gastrointestinal system.

■ **Fever**, keeping in mind that heat and activity will elevate the temperature. One can use ear, rectal mercury, or oral

digital thermometers, the normal temperature being 101-102F for dogs and cats.

You can, of course, get help from many sources besides veterinarians and their staffs. For example, pet food companies employ nutrition counselors who can be reached through toll-free help lines. Your animal shelter is another important resource, as are behavioral counselors and trainers.

I have touched on only a few situations where you might seek veterinary guidance. But being alert to some basic warning signs will enable you to get timely assistance for your pets and enable them to live longer, healthier lives.

Dr. Hinn practices at the Hayfield Animal Hospital.

Green, Green Grass Of Home Can Be Deadly to Pets

As you prepare your lawns and gardens for winter, please take note of this finding reported in the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute* in 1992:

Dogs of homeowners who use lawn chemicals die of cancer two to four times as often as dogs of homeowners who do not.

—SOURCE: *Washington Post*

The Animal Welfare League of Alexandria *SPOTLIGHT ON ANIMALS* (© 1994) is published four times a year and has a circulation of 24,000. Address all correspondence to The Animal Welfare League of Alexandria, 910 South Payne Street, Alexandria, VA 22314.

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

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Dash Over to Ft. Hunt Park for the 4th Annual Canine Race!

The League's 4th Annual "Doggie Dash," a 1.2-mile walk/run event, will again be held at Ft. Hunt Park in southeast Fairfax County on Sunday, November 6, at 9:00 a.m. The registration fee of \$15 per canine entrant includes a t-shirt, bandana, and dog treats for the first 400 registrants. All proceeds from this event will go toward helping homeless and injured animals.

You may use the convenient registration form below; additional forms are available at local animal hospitals, PetStuff, or the Alexandria Animal Shelter at 910 S. Payne Street. Pre-registration for this event is required. **There will be no on-site registrations.** Registered contestants must collect their packets at PetStuff, 6750 Rich-

mond Highway, Beacon Mall in Alexandria from 2 until 4 p.m. on Saturday, November 5.

There will be separate categories for walkers and runners, with sponsored prizes awarded after the race. A veterinarian will be on the premises, and water will be provided to the dogs at various points along the race course.

A disc jockey will be on hand to provide music throughout the event, and coffee, hot chocolate, bagels and doughnuts will be available.

Ft. Hunt Park is located off the George Washington Parkway about five miles south of Alexandria and about one mile before the Mt. Vernon mansion.

Last year's Doggie Dash was a huge

success, with almost 300 dedicated pet owners turning out to show their support for the League. This year's event promises to be just as exciting. Rain or shine, mark Sunday, November 6, on your calendar and dash on over to Ft. Hunt Park!

For more information, call the Doggie Dash Hotline at (703) 519-7230.

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4TH ANNUAL DOGGIE DASH REGISTRATION FORM



Owner's name (please print) _____
Last First

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (h) () _____ (w) () _____

Pet's name _____ Breed _____ Sex: M F

Pet's age _____ Date of last visit to veterinarian _____

Please specify whether the dog is a: [] Walker [] Runner

MANDATORY WAIVER

Knowing that participating in the Doggie Dash (the Event) is a potentially hazardous activity, my dog and I enter and participate in this event certifying that we are medically able and properly trained. I agree to abide by any decision of a Doggie Dash official relative to my ability and that of my dog to safely complete in the race. I also assume any and all other risks associated with competing in the Event including, but not limited to, falls, contact with other pets and their owners, the effects of weather, including heat and humidity, traffic and the conditions of the grounds. Knowing these facts, and in consideration of your acceptance of my entry, I hereby, for myself and my dog, my heirs, executors, and administrators, waive, release, and covenant not to sue and forever discharge the Doggie Dash sponsors and any and all parties associated with the Event from any and all claims for damages, or liabilities of any kind arising out of our participation in this Event even though such liability may arise out of my own negligence or action or that of my dog. This release extends to all claims of every kind or nature whatsoever, foreseen or unforeseen, known or unknown.

The undersigned further grants full permission to this Event and any organization conducting the Event and/or agents authorized by them to use any photographs, videotapes, motion pictures, recordings, or any other record of this Event for any purpose.

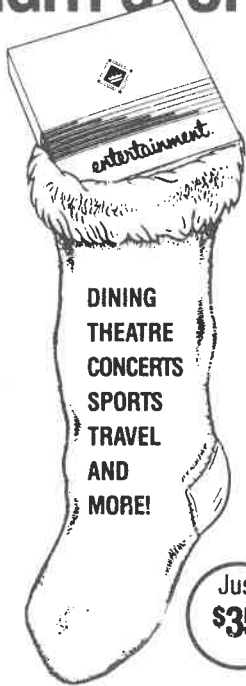
Signature _____ Date _____

Please return this form, together with your \$15 check made payable to AWLA, to Doggie Dash, 576 N. St. Asaph St., Alexandria, VA 22314

'Homeless Homer' Campaign

Our "Homeless Homer" program has got off to a great start! Please keep up the good work—if you use Cycle products, just clip the "Homeless Homer" proof-of-purchase symbols from the packages or cans and then turn them in to the Shelter so we can redeem them for cash. It's one more way you can help us care for homeless animals.

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Don't Be Cruel . . .

Sometimes cruelty can result from ignorance rather than deliberate abuse. Even the most well-meaning people may inflict cruelty simply because they don't know any better. Here are some examples inspired by our case files:

- Collars left on too tight result in ingrown collars and seriously injure or eventually even kill the animal. Collars should be checked weekly.
- Animals tied on or near stairs or a balcony can accidentally hang themselves.
- Dogs and cats should never be allowed out on a balcony. They can—and all too often do—fall to their deaths.
- Cats allowed to play with string can swallow it, perhaps necessitating emergency surgery.
- Leaving an animal in a parked car can result in heat stroke within just 3 to 6 minutes.
- Children playing with rubber bands should not be allowed to put them on an animal's tail, leg, or around the neck. This can impair circulation and even result in the loss of a limb.
- Dogs allowed to ride in the back of an open pick-up truck can lose their traction and fall out.
- Animals should not be kept outside in extreme weather. If you witness an animal being kept outside without proper shelter, please call us at 838-4775 so our officers can investigate.
- An animal tied up outdoors is unable to defend himself against predators or unscrupulous parties who may abduct him for laboratory research. In addition, he can easily become tangled on his tether or chain and may injure himself.



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SANTA PHOTOS

December 2,3,4 - Call for reservations beginning November 15.

836-7643

For more information, call

529 Oronoco Street • Alexandria, VA 22314



During the holidays, please don't forget the homeless pets at the Shelter. You are invited to bring a treat, place it under our tree, and visit the animals. If you've adopted a pet from the League or from any shelter, it's a wonderful way to remember the many pets who still need good homes.

In addition, the League would be grateful for donations of the following articles:

Nyla Bonz
Plastic cat toys
Booda Bonz
Kitty litter
Hard dog biscuits
Towels
Blankets
Copier paper (8-1/2 x 11")
Polaroid film or
35 mm. 100 speed film
Microscope (please call the Shelter for details)

If you can help, these items may be delivered to the Shelter at 910 S. Payne Street in Alexandria, or call (703) 838-4775 for pick-up.

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1994 Canine Olympics: A Gold-Medal Event

The Third Annual Canine Olympics on Labor Day Weekend was a huge success, thanks to generous community support, our hardworking volunteers, and, of course, the dogs who participated. Over 200 canines participated, a 30 percent increase over last year, and an estimated 450 people came to cheer their favorite four-legged athletes on.

The weather was ideal, and we received great media coverage. The event was even reported by at least one TV station in Florida! But best of all, a lot of homeless Shelter animals were adopted as a result of the Olympics.

Our sincere thanks to the following individuals and local businesses who helped to make our 1994 Canine Olympics our best yet:

Gold Sponsors

Del Ray Animal Hospital • Old Town Veterinary Hospital
• P.T. Moran—The Dream Store for Pet Lovers

Silver Sponsor

Elpaw Veterinary Clinic

Bronze Sponsors

Fort Hunt Animal Hospital • Hayfield
Animal Hospital • Old Town Holiday Inn

Contributors

Alexandria Police Department—K-9 Unit • Alexandria Red Cross • Almost Anything Inc. Office Support Services • Annandale Millwork • Armand's Pizzeria (Old Town) • Backyard Boats • The Chart House Restaurant • Patricia Donohue, DVM, Alexandria Animal Hospital • Dunkin' Donuts • Ed Fetterolfe • Fast Signs • FINA Construction • For Pet's Sake • Larry and Yo Frommer • The IAMS Company • The Shelter Staff • Over 60 Dedicated Volunteers



Perennial champion Monkey, who now lives in New York, returned to defend her "titles" and added several more Olympic medals to her collection.

A Farewell from 'King'

I didn't have a name when I came to the Shelter, and no one knew my age, either. In fact, they called me "Old Father Time." I was found early one morning, wandering down King Street. A lady tried to rescue me, but I was frightened and ran away, so she called the League for help. An Animal Control Officer came to get me and finally I was safely settled into the Shelter.

That lady came to see me many times, brushing and bathing me to make me more comfortable. After 10 days, no one showed any interest in adopting me, and so the lady said, "We're going home, King."

I had two wonderful years with "Mom" and her animal family—dogs, cats, and a bird. I gained some weight, developed a beautiful coat, learned to bark a little, and finally to feel happy and safe.

A few days ago, Mom had to make a very difficult decision about me. I



couldn't walk well anymore, and was losing control over my bodily functions.

Well, I'm in heaven now, and have a few last things to say: First, don't assume that an animal wandering around by itself knows where it's going. Most of us are lost, confused, and scared. Please try to help. Second, please don't overlook a senior citizen like me. We have a lot to offer.

Finally, thanks, Mom. I miss you and the gang.

Love,
King

The Man Who Didn't Like Cats

by Pat McDougall

Several years ago I was a single gal living the good life in Mississippi with my beloved "fat cat," Brandy. Enter a d— Yankee from New York who declared that he didn't like cats. Despite this obvious character flaw, I was soon head over heels and agreed to marry the carpetbagger. Tearfully, I arranged to entrust Brandy-Cat with my parents, who stated, "We'll give her a good home, but she won't have the run of the house." Needless to say, in a matter of weeks she had them wrapped around her paw and lived to the age of 18, an adored member of the family who passed away in her favorite spot as my mother stroked her.

On to the recent past: Almost three years ago our son and his girlfriend adopted Little Mac from the Shelter. Since Scott was away at college, Little Mac lived at Annie's house but was a frequent visitor, much to my delight. Then in June 1993 Scott graduated and moved to Orlando, Florida, taking his "son" with him.

Fast forward to December '93: Scott

and Little Mac are coming home for Christmas and I can't wait to see him. (I'm glad Scott is coming home, too, of course.) Then one night my husband comes home and says to put dinner on hold and get into the car, because he wants to show me something. Shortly

afterward we pull up to the Alexandria Animal Shelter, where he tells me, "Go in and pick out your kitten."

Fatchance I had! He had already picked a solid white medium-hair male with amber eyes. I wanted them all, but agreed with his choice.

So on December 10, the man who doesn't like cats brought home my early Christmas present, saying, "I knew when

Continued on page 7



Shelter graduate Boomer relaxes with 'The Man Who Didn't Like Cats.'



THERE IS A CHOICE

Sorrow comes to families in the loss of beloved pets, just as it is true in the loss of our loved ones. This is especially true when a faithful and loving pet has been a part of the family for many years.

Those who have known that special love and trust of a family pet understand the empty place left by a pet's death. They understand, too, the need for proper final care or memorial to one who has been both devoted and dependent on you for its needs throughout life.



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Didn't Like Cats *from page 6*

Mac left again you'd be a basket case."

The subsequent months have been delightful, despite our difficulty in deciding on the proper name. After a few weeks of being listed as "no name" at the vet, we finally settled on Boomer.

Boomer now travels between two homes: weekdays in Old Town and weekends at Solomon's Island, Maryland. He much prefers the weekends at Solomon's, since he has lots of windows from which to watch the endless parade of birds and squirrels and plenty of house to run in. He actually pouts when we come back to Old Town! He loves to travel, as evidenced by his recent attempt to go with "Dad" to Pennsylvania. He took advantage of an unzipped hang-up bag to stow away and was discovered only when my husband wondered why the bag he was carrying to the car was so heavy.

As for the man who doesn't like cats? He brags to me when Boomer jumps onto his lap unasked. I catch him planting frequent kisses on Boomer's furry white head. And tonight, I witnessed a "father-son" talk regarding the use of stereo speakers as a scratching post. Boomer has a litter house and scratching post at both homes, not to mention multiple toys—all compliments of this man.

To me, this proves what I have always believed: that the love of a good cat can reform anyone—even a Yankee! I urge anyone who "doesn't like cats" to give one a chance to change and enrich your life—and by all means, get one from a Shelter.

P.S.—"Dad" just walked downstairs yelling, "Where's my cat?" That says it all.

Author Pat MacDougall says, "I want you to know how very happy we are to belong to one of your former 'residents.'" Would you like to share your life with a wonderful cat like Boomer? There are many healthy animals at the Alexandria Shelter who need a good home, and they would love to meet you!



Thanks For Helping Us Put Together a Purr-fect Show!

In the last issue of *Spotlight*, space did not permit us to acknowledge many of those who helped make our July 10 Household Pet Cat Show a great success. We are indebted to the following individuals and local businesses for their contributions:

Major Sponsors and Ring Sponsors

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And thanks, of course, to the Shelter staff and the many volunteers who donated their time and energy to this event. We couldn't have done it without you!

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Photo by Myra McGovern

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Hours of Operation

Business:

Tue., Thu., Sat. 8 a.m.–5 p.m.
Mon., Wed., Fri. 8 a.m.–8 p.m.
Sun. and Holidays 12 noon–4 p.m.

Animal Visiting:

Tue., Thu., Sat. 11 a.m.–4 p.m.
Mon., Wed., Fri. 11 a.m.–7:30 p.m.
Sun. and Holidays 12 noon–4 p.m.

**Alexandria Animal Shelter
910 S. Payne St. • Alexandria
(703) 838-4775**

Pet Photos With Santa Returns For a Three-Day Engagement

Due to overwhelming demand, the League, in cooperation with the Olde Towne School for Dogs, have decided to extend the annual Pet Photos with Santa sittings to three days. This popular event commemorating the holiday season will be conducted on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, December 2, 3, and 4, at the Olde Towne School for Dogs, 529 Oronoco Street in Alexandria.

Pet owners may bring their companion animals to the School to have their pictures taken with Santa Claus in front of a scenic seasonal 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 and Ginger Noce 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-



Pet Photos with Santa make great holiday cards and gifts.

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 you will want to make yours early to avoid disappointment. Please call (703) 836-7643 after November 14 to schedule your sitting.

REMEMBER: If you ever have reason to be concerned about the welfare of an animal, please call the League at (703) 838-4775.



910 South Payne Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

ADDRESS CORRECTION
REQUESTED



Protect Your Pet from Holiday Hazards

The holidays can be fraught with perils for your pet. Here are a few tips to ensure his safety:

- Secure the tree by tying it to avoid tipping. Keep fragile ornaments toward the top.
- Unplug any lights when you leave the room.
- Keep toxic plants, including poinsettias—and especially mistletoe and holly—away from your pet. If you suspect he's eaten any, call your veterinarian immediately. Also moderately toxic: tree preservative, bubbling lights, products to color flames in the fireplace, candles, tinsel, icicles, angel hair, and styrofoam.
- Don't offer your pet chocolate, which can be harmful to dogs and fatal to cats.

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