

THE ANIMAL WELFARE LEAGUE OF ALEXANDRIA



# SPOTLIGHT on animals

IN OUR 45th YEAR

SUMMER 1991

*Thank You . . . Thank You . . . Thank You! The animals and staff of the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria would like to thank the many, many people who have graciously made donations to the Shelter: animal food, toys and treats; blankets and towels; office supplies; typewriters; a 35MM camera; wildlife lecture sponsorship contributions; and photography, filming and advertising services.*

*We still need the following items:*

- animal treats and toys
- blankets and towels
- Science Diet animal food
- guinea pig, rabbit, hamster and gerbil food
- bird seed
- cat litter
- carpeting
- file cabinets
- office supplies
- lawn mower

*Please call us at 838-4775 if you can help us with any of these items.*

*The League has published the 1991 edition of its brochure, 43 Ways You Can Be Kind to Animals. You can get a copy by sending a self-addressed, stamped #10 envelope to the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria, P.O. Box 20050, Alexandria, VA 22320-1050. An accompanying contribution in any amount would be welcome.*

*The Spotlight welcomes "Alumni Success Stories" about animals adopted from the Alexandria Shelter. If your adopted four-legged family member has changed your life for the better, please send us a letter and a photograph for possible publication in Spotlight.*



**Sharna Fulton of DDB Needham and Kermit O. Jones of Metro in front of the FEW RUNAWAY PETS SURVIVE LIFE IN THE FAST LANE display. (Photo by Ruth Bauer.)**

## Few Runaway Pets Survive Life in the Fast Lane

This eye-catching public service message was displayed on the backs of Metro buses in April, thanks to the combined efforts and talents of staff at DDB Needham Worldwide Advertising and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority.

Last August Sharna Fulton, a DDB staff member, contacted the League about an advertising campaign to convey that overpopulation, homelessness and abuse are not just human issues.

"It is obvious that there is a strong need to educate people on the proper treatment of animals," said Ms. Fulton. Through this initial concept, she and the staff at DDB Needham donated valuable time, resources and services to see that this media campaign became reality. Metro also responded generously by donating advertising space on 50 Northern Virginia buses.

In addition to the Metro bus campaign, DDB Needham produced two posters; one encouraged people to spay and neuter their pets and another focused on how the Shelter helps homeless domestic and wild animals. Both posters are available to the public.

The League is grateful to DDB Needham and Metro for their assistance. It is through the efforts of groups such as this that the League tries to effectively communicate to the public the need for the humane treatment of all animals.

### 1991 Annual Dinner

Please mark Thursday, October 24, on your calendar. That's the date of the League's Annual Dinner. Details will follow in our fall newsletter.

# Summer Pet Care

by Jerry A. Hinn, DVM



Dr. Jerry Hinn, a graduate of the University of Georgia, practices at the Hayfield Animal Hospital in Alexandria. He and his wife, Georgia, have been active in both local and state organized veterinary medical associations.

As spring gives way to summer, it is essential to take special steps to attend to the needs of our pets. These precautions include, of course, such common-sense measures as providing extra water and shade for pets spending more time out of doors, ensuring adequate ventilation, and never, ever leaving your four-legged companion locked in a car.

To minimize the danger of heat prostration, it also is advisable whenever possible to plan our pets' walks early in the morning or later in the evening. Older pets, overweight ones, and those with flatter nose conformations seem especially at risk on these 100-plus degree days or times characterized by high air pollution. Additionally, many pet features are particularly sensitive to sunlight, such as a white cat's nose and ear margins. The same ultraviolet rays that can damage human eyes and promote cataract formation also endanger animals, who are unable to protect themselves with sunglasses.

Warmer weather signals a need for strict attention to heartworm prevention for dogs and vaccinations (particularly against rabies) for dogs, cats and ferrets. You may also wish to ask your veterinarian's advice on vaccinating your dog against Lyme disease, a crippling tick-borne arthritic affliction.

Another constant warm-weather concern is, of course, the flea. Since many humans as well as animals are sensitive to the sting of the saliva from their bite, it is doubly important to try to eradicate these pests before they—and the misery they cause—go out of control. Check with your veterinarian for guidance. Also keep

in mind the following:

- Repellent ointments are available to help prevent injury caused by flies to the tips of erect-ear breeds such as the German shepherd.
- Warbles can penetrate the skin of rabbits kept outside in their hutch, so watch for the sudden development of firm lumps.
- Keep a cautious eye around the rectal area of senior dogs who often doze



## Vet's Corner

off under shrubs and fall prey to fly maggots that can inflict damage. Many owners favor summer haircuts for longer-haired pets that go out of doors, so consult a grooming professional.

- Be alert to hot pavement that can damage your pet's sensitive feet.
- Many pets enjoy the water and beach outings with their family. But don't allow your dog to ride with his head out the car window. He might suddenly jump, or he could develop conjunctivitis from the wind's irritation.

By observing these precautions, you can enjoy a safe and healthy summer with your pet!



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## More Hot Tips for A Safe Summer

*It is very dangerous to leave dogs and other pets in parked cars.* The temperature in a car will rise rapidly, and the animal confined inside will quickly suffer brain damage and die from heatstroke. Even when it is a comfortable 60 degrees outside, it can quickly become 100 degrees in a parked car.

Excessive heat is dangerous for animals outdoors. When a dog is exercising with its owner, it will continue the activity until the owner tires out. So remember, exercise raises a dog's metabolism and boosts its temperature. Overweight dogs are at even greater risk, since they have more body volume to retain heat.

Owners must monitor and restrict their dogs' activity when it is hot outside, and provide plenty of water to relieve dehydration from the heat.

Even inactive pets lying in the warm sun are at risk of heat prostration. Even pets provided with outdoor shelter, shade and water can die from heat stroke if they are left outside for extended periods of time in the blistering summer heat.

Keep in mind that when you get hot, your pet gets hotter. Limiting a dog's activity, minimizing the length of time he is outside, making sure a cool area and fresh water are available and staying alert to any signs of overheating can save your pet's life.



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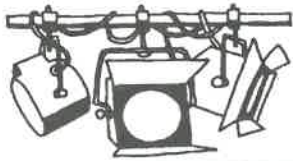
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Jack Steele, *President*  
Joyce McDowell, *Editor*





## Robin Moler Kennel Assistant

Robin Moler joined the Shelter staff in 1990 as a kennel assistant. From the start her dedication and hard work have provided the animals with exceptionally high-quality care. She enjoys spending time with the animals, playing with them, bathing them, or just holding them. Her gentle touch helps to relieve any stress they experience during their stay at the Shelter. The care and well-being of our animals, which is always the Shelter's top priority, is greatly enhanced by Robin's presence.



### Shelter Focus

## League Honors Firefighters and Paramedics

The Animal Welfare League recently honored five members of the Alexandria Fire Department for outstanding humane service.

On May 27 the Fire Department responded to a house fire in Del Ray. When the firefighters entered the burning house they found a dog, a cat, and three birds. The animals were carried out

of the smoke and fire, placed in a cool environment, and given high-flow oxygen by paramedics. The League was called and our kennel manager, Linda Johnson, immediately rushed the animals to the emergency veterinary hospital. There, Dr. Julia Jones provided professional care and was able to save one bird, the dog and the cat. The next day the animals were returned to their owner, who says they are now "doing just fine."

The July 30 ceremony honoring the five firefighters and paramedics who participated in the rescue was conducted in the Council Chambers at City Hall. Mayor Patsy Ticer presented plaques on behalf of the League to firefighters Joseph Marabito and Don Short, and paramedics Kara Kerr, Michelle McCommack and Thomas Lucas. Also attending the ceremony were Fire Chief Jack Beam and a large contingent of firefighters and paramedics, Deputy Chief of Police Al Leversque, Police Lt. Bill Johnson, city staff members, League Board members, and members of the Shelter staff.

The ceremony was widely covered by the local media, and was seen on the Channel 7 evening news.

## The League Needs Your Help

The League recently mailed letters to many of our friends asking them to renew their membership. As you know, the League relies on membership fees and donations to fund many of our programs. Please help us in our work of finding good homes for the hundreds of abandoned animals that we care for every year. If you have not replied to our letter, please do so today. If you did not receive a letter, please use the coupon below. Your contribution will make a difference. Thank you.

**YES!** I want to help the Alexandria Animal Shelter care for homeless animals. I am pleased to enclose my tax-deductible gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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## Saying Good-bye To a Friend

Coming to grips with the loss of an animal is a painful but necessary process that begins the steps toward healing. By denying pain or grief, we only prolong the hurt.

Are you anticipating the death of your pet? Have you recently experienced a loss? If so, you can help yourself and others by sharing your feelings with those who are experiencing the same pain, at free group support meetings sponsored by the League.

These sessions will be conducted by Katherine M. Reiter, who regularly conducts bereavement sessions at the Fairfax County Shelter. Ms. Reiter attended Sacred Heart College and George Mason University, and received her Master's degree from Catholic University. She has 18 years' experience in grief counseling, and three years specializing in pet bereavement. During the last three years she has counseled over 3,500 people.

The meetings will be held at the Alexandria Shelter the first Wednesday of each month beginning September 4, from 7:30 until 9:00 p.m. They will be held for a three-month trial period to determine if there is sufficient attendance for them to continue. The Fairfax County Animal Shelter currently conducts sessions on the third Wednesday of each month.

There is no charge for these sessions. For more information, please call (703) 838-4775.



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# Cruelty Case Resolved

Last October, Alexandria police officers investigated a complaint of pit bull fighting on a local street corner. A young female pit bull, who was being forced to fight a larger adult pit bull, was impounded by the League. It was later learned that this young dog, known as Page, was owned by an Alexandria resident and breeder of pit bull dogs.

The Alexandria Police Department conducted an intensive investigation resulting in a search warrant being issued to examine the other dogs maintained by Page's owner.

The search warrant was served on October 19 and another pit bull, an adult male known as Spot, was seized when 50 to 75 scars were observed covering the dog's head and legs. Spot also was placed in the custody of the League and criminal charges were placed against the owner.

On November 20 the owner was convicted of cruelty to animals and of being an unfit owner for both dogs. The dogs remained in the custody of the League pending an appeal hearing requested by the owner.

On Christmas Eve, Spot was stolen from the Animal Shelter when a thief cut through the perimeter fence and then

through the lock of Spot's kennel run and illegally removed the dog. Three weeks later, Spot was recovered in Washington, D.C. He had again been forced to endure several fights and was suffering from numerous severe wounds.

The appeal hearing was conducted on April 30 and, although the original convictions did not stand, the owner did release Page and Spot to the League and signed a court agreement that he will not own more than one dog at a time.

League personnel had become fond of Page and Spot during their extended stay at the Shelter, and find consolation in knowing that the dogs will not face any further abuse or pain. This case has been a sad reminder that it is always the animals who pay when humans irresponsibly breed and use them for commercial gain.

The League is very grateful to the Alexandria Police Department for its thorough and vigorous investigation of this case.

**To report suspected cruelty to animals, call 838-4775**

## In Memoriam

The Animal Welfare League recently lost a very good friend. Larry Davis died suddenly on July 18. Over the years, Larry and his family adopted their pets from the Shelter. He frequently donated his time and skill as a professional photographer to the League, and his pictures often appeared in the *Spotlight* and in our brochures.

Our sincere condolences are extended to his family.

## 'Adopt-a-Pet' Hotline

WCXR Radio (105.9 FM) and the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria are proud to present "Adopt a Pet," a new phone recording line to be installed on WCXR's regular hotline, 683-1059.

Listeners soon will be able to dial the WCXR hotline number, select the "Adopt a Pet" line, and then hear short descriptions of some of the wonderful animals available for adoption at the Alexandria Animal Shelter. Be sure to check on the "Adopt a Pet" line around August 20.



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