



The ARK

March 2000

Virginia Federation of Humane Societies

Regional News

Northern Virginia

The Most on the Coast!

Animal Welfare League of Alexandria

Congratulations to the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria for being chosen the most outstanding facility on the East Coast by the ASPCA of New York, a national humane organization. The honor carries a \$2,500 ASPCA grant, which PetsMart matches.

Among the League's most notable and successful programs is education, whether in free instructional programs for all ages or in participatory camps for young people from 7 to 15 years of age. The instructional programs, presented by the League's humane educators to organizations in Northern Virginia, include such topics as responsible pet ownership; pet overpopulation; choosing the right pet for your family; the difficulties and dangers of owning exotic animals; animal control laws; the connection between child abuse and animal abuse; careers involving animals or the environment; and habitat destruction.

The Absolutely Awesome Animal Awareness Camp of Alexandria, a summer program, focuses on many of the same topics as the instructional programs, but offers youth the opportunity to interact with animals; explains how each individual *can* make a difference in helping homeless, abandoned, abused and neglected animals; and, perhaps most importantly, fosters in children respect and compassion for all living things. Children can make bird and bat houses, toys for shelter animals, tee shirts with humane messages, paper-mache animal masks, and animal cone feeders. There are poster contests, hands-on instruction with a professional

dog trainer, plays and musical presentations, and video camera practice as an "animal news" reporter. Camps last a week. The cost for half-day camp is \$125; for full-day camp, \$175.

For more information on both instructional programs and summer camp, call the League's humane education line at 703-838-5042.

In a period of recognition and achievement, the League will also have a new shelter, thanks to the Alexandria City Council's vote to fund the facility. The new shelter will be designed to maximize the comfort and security of the animals, reduce the noise level, provide the animals with larger exercise areas, completely isolate ill or diseased animals, and provide a state-of-the-art air exchange system. Potential adopters will have areas allowing them more privacy with animals, and there will be more room for educational programs. The shelter should be ready for occupancy by early 2001.

The Valley

Humane Handling!

Augusta County SPCA

After months of negotiations between the SPCA and the Augusta County Board of Supervisors, the SPCA's board of directors approved a contract to handle the county's stray, unwanted, and "criminal" dogs. Under the six-year contract, the county will pay for services and an additional \$73,607, half the cost of expanding the shelter.

Free Veterinary Care!

SPCA of Winchester-Frederick-Clarke Counties

The SPCA Free Veterinary Clinic opened May 4 to offer veterinary care for pets owned by low-income families. Dogs can receive vaccinations for rabies, distemper, hepatitis, parvo virus, parainfluenza, and leptospirosis. Cats can receive vaccinations for rabies, leukemia, distemper, rhinotracheitis, calici virus, and chlamydia, and they can be tested for leukemia and immunodeficiency virus. Fecal tests for both cats and dogs are performed.

To qualify for the free clinic, the pet owner must live in Winchester, or Frederick or Clarke County and have a yearly income below the following levels:

Single.....	\$14,720
Family of 2.....	19,680
Family of 3.....	22,500
Family of 4.....	25,500

The clinic is open on the first Tuesday of each month from 7:00-9:00 p.m. For more information, call 540-662-8616.

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Issue Highlights

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VFHS Information

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Who to contact for:

Annual Conference

Peggy Allen

Change of Address

Dawn Caldwell

Disaster Preparedness

Peggy Allen

Disease Control

Kay Gross, DVM

Humane Education

Peggy Allen

Laws/Legislation

Teresa Dockery
Dale Bartlett

Membership Dues

Dawn Caldwell

Newsletter

Sara Brown

Start Up/New Groups

Anne Gowdey

Shelter Designs

Anne Gowdey

Memorials

In memory of Jim Godwin by Anne Gowdy and Alvina Pitches.

In memory of "Telly," beloved Doberman of Dawn and Terry Caldwell by Anne Gowdy.

Conference 2000— Don't miss it

The VFHS Annual Conference will be held March 31–April 1 at the Inn at Afton in Waynesboro, Virginia. Sponsored by ASPCA, HSUS, North Shore Animal League, and PetsMart Charities, the conference will feature presentations by experts in a variety of animal welfare areas.

From sessions on Trends in Animal Sheltering, Pre-Adoptions and Off-Site Adoptions to the Business Aspects of Running an Organization and Dealing with Difficult People and with Collectors, there's something for everyone at the conference.

Many of the presentations provide Continuing Education credits for Animal Control Officers and Humane Investigators. Pre-conference activities include tours of the newly expanded Augusta County SPCA Animal Shelter and the Wildlife Center of Virginia.

For more information or to register for the conference call Evie Thrift at 804-785-3109

How Many Dogs Does it Take to Screw in a Light Bulb?

Pit bull: Make me!

Yorkie: I can't reach the stupid lamp.

Beagle: If I bark at it long enough, it will light again.

Afghan: What's a light bulb?

Irish setter: What?

Saluki: Get my slave to do it.

Basset hound: I'll walk across the room tomorrow and sniff it.

Greyhound: How fast do you want it?

Welsh corgi: Tell you what. I'll put a bulb in it, then I'll take it out again and hide it, and if you give me a cookie, I'll show you where I put it—maybe.

Springer: Light bulb? That thing I just ate was a light bulb?

Labrador: Me! Me! Please let me change it. Can I? Can I?

Malamute: Let him do it. You can pet me while he's changing it.

Cocker spaniel: No need to change it. I can be just as loving in the dark.

Collie: If it's dark in here, perhaps you won't see me sleeping on the couch.

German Shepherd. Zero! German shepherds aren't afraid of the dark!

Rotweiler: I didn't mean to knock over the lamp. It was between me and where I wanted to go.

Border Collie: I can do it. And while I'm at it, why don't you let me wire the house.

Golden Retriever: It's a beautiful day. I have my tennis ball and frisbee, and you're inside worrying about a burned-out light bulb? Come on, let's go for a walk.

Cat: Me? That's not my job. Let the dog do it.

—NACA News

Regional News *(continued)*

The Piedmont

Vital Signs!

Orange County Humane Society and Orange County Animal Control

The Orange County Humane Society has erected 25 signs throughout the county warning that "Heat Kills Pets in Parked Vehicles."

Special kudos go to Malone Schooler, owner of Lake of the Woods Shopping Center in Orange County and other shopping centers in the state, who, at his own expense, will be producing and erecting 50 additional signs at his company's shopping centers throughout the Piedmont.

Orange County Animal Control's new vehicle, a former rescue squad ambulance, has not only a new use that increases captured animals' comfort during transport, but a new, animal-friendly message painted on its sides: "Love your pets, spay and neuter."

Central Virginia

Compassionate Campaign!

Richmond SPCA

The Richmond SPCA has taken a major step toward making the greater Richmond area a true community of compassion where every adoptable pet may find a loving home.

In launching its *Campaign for a Compassionate Solution*, the shelter is seeking to exterminate killing as the solution to the overpopulation problem. Chaired by dedicated philanthropist and community leader E. Claiborne Robins, Jr., the campaign is off to a remarkable start with a \$1.2 million gift made in memory of Elizabeth Ireland Graves.

The campaign's goal of \$8 million will permit the shelter to pay for its new building and transform it into a state-of-the-art animal adoption center, spay/neuter center, and animal care facility.

The money will also fund greatly enhanced community services that include an aggressive, large-scale spay/neuter program and broadened humane education programs. Specific plans feature progressive humane ken-

neling, a low-cost neuter center, a modern hospital room for pets in the rehabilitation program, 30 to 40 individual walk-in adoption rooms for dogs and cats, an auditorium and library for educational programs, a dog jogging track, obedience classrooms, and indoor pet exercise areas.

Explaining the momentous choice in the Richmond SPCA's winter newsletter, Robin Starr, the shelter's director, writes: "It took a great deal of courage for our Board to undertake this plan for the future. Decisions that break with the past and move institutions and communities toward more progressive ways of behaving are often met with resistance. Change is always hard for people. But it has become clear ... that [SPCA supporters] not only understand but are deeply supportive of where we are leading this community. We are united in a belief that this community in the 21st century must live by a higher code of compassion than has been true in the past."

Richmond's Prevent a Litter

The Cutting Edge!

Richmond's Prevent a Litter

Prevent a Litter (PAL), a low-cost spay/neuter clinic, opened in Richmond in April. The facility also offers basic vaccinations to animals being spayed or neutered. Although PAL is open to any pet owner, regardless of income, the organization targets pet owners who give homes to strays. Hence, most of the pets spayed at PAL come from private homes, but some shelters send their animals there.

Robin Starr, executive director of the Richmond SPCA, praises the facility as "something Richmond needs very much."

According to PAL, about 14,000 homeless animals are killed in Richmond area animal shelters each year, and countless others are abandoned. Reflecting on these facts, Susan DeFazio, PAL's founder, states that the organization's goal "is for every animal to have a home." For more information, call 804-359-6369.

—*Richmond Times-Dispatch*

Southside

Equal Opportunity Pets!

Southside SPCA

A Southside SPCA canine alumnus is home from Hollywood after behind-the-scenes work as a morale officer offering human stars equal opportunities for hugs, licks, and pets. Initially employed for *Girl, Interrupted*, the M.O. is currently on location in Richmond for filming *The Contender*.

News Bytes

Richmond ranks 9th on Postal Service's dog-bite list: The U.S. Postal Service has named Richmond one of the nation's Top 10 Dog Bite Cities for 1998. In that year, 15 Richmond letter carriers working their routes were bitten by dogs, ranking the city ninth. Nationally, dogs bit 2,541 postal worker in '98.

The worst place to be a letter carrier, bite-wise, was Houston, where 49 were attacked. The city edged out Baltimore, Boston, and Phoenix, which shared the No. 10 spot with 14 bites each.

Richmond Times-Dispatch

Science Bits

Population control: Progress by Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine student Michael Meister-Weisbarth toward developing an immunocontraceptive for cats is described at a new web site, <http://actioncat.com/control.html>

Working under molecular biologist Stephen Boyle, Meister-Weisbarth has genetically modified the salmonella bacterium to deliver the vaccine to feral cats via bait pellets

Other efforts to develop immunocontraception for cats and dogs are reportedly in various stages of development by a number of other institutions and organizations, including, the University of Missouri, the University of Georgia Veterinary School, Dalhousie University, Zonagen, Proteus International, Janssen Pharmaceuticals, and ML Laboratories.

—*Animal People*



Address Service Requested

How to Give a Cat a Pill

1. Grasp cat firmly in your arms. Cradle its head on your elbow, just as if you were giving a baby a bottle. Coo confidently, "That's a nice kitty." Drop the pill in its mouth
2. Retrieve cat from top of lamp and pill from under sofa.
3. Follow same procedure as in 1, but hold cat's front paws down with left hand and back paws down with elbow of right arm. Poke pill into its mouth with right forefinger.
4. Retrieve cat from under bed. Get new pill from bottle. (Resist impulse to get new cat.)
5. Again proceed as in 1, except when you have cat firmly cradled in bottle-feeding position, sit on edge of chair, fold your torso over cat, bring your right hand over your left elbow, open cat's mouth by lifting the upper jaw and pop pill in— quickly! Since your head is down by your knees, you won't be able to see what you are doing. That's just as well.
6. Leave cat hanging on drapes. Leave pill in your hair.
7. If you are a woman, have a good cry. If you are a man, have a good cry.
8. Now pull yourself together. Who's the boss here anyway? Retrieve cat and pill. Assuming position 1, say sternly, "Who's the the boss here anyway?" Open cat's mouth, take pill and —Oooops!
9. This isn't working, is it? Collapse and think. Aha! Those flashing claws are causing the chaos.
10. Crawl to the linen closet. Drag back a large beach towel. Spread towel on floor.
11. Retrieve cat from kitchen counter and pill from potted plant.
12. Spread cat on towel near one end with its head over long edge.
13. Flatten cat's front and back legs over its stomach. (Resist impulse to flatten cat.)
14. Roll cat in towel. Work fast; time and tabbies wait for no man— or woman!
15. Resume position 1. Rotate your left hand to cat's head. Press its mouth at the jaw hinges like opening the petals of a snapdragon.
16. Drop pill into cat's mouth and poke gently. Voila! It's done!
17. Vacuum up loose fur (cat's). Apply bandages to wounds (yours).
18. Take two aspirins and lie down.

—Retrieved from the Internet