



Good News Gazette

Richmond SPCA—Plenty to Dance About!

Accolades for Adoptions

In its front-page article of its summer issue of *Wayfarer's News*, the Richmond SPCA proudly announced that in Richmond, "an incredible 42% of dog owners and 21% of cat owners get their pets from the Richmond SPCA."

Nationally, the paper stated, only 14% of families adopt their dogs and 12% of families adopt their cats from shelters. The Richmond SPCA cares "for almost two thirds of the area's homeless pets, double the national average for humane societies, and (does) so without any government funding."

The Link

On May 10, the Richmond SPCA hosted an all-day conference on "The Link," the well-established but often ignored correlation between violence to humans and violence to animals. Noting that "[b]y teaching, advocating for, and practicing compassion and empathy toward both children and animals, we produce a more compassionate, less violent society," experts Maureen Fredrickson and Michael Kaufman, both from the American Humane Association, revealed that scientific, psychological, and sociological research indicates that children who are cruel to animals are more likely, as adults, to show aggression toward humans; that violent prisoners have, as children, usually abused animals; that abused children are likely to abuse animals and thereby reveal the criminal abusive behavior of adults; and that children learn cruel behavior from adults and reenact it with animals. Fredrickson and Kaufman strongly advocated that teachers, parents, law enforcers, court personnel, and social service workers

regard animal cruelty as a serious offense, both for itself and as an indicator of past, present, and future crimes against human beings. For further information, contact:

American Humane Association
63 Inverness Drive East
Englewood, CO 80112-5117
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Campaign for a Compassionate Solution

Updating readers of the summer issue of *Wayfarer's News* on the progress of the shelter's fundraising campaign for a state-of-the-art adoption and sterilization facility, Robin Starr, the director of the Richmond SPCA, wrote: "The immediate and enthusiastic response of the community has certainly exceeded our greatest expectations. It is clear that the community is deeply moved by our goal of ending the killing of homeless animals in this community."

Over \$4 million of the shelter's \$8 million goal has already been raised, \$800,000 between late November, when the Richmond SPCA announced its plans, and the end of the year.

Fur Ball 2000

Richmond SPCA's second annual Fur Ball attracted over 300 dancing humans and 30 tail-wagging pets to raise money for the Cinderella Fund, which pays for veterinary care for mistreated or neglected animals brought to the shelter.

The gala earned over \$150,000, including a \$40,000 gift from Patricia Cornwell for the purchase of a new van for the SAAF program. The van will transport to the shelter the pets of abused spouses seeking shelter at the YWCA.

Rockingham-Harrisonburg SPCA—A stitch in time saves hundreds!

According to *Tattle Tails*, Rockingham-Harrisonburg SPCA's newsletter, "For the 3rd consecutive year, the Rockingham-Harrisonburg SPCA joined forces with the Pet-Fix Coalition and area veterinarians to offer reduced cost spay/neuter services to the community during the month of February.

Once again, incredible results were achieved by the caring veterinarians of our community. A record breaking 738 surgeries were performed during the month by these dedicated professionals! In just three years of participation in the program 1575 pets have received the benefits of this life saving procedure." More eloquent than any words, however, are the numbers. Here they are:

Year	Received	Euthanized
1996	5696	4628
1997	5102	4040
1998	4869	3771
1999	4537	3219

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VFHS Information

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Who to contact for:

Annual Conference

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Disaster Preparedness

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Disease Control

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Humane Education

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Laws/Legislation

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Membership Dues

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Newsletter

Sara Brown
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Start Up/New Groups

Peggy Allen
540-879-9874

Shelter Designs/Building Information

Anne Gowdey
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become welcome neighborhood visitors, partnering with animal obedience clubs, and waiving leash violations if the owner has the animal sterilized within 15 days.

Among the most progressive animal control departments is Calgary Animal Services. In Calgary, animal control initiated a six-month moratorium on prosecutions and fines for unlicensed animals. Once the moratorium expired, Calgary Animal Services began levying heavy fines on license violators--\$250 for a first or second violation and \$750 for a third one. The additional revenue this program generated allowed the agency to equip its vehicles with onboard computers, enabling officers to "look up a lost [or roaming] dog's license number and drive the animal home. To date, about 39 percent of the animals picked up have benefited from this new service." It costs the owner \$25, a charge owners prefer to having their animal go to the shelter. Moreover, the article continues, the program allows officers to talk with owners to determine how the animal got loose and how to prevent it from happening again.

Virginia animal control need not hang its head in the presence of these outstanding organizations. VACA has been nominated for NACA's Outstanding Association for Animal Control. According to VACA News, "VACA has already been recognized for our commitment to training and professional standards, receiving a \$500 grant from NACA for our 22nd Annual Conference." Regardless of the outcome of the NACA competition, we at the VA Federation know who's the best!

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Animal Control—From catcher to caregiver!

According to a recent issue of the American Humane Association magazine, "...many animal control agencies include the protection and welfare of animals as part of their mission.... As

the stereotypes fade and agencies refashion their image, new and innovative programs are emerging that are putting animal control in the forefront of humane work." Innovations include beautifying the pound itself, offering animals through off-site adoption centers, creating bike patrol units that

2000 General Assembly Session— Animal Legislation

Passed

HB 30; SB 30 Budget Bill.

Patrons-Vincent F. Callahan, Jr.; John H. Chichester

Makes appropriations for the 2000-02 biennium.

Item # 96 #1c provides \$100,000/year from the general fund for the Department of Agriculture to conduct statewide training of animal control officers as required by standards approved by the Department of Criminal Justice Services and the State Veterinarian. No additional FTEs are funded.

Item #571 provides \$500,000/year to the Virginia Marine Science Museum for expansion that may include construction of a dolphin tank. The City of Virginia Beach had originally requested \$10 million from the state for expansion that would include construction of a dolphin tank.

HB 638; SB 440 Vicious or dangerous dogs; local animal ordinances.

Patrons-Donald L. Williams; D. Nick Rerras

Provides that an animal control officer shall confine an animal believed to be a dangerous or vicious dog until a decision is made by a magistrate as to whether or not the animal is a dangerous or vicious dog. The bill provides that an animal control officer may permit the owner or custodian to confine the animal until a decision is made if the animal control officer determines that the owner or custodian can confine the animal in a manner that protects the public safety. Currently, the owner of the animal may confine the animal until a decision is made without a determination by the animal control officer that the owner can confine the animal in a manner that protects the public safety

HB 744 Functions of a multi-jurisdiction grand jury; animal cruelty.

Patron-Eric I. Cantor

Allows multi-jurisdictional grand juries to investigate incidents of cruelty to animals.

HB 787; HJ 124 Constitutional amendment (voter referendum); right to hunt, fish, and harvest game.

Patron-R. Creigh Deeds

Provides for a referendum at the November 7, 2000, election to approve or reject the addition to the Conservation Article of a statement that "the people have a right to hunt, fish, and harvest game, subject to such regulations and restrictions as the General Assembly may prescribe by general law."

HB 994 Veterinarians; release of immunization information.

Patron-William P. Robinson, Jr.

Requires veterinarians to release rabies immunization and relevant treatment data for any animal under their care when requested by a treating physician of a person when administration of the rabies treatment protocol is being contemplated.

HB 1514 Animal pounds; civil penalties.

Patron-Harvey B. Morgan

Allows the Board of Agriculture and Consumer Services to impose civil penalties on animal shelters and county and city pounds that are violating laws and Board regulations. The penalties may not exceed \$1,000 per violation, and each day is considered a separate offense. In determining the amount of any civil penalty, the Board shall consider (i) the history of previous violations at the pound; (ii) whether the violation has caused injury to, or death or suffering of, an animal; and (iii) the demonstrated good faith of the locality to achieve compliance after notification of the violation. This bill has a delayed effective date of July 1, 2001.

Failed

HB 639; SB 439 Vicious or dangerous dogs; local animal ordinances.

Patrons-Donald L. Williams; D. Nick Rerras

Permits localities to adopt more stringent ordinances to control dangerous or vicious dogs than are set forth in the dangerous or vicious dog provisions in the Code of Virginia.

HB 703 Animal control officers, etc., to report suspected child abuse.

Patron-Vivian E. Watts

Requires animal control officers, humane investigators, and State Veterinarian's representatives to report suspected child abuse or neglect in the same manner as law-enforcement officers, teachers, etc.

HB 718 Crimes against nature; penalty

Patron-L. Karen Darner

Reduces the penalty for crimes against nature, excluding bestiality, between consenting adults from a Class 6 felony to a Class 4 misdemeanor. As introduced, this bill similarly reduced the penalty for bestiality.

HB 825 Maiming, killing or poisoning fowl or companion animals; penalty.

Patron-S. Chris Jones

Increases the penalty for maliciously shooting, stabbing, wounding, administering poison to, or exposing poison with intent that it be taken by a fowl or companion animal from a Class 1 misdemeanor to a Class 6 felony.

Carried Over

HB 580 Sale of wildlife parts.

Patron-Jo Ann S. Davis

Allows Native Americans who possess tribal enrollment cards indicating that they are members of a bona fide state or federally recognized tribe to possess, offer for sale, sell, offer to purchase, or purchase wildlife parts.

HB 672 Assault and battery on police animals; penalty.

Patron-Kathy J. Byron

Punishes assault and battery on a police animal as a Class 1 misdemeanor.

Currently this is not a crime; however, maliciously doing bodily injury to a police animal is punishable as a Class 5 felony.

HB 1252 License tax on ownership of dogs or cats.

Patron-Robert H. Brink

Increases the maximum amount that the governing body of a county or city may impose as a license tax on the ownership of a dog or cat from \$10 to \$25 per year.

2000 Annual Conference

Held this year on March 31 and April 1 at the Inn at Afton, the Federation's annual conference attracted over 200 attendees and featured 13 widely recognized speakers on such diverse topics as new Virginia laws, online adoptions, trends in shelter care, dealing with animal collectors, and euthanasia. While the scenic beauty and the outstanding hard work and cooperation from the staff at the Inn at Afton assured that a good time was had by all, this conference attacked the hard issues.

Underlying nearly every presentation was the recognition that overpopulation represents by far the most serious of the problems facing every animal welfare organization; solving this problem, and dealing with the difficulties attendant upon the problem and its solutions, formed the substance of many programs.

For reducing the future population education, legislation, and sterilization solutions (LESS) stood as the trinity of methods. By educating pet owners that sterilization is the compassionate, responsible, manly (or womanly) thing to do, and by persuading localities to adopt sterilization ordinances that the VA Code already allows them to do, the Federation hopes that the number of unwanted animals and shelter killings will not only plummet, but will drop to zero.

In the meantime, however, the crimson tidal wave must be dealt with, and several speakers proposed ways to increase adoptions: improve the image of a



President Peggy Allen and former Co-president, Teresa Dockery led the presentation on LESS.

shelter by keeping it clean, light, and odor-free and making it homelike; assure that the animals are healthy, well-groomed, and properly matched to the people who adopt them; use popular community sites such as shopping centers and local events to publicize the animals and show them for adoptions; cultivate the media; and, most innovatively, use the Internet to publicize the availability of animals, match animals with people, arrange for adoptions, and reunite owners with lost pets.

For the animals that remain in the shelter, euthanasia remains the most widespread "solution," creating the obvious, dismal paradox that those who love the animals the most must be their executioners. While this match of care with death is incontrovertibly best for the animals, its toll on people is enormous. Helping shelter personnel deal with euthanasia was the subject of one of the most highly attended programs. A related workshop on misguided and often damaging "rescuers" described animal collectors and how to help them and their animals.

For further information, you can contact the following people:

Agricultural Animals; Law Update, Enforcing Current Law, Understanding Regulations

Charlotte Robinson, DVM
VA Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
1360 Rose Garden Drive
Bedford, VA 24523
540-297-5675

Trends in Animal Shelters; Dealing with Difficult People

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National Shelter Outreach-ASPCA
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Pre-Adoptions; Off Site Adoptions

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Special Adoption Services
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Animal Welfare

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Anne Anderson, Executive Director
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Trends in Animal Shelters; The Business Aspects of Running an Organization

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Locating Homes for Animals Through the Internet

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Dealing with Collectors

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Law Update, Enforcing Current Law, Understanding Regulations

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Wildlife Issues

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Waynesboro, VA 22980
540-942-WILD



The vendor area provided participants with a wide assortment of information and materials.

Dealing with Collectors

Media Relations

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The Federation wishes to thank most heartily and sincerely all of these experts and the organizations that they represent.

The Federation also recognized six people for their outstanding work in improving animal welfare during 1999. Recipients of the Federation's 2000

Awards were presented to:

Virginia Godwin in memory of Jim Godwin. Jim was a true "hero" to the animals of the Commonwealth of Virginia. He gave unselfishly of himself to his local organization, the SPCA of Petersburg-Colonial Heights, and other area organizations and to the Federation. He worked diligently for the passage of stronger laws to protect animals and the enforcement of those laws once passed. Jim's memory will live on in his many accomplishments for animal welfare.

City of Richmond and Councilman John Conrad. Recently, the City of Richmond at the request of the Richmond SPCA and the invitation of Councilman Conrad passed an ordinance requiring that every animal adopted from the Richmond pound be sterilized prior to adoption. This progressive step exemplifies the commitment by the city leaders to eliminate the need to euthanize healthy, adoptable animals.

Dawn Caldwell, VFHS Treasurer. Dawn has served as Treasurer for the past three years and has been a tremendous asset to the Federation. Her financial skills and abilities have been evident in the organization and production of the financial reports and activities.

Alvina Pitches. Alvina became involved with the Federation over twenty years ago. She served as legislative liaison, vice-president, and president. She

founded the Martinsville-Henry County SPCA, was a humane investigator, and a wildlife rehabilitator. Through each office and position Al gave of herself for the betterment of the lives of animals. She touched the lives, directly and indirectly, of hundreds of thousands of animals in this state and in others.

Tenny Mudge and Michael Lonergan. In 1995, Tenny and Michael lost their 10-year old Samoyed-Australian shepherd, "Chinook" in a tragic accident. While swimming after beavers in a local pond, a stick became lodged in "Chinook's" collar and he strangled himself trying to free it. After having difficulty trying to locate a breakaway collar for "Chinook" and the couple's other pets, Tenny decided to invent a collar. Thus the "Guardian Angel Breakaway Safety Collar" was born.



Rachel Query of the Humane Society of the United States discussed strategies for marketing and public relations.



Tammy Kirpatrick of North Shore Animal League talked about pre-adoption procedures and guidelines for off-site adoptions.



ASPCA, The Humane Society of the United States, North Shore Animal League, and PetsMart, were also represented by informational displays and a vast assortment of printed materials for participants to take back to their organizations.

Virginia Federation of Humane Societies
826 Oakwood Drive
Harrisonburg, VA 22801-3924

Nonprofit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 9
Harrisonburg, VA



Address Service Requested

Early Spay/Neuter— A View from the AVMA

Critical to reducing the euthanasia rate, obviously, is reducing the birth rate. While mandatory sterilization laws have been in place for several years, compliance has been incomplete. To remedy this deficiency, a number of veterinarians have begun to sterilize puppies and kittens before they are adopted, a practice that has stimulated debate within the profession. In its April 2000 issue of *Veterinary Practice News*, the AVMA “supports the concept of early (prepubertal, 8 to 16 weeks of age) gonadectomy in dogs and cats in an effort to reduce the number of unwanted animals of these species and recommends veterinarians use their best medical judgment in deciding at what age gonadectomy should be performed on individual animals.” The article reports that there appears to be no increase in the incidence of urinary blockages as a result of early surgery and, in fact, the number of minor complications associated with the

surgery is less among the young animals than among the “traditional-age neuter group.” The rate of major complications in the two groups is the same. Some veterinarians have reported higher rates of infections in immature shelter animals that were sterilized than among the older animals, a difference possibly attributable to the animal’s post-operative environment.

VFHS Executive Committee Meeting

On June 8, 9, and 10, the Federation’s new executive committee met at the Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine (VMRCVM) in Blacksburg to discuss routine business and to plan the 2001 Annual Conference. In response to attendee requests, next year’s conference will focus on controlling population and reducing euthanasia rates through legislation, education and sterilization. Since money makes all this easier, fundraising will be a major topic.

Early arrivers toured the Humane Society of Montgomery County’s shelter, located just outside Christiansburg in a pastoral setting overlooking meadows and mountains. This is a non-euthanizing shelter with healthy animals housed in a fine facility; an enthusiastic, innovative staff; and exemplary community support. You can visit their web site at www.civic.bev.net/hsmc. Check it out!



Executive committee members were given a tour of the Veterinary College.