



Animal Welfare
League of Arlington

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For Immediate Release

The Animal Welfare League of Arlington Staff and Volunteers Nominated for Metropolitan Council of Governments Awards

Arlington, VA. January 26, 2009. The Animal Welfare League of Arlington, the county's official humane society, is proud to announce that several League staff and volunteers have been nominated to receive awards from the Metropolitan Council of Governments (COG) Animal Services Committee for their outstanding dedication, commitment, and service to animal welfare. COG established the awards in 2005 to bring recognition to the professionals and volunteers who dedicate themselves to helping animal in need in the metro region. Award winners will be announced at the COG Awards Ceremony on Friday, March 13, 2009, at 9:30 a.m.

The nominees and their award categories are:

Volunteers of the Year: Rebecca Kingery, Nicky Roberts, Kit Hudgens, and Vanessa Hartman for their dedication to small companion animals at the shelter and their assistance with adoptions of 159 rabbits, guinea pigs, hamsters, gerbils, rats, mice, birds, and ferrets in 2008. Kit Hudgens also assisted with the transfer to rescue groups of more than 60 of these pets in the same time period. Without their help the shelter would be overwhelmed with these small companion animals.

Animal Care Team of the Year: Bonnie Wilson, Kim O'Keefe and their kennel staff go far beyond just keeping our shelter clean and comfortable for our animals. Each day they have long lists of medications, treatments, and special diets to administer. Often animals stay at the shelter for several weeks while getting special care. The kennel staff manages to give the attention needed by these special needs animals while doing all the routine care for more than 100 shelter animals every day.

Animal Control Officer/Humane Officer of the Year: Alice Burton, Chief Animal Control Officer. After neighbors reported that an Arlington resident was keeping a large number of exotic snakes in his home, the Arlington County Board approved a total ban on keeping poisonous snakes with no grandfathering clause for current owners. The snake owner had to remove all the snakes from his home in Arlington County and had to submit to an inspection by Animal Control to show his compliance with the law. Throughout the process Officer

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Burton managed to keep the owner's trust and work with him in a cooperative manner. She was a vital resource to Arlington County law makers and residents.

Community Partnership of the Year: Arlington County Office of Emergency Management (Lucia Schmidt, Debbie Powers), Animal Welfare League of Arlington (Kay Speerstra), Arlington County Dept. of Health and Human Services (Robert Sharpe), Arlington/Alexandria Chapter of the American Red Cross (Dawn Kuras). A public-private partnership in Arlington took the county one step closer to disaster preparedness by setting up a people and pets co-shelter exercise on Saturday, May 31, 2008, in Arlington. The county Department of Human Services, Office of Emergency Management, American Red Cross-Arlington County Chapter, and the Animal Welfare League of Arlington worked closely together to plan the exercise and execute it. The county made a school building available for the exercise.

Veterinarian of the Year: Dr. Jeff Newman and the staff of Caring Hands Animal Hospital, Arlington. Animal Control picked up a stray kitten that had climbed into a clothes dryer and gotten burned. The kitten was treated at an emergency clinic immediately and brought back to the shelter with medication. Several days later, staff noticed that the kitten had a fever and appeared to be in pain and was taken to Caring Hands Animal Hospital where he was treated and put on new medications. We named the kitten Fergus while caring for him. When we sent Fergus to Caring Hands a second time for adjustment of his medications, Dr. Newman and his staff offered to keep him at the animal hospital where they could monitor him closely and protect him from any possible contagion. Fergus stayed at Caring Hands for several weeks (at no cost to the League) being monitored and treated for severe burns. He recovered well and was adopted.

Administrative/Customer Service of the Year: Rita Naimoli, Coordinator of Volunteer Training for the Animal Welfare League of Arlington. Each year the League holds four, three-hour orientation sessions for new volunteers and then integrates them into the work of the shelter. In 2008 Rita ran orientations for 99 new volunteers and interviewed almost every one of them individually to help determine what kind of volunteer work they were best suited for. Some volunteer jobs such as front desk assistant, kennel assistant, and pet-assisted therapy volunteer require specific training. Rita schedules and organizes all of these additional training sessions.



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Adoption Team of the Year: Rebecca Gall and the adoptions team at the Animal Welfare League of Arlington. Rebecca did extensive research and received training to begin an adoption program for pitbulls at the League for the first time in over 20 years. She also helped the Loudoun County Shelter, which is not allowed to place pitbulls for adoption, by accepting transfers of adoptable pitbulls.

About the League. Since 1944, the Animal Welfare League of Arlington has been committed to the humane treatment of animals and to the promotion of animal welfare. The League provides temporary care and refuge for homeless and suffering animals, places animals in loving, responsible homes, provides animal control services to Arlington County, educates the public, and provides a wide variety of community services.

You can see all of our available animals on our Web site at www.awla.org or call us at 703-931-9241 x200. Our staff and volunteers will be happy to help you meet our animals and find the right one to become your new best friend. Visit us Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, noon to 7:00 p.m. or Saturday and Sunday, 12:00 noon to 4:00 p.m. at 2650 S. Arlington Mill Drive, Arlington, VA 22206.

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