



Animal Welfare  
League of Arlington

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## **For Immediate Release**

### **Animal Welfare League of Arlington Staff and Volunteer Honored for Excellence**

**Arlington, VA, March 14, 2007 – Kay Speerstra, Executive Director of the Animal Welfare League of Arlington (League); Ann Beam, Animal Control Administrative Assistant at the League; and Jamie Nicholas, volunteer foster parent, received awards for excellence in the animal service field from the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments.**

Kay Speerstra received the COG Leadership Award for her outstanding work at the League, overseeing major, positive changes in policy and procedure at the League that has resulted in better health care for shelter animals, an increase in adoption and decrease in euthanasia. Speerstra has also been instrumental in increased communications and collaboration among area animal shelters, participating in inter-shelter animal transfers and establishing regular meetings among area shelter directors. “While this is a great honor, it is important to recognize that the League’s success has been dependant upon the efforts and cooperation of everyone involved including League staff and volunteers, Arlington County leaders and area shelter directors,” said Speerstra.

Ann Beam, League Administrative Assistant, was awarded for her excellent administrative and customer service. Among many duties, Beam handles all bite reports and quarantines in Arlington County, including 101 bite cases and 60 quarantines in 2006. Beam counsels bite victims, who are often very upset, in a calm, professional manner, and ensures that all bite and quarantine procedures are carried out without further pain or inconvenience to the victim. “The quarantine period for an animal that has bitten someone is ten days and I often tell the victims that the longer they don’t hear from us the better. This usually gets a chuckle out of an otherwise worried bite victim,” said Beam.

Jamie Nicholas, League volunteer, was awarded Volunteer of the Year, for her part in helping to reduce euthanasia and increase adoptions, by fostering kittens that are not of legal adoption age or weight. Nicholas has fostered more than a dozen kittens and cats in the last year for one to five months at a time. She has spent countless hours caring for sick kittens, rushing them to a vet for medical treatment and feeding, weighing, socializing and monitoring their progress daily. In addition to her demanding volunteer foster parent schedule, Nicholas still finds time to help the League by identifying potential adopters for the kittens and for driving wildlife to rehabilitators.

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**2650 S. Arlington Mill Drive Arlington, VA 22206**



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“The significance of this awards ceremony is to recognize the hard work that animal service professionals provide for the animals in our region,” said Rodney Taylor, associate director of Animal Services Management for Prince George’s County and chair of the Animal Services Committee. “They work tirelessly and spend countless hours for the safety and livelihood of the animals.”

Since 2000, COG’s Animal Services Committee has provided the animal services community with an opportunity to meet and address regional animal care and protection issues as well as public safety and health concerns. This year’s awards were sponsored by COG, The Humane Society of the United States, and The American Humane Association.

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 suitable homes, provides animal control services to Arlington County, educates the public, and provides a wide variety of community services.

For further information, visit the League, Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, noon to 7:00 p.m. or Saturday and Sunday, noon to 4:00 p.m. at 2650 S. Arlington Mill Drive; visit our Web site at [www.awla.org](http://www.awla.org).



*From left: Ann Beam and Kay Speerstra of the Animal Welfare League of Arlington, and Barbara Prescott, a wildlife rehabilitator, receive their awards; Jamie Nicholas receives the award for Volunteer of the Year.*

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