What Does Animal Control Do For You?

Have you ever encountered an injured bird, found a raccoon in your trash can, or seen a dog running in the street? If you’ve experienced any of these situations, you may have called your local animal control agency. The person who responded was probably an animal control officer. This profession has come a long way from the historic “dog catcher” role. Along with our society’s attitude toward animals, the role of animal control has evolved over the last decades and has become that of humane educator and animal rescuer.

On July 1, 1983, the League took over animal control duties from Arlington County and hired three animal control officers for these added responsibilities. Animal Control is often part of municipal police departments. The League took over this role because we believed that having a closer connection between animal control and animal welfare would provide better service to the community. In addition to state-required training, our officers also benefit from training on topics including animal care and handling, native wildlife, and compassion fatigue.

A typical day for one of our officers can range from minor complaints (“an unknown dog is leaving poop on my lawn”) to true emergencies (a child is bitten by a stray cat, or a stray dog is hit by a car). Officers need skills in dealing with animals as well as with people. They might be crawling under a shed to capture a litter of abandoned kittens and later the same day mediating a conflict between neighbors about a barking dog.

The following situations illustrate the tremendous variety of problems that greet our officers every day (and night):

The Arlington Police called the League on February 14 about a dog running loose. It initially started on Fairfax Drive and ended up on Washington Boulevard where it was hit by a car. After being hit, the dog ran away. Officer Jennifer Gaines found the shepherd on North Courthouse Road and immediately brought it to Caring Hands Animal Hospital. The female dog had no identification tag or microchip. The vets at Caring Hands stabilized the dog and gave her pain medication, but recommended overnight care. Alice Burton, Chief Animal Control Officer, picked up the dog and took her to the Alexandria Emergency Veterinary Clinic for overnight care. While she was transporting the dog, the owner called the League to report the...
dog as lost. A volunteer radioed Officer Burton. She spoke with the owner and gave him directions to the emergency clinic where he was reunited with his dog.

One of Officer Burton’s more interesting wildlife calls came when a resident reported seeing a raccoon in a tree with a jar stuck on its head. On arrival at the scene, she could see a jar protruding from a nook in the tree. The jar was brown plastic and clouded with moisture. She tapped on the jar, and the raccoon lifted up its head. She pulled the jar off, and the raccoon took a VERY deep breath. He looked shocked to see her staring at him, but otherwise he appeared healthy. She left him alone to go about his business much more comfortably.

On occasion officers assist police and fire departments in tragic circumstances. Arlington police called Officer Burton to a residence where they had found a deceased woman. They could not remove her body because her Basset Hound was protecting it. Officer Burton restrained the dog and took her out of the apartment into the hallway. She read the dog’s identification tag and saw that her name was Portia. She spoke to the dog by name, and Portia seemed to relax immediately. Officer Burton then searched the apartment and found a cat hiding in a kitchen cupboard. She took both pets back to the shelter where they had stayed in our Safekeeping Program until their owner’s family could pick them up.

Animal Control officers perform a variety of services to the community. While public safety is their first priority, they also play a large role in humane education and animal rescue. The next time you see an animal in distress, or have a question about sharing our world with wildlife, remember that there are professionals ready to help 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Call the League at 703-931-9241.

The National Animal Control Association (NACA) promotes April 13-19, 2008, as National Animal Control Appreciation Week

This week of appreciation gives recognition to the hard-working men and women of Animal Control that serve the public like all other public safety and law enforcement personnel. To learn more about NACA visit http://www.nacanet.org/acoapprec.htm.

Adopted

2007 Animal Service Awards

Each year the Metropolitan Council of Governments (COG) Animal Services Committee presents awards to individuals and groups in the animal welfare field who have demonstrated outstanding dedication to helping animals. For the 2007 awards, the League has several nominees.

Animal Control Officer Nominee Jennifer Gaines, Animal Welfare League of Arlington

An Arlington family who had adopted an older dog from the Animal Welfare League of Arlington decided that they wanted to get him a companion. They found a breeder on the Eastern Shore who had a 3-year old female. The breeder mentioned that the dog displayed some aggression around food, but the couple thought that this was a problem they could work on. During the car ride back to Arlington, the dog seemed fearful and nervous. When they got her home late that night, her fear turned into severe aggression. She began snarling, barking, growling, and lunging at them. The two adults and their adopted dog were cornered in their living room.

They called Arlington animal control on a cell phone and were connected with the officer on duty, Jennifer Gaines. She responded to the location immediately, but could not get in the locked door of the apartment. The owner couldn’t get past the snarling dog to unlock the door so he tossed his keys through a window to officer Gaines. Working all alone officer Gaines unlocked the door and carefully entered the apartment. The frightened owners watched as she used a control pole to catch the dog as it lunged at her. She loaded the dog into a crate in her animal control vehicle and brought her back to the shelter at 1:00am.

Wildlife Rehabilitator Nominee Nora Missell

Nora Missell is licensed in the Commonwealth of Virginia to rehabilitate song birds and small mammals. She has been one of the League’s most reliable resources for hundreds of birds that have been orphaned, injured, or sick over the past several years. In fiscal 2007 Nora took birds from the League 57 times. These birds need constant care over several weeks to survive and be healthy enough to return to the wild. Nora also will take birds and other wildlife for transfer to other rehabilitators. She is always helpful to League staff and volunteers and is very willing to consult on wildlife questions and recommend other rehabilitators when appropriate. Nora has also trained apprentice volunteer wildlife rehabilitators. Without volunteers like Nora and those she has trained, the League would be inundated with rescued birds every summer with nowhere to take them.

Veterinarian Nominee Kira Leedom, DVM Ballston Animal Hospital

A stray kitten brought to the League in December 2006 was found to have a birth defect called microphthalmia which is characterized by abnormally small, shrunken eyes. Because the eyes were atrophied, the kitten was blind. The kitten also had entropion, a medical condition in which the eyelids fold inward. It is very uncomfortable, as the eyelashes rub against the cornea constantly. Because of the discomfort and likelihood of infection, the only remedy for the condition was removal of the eyes (enucleation). Although the kitten was blind, she would be fully capable of functioning in a home.

A double enucleation is a rare surgery that is often referred to a specialist, but Dr. Kira Leedom of Ballston Animal Hospital agreed to do the surgery. The League pays for unusual medical expenses through our Woody and Mickey Health Pet Fund, and it is very important that we try to save expenses whenever possible (see Pawpourri, Summer 2007). Dr.
Leedom and Ballston gave us a reduced price on the surgery which was also planned to include a spay.

During the surgery Dr. Leedom discovered a surprise. The kitten we named Nellie was actually a male with testicles that had not descended. From that moment Nellie became Mr. Nellie. He recovered from this major surgery quickly and was adopted in March 2007. We have heard from his adopters that Mr. Nellie’s favorite activities are playing with his cat roommate and snuggling up to his people. Thanks to Dr. Leedom, Mr. Nellie is enjoying life to the fullest.

**Volunteer Nominee**

**Carol Moylan, Animal Welfare League of Arlington**

Carol Moylan has been an amazing advocate, leader and tireless volunteer for the League. While serving two terms on the Board of Directors, Carol has led the League through a time of significant change. During her term as President of the AWLA Board of Directors, Carol represented the League before the Arlington County Board and the public when a small group of residents questioned some of the League’s policies and procedures. She devoted a great deal of her personal time to meeting with these residents and County representatives. After a very positive review by the American Humane Association, Carol oversaw the transition to a new executive director after more than 19 years. In 2007 Carol was instrumental in the decision to move forward with an addition to the League’s current facility.

Carol is the Chair of the League’s Finance Committee and is responsible for the overall budget of the Animal Welfare League of Arlington. She is also one of the League’s most committed Front Desk volunteers. Carol has a true gift for helping people with the adoption of a new pet, the surrendering of pets, the dispatching of animal control calls and generally sharing her desire to help both people and animals.

**Community Partnership Nominees:**


Kay Speerstra, Executive Director of the League, along with the leaders of the shelters in Alexandria, Fairfax, and Washington and the HSUS are nominated for their cooperative effort to rescue 32 dogs from a puppy mill in Hillsville, Virginia (see *Pawpourri*, Winter 2008). The Fairfax shelter organized the rescue mission, and all the groups cooperated to bring their combined resources together to give the mistreated dogs the happy lives that they deserve.
July is Kids’ Month

A Week in the Life of the Animal Welfare League of Arlington
(Ages 11-14)
Monday, July 7- Friday, July 11th 10:00 AM- 4:00 PM or
Monday, July 21- Friday, July 25th 10:00 AM- 4:00 PM
Participants will go behind the scenes at the League and observe front desk operations, animal control calls, humane education, fundraising, and kennel operations. Participants will help in a hands-on capacity in certain aspects of shelter operations and will meet area animal professionals. Fee: $200 per participant. Please contact Jennifer Newman at (703) 931-9241 x 213 or via e-mail: jnewman@awla.org if you have any questions.

At this writing both sessions are full.

Dogs, Cats, & Small Animals Camp (Ages 6-10)
Wednesday, July 16th - Friday, July 18th 10:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M. or
Wednesday, July 30th - Friday, August 1st 10:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.
Children will learn how to be responsible pet owners and make good choices for animal welfare. They will learn about wildlife in Arlington, the different kinds of companion animals that make good pets, bite prevention and will hear from guest speakers who are area animal professionals. Children will tour the shelter and meet many of our animals that are available for adoption. Fee: $120 per participant. Please contact Jennifer Newman at (703) 931-9241 x 213 or via e-mail: jnewman@awla.org if you have any questions.

At this writing both sessions are full.

Holiday Hazards for Pets

The British Columbia Veterinary Medical Association offers these helpful tips to ensure pet safety during the Easter and Passover holidays.

Treats and Food
Holiday treats are meant for people, not pets. Fatty foods and sugary confections can rapidly become toxic to an animal unaccustomed to them. Of course, they also carry empty calories that can cause unhealthy weight gain. Chocolate is probably the human food that is the most dangerous for animals — even one chocolate truffle could have serious consequences for a small pet. The theobromine in chocolate can cause vomiting, diarrhea, hyperactivity, irregular heartbeat, seizures and, in some cases, death. Never leave gifts of chocolate easily accessible to pets.

Plants and Flowers
Lilies can be deadly to cats. Some common poisonous plants include: Easter lily, tiger lily, rubrum, Japanese show lily, some species of day lily, and certain other members of the Liliaceous family, which can cause kidney failure in cats.

Decorations and Easter Baskets
Decorations, wicker baskets and paper or synthetic “Easter-grass” can all become serious hazards if eaten or chewed. If hiding Easter baskets, ensure that the baskets will be out of reach of the family pets.

For more information visit: www.bcvma.org
Thanks To Our Donors

Thank you to the League supporters who donated $250 or more between October and December 2007.

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Pawpourri  Spring 2008
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**The Scoop**

Advice for the Furry Crowd

*Shelter Dog’s Tips for Happy Dog Park Visits*

We dogs love to play, especially with other dogs. But sometimes a visit to the local dog park can be a nightmare. Here are some tips for owners to make their pups’ visits happy ones.

**Evaluate**

Not all dogs are “dog park dogs.” Know your dog to determine whether or not he’s a good candidate. Dog park dogs should be friendly, reasonably confident, and not fearful, aggressive, or bullying. A dog park is not the place to work on “fixing” any behavior problem your dog may have.

**Health**

Only healthy, fully vaccinated dogs should visit dog parks. Dogs with any communicable diseases, parasites, or unspayed females in heat should stay at home.

**Obedience**

Before heading to a dog park be sure that, at a minimum, you can call your dog to you. Don’t just wait for when you leave, but use this command throughout your time there to keep him “in check.” Call your dog to you from time to time, praise him, then turn him loose for more romping. “Sit,” “Leave It,” and “Off” are other great commands to gain control of your dog if necessary and prevent him from harming others.

**Supervise**

It is your responsibility to stay vigilant and focused on your dog. Dog parks are a great place for dog owners to connect with each other and socialize, but your priority is to make sure your dog and others stay safe and have fun.

**Poop**

Always pick up after your dog!

**Toys & Treats**

The use of toys and treats is discouraged to avoid any dog-to-dog conflicts. There’s too much potential for dogs to guard food or toys which can lead to fights between dogs. Better safe than sorry - give treats later. People should also avoid eating within the park.

**Be Flexible and Sensitive**

If your dog’s not having fun or is showing signs of stress, it’s time to leave. If someone has a complaint about your dog’s behavior, be open to listening without getting defensive. If you see another dog behaving badly, avoid disciplining another owner’s dog. Instead, take your dog out of the mix. When in conflict with another person, remain calm and polite, and remember a guide for good canine relations, “never bite when a growl will do.”
[In December 2006] After looking at several animal shelters, we decided we liked your shelter the best and started to look seriously at adopting a new cat. I visited several times on my own and narrowed the choices down to 3 possible cats, and then came back with my husband and 2 year-old son for the final decision. We ultimately decided to adopt “Fancy,” a spayed 4 year-old tabby who’s owners gave her up because they moved out of state. Fancy had been in the shelter since early Sept, and even though it was then mid-Dec, she was very friendly and playful. We brought her home, renamed her “Sophie,” and the 1st night she clawed through the bottom of our box-spring and refused to come out. She gradually got used to our household (including an 11 year-old cat, Ballou, I also adopted from AWLA in 1996, and a 6 year-old dog, Aurora, we adopted from a shelter in Idaho), but Sophie still seemed a bit fearful of the washing machine and dishwasher.

She liked to be in the same room as other people, but she wasn’t terribly interested in sitting on laps or sleeping on the bed with us. Well, it has been nearly a year since Sophie came to live with us, and I am very happy to tell you she has settled into the household beautifully. She and Aurora get along fine, she and Ballou play quite a bit, and now we can hardly keep her off our laps when we sit down. Sophie has decided her favorite place to sleep is on a chair in my son’s room & she occasionally takes an afternoon nap with him (see picture). Anyway, I just wanted to let you know that ... we are very happy to have Sophie as part of our lives. Thank you for all the work you do for our furry companions.

Sincerely,
Rebecca, Paul & Connor
(Ballou, Sophie, and Aurora, too)
Where there’s a will...

There’s a way to help the animals after you’re gone.

Your bequest to the Animal Welfare League of Arlington will leave your legacy of compassion and generosity to the animals and people we serve.

For more information, please contact the League at donate@awla.org or Animal Welfare League of Arlington
2650 S. Arlington Mill Dr
Arlington, VA 22206

Personalized Pet ID Tags
Two-sided, engraved identification tags are now available in minutes at the League.
$6.00 per tag.
Available in a variety of shapes and sizes.

League Services

Emergencies in Arlington
We respond to animal emergencies 24 hours a day.

Adoptions
We always have animals who need good homes. If you live in Virginia, DC, or Maryland call us about adopting a companion.

Animal Control & Cruelty Investigation
Animal control officers pick up stray dogs and respond to citizen complaints about animals in Arlington.

Community Services
The League sponsors community services that help people and animals. Visit our Web site at www.awla.org or call (703) 931-9241 x 200 for information.

Lost & Found
Call (703) 931-9241 x 200 or visit our Web site at www.awla.org to report all lost and found animals. We can help find animals’ owners and return lost pets home again.

Wildlife Rescue & Problems
We’ll help get injured or abandoned wildlife to a licensed rehabilitator whenever possible. We’ll also help you discourage wildlife from moving into your home.

Rabies Control
See the calendar on the back cover for clinic dates and times.

Speakers & Humane Education
If your neighborhood is having animal problems or problems with irresponsible animal owners, you might want a League representative to address your civic association. We also present educational programs on many topics to schools and clubs. Visit our website at www.awla.org or call (703) 931-9241 x 213 for information.

A COPY OF THE LATEST FINANCIAL REPORT AND REGISTRATION FILED BY THE ANIMAL WELFARE LEAGUE OF ARLINGTON MAY BE OBTAINED BY CONTACTING the State Division of Consumer Affairs, Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, P.O. Box 1163, Richmond, VA 23209. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL, OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE.

Pawpourri, the newsletter of the Animal Welfare League of Arlington, 2650 S. Arlington Mill Dr., Arlington, VA 22206, http://www.awla.org, is published quarterly and mailed to League supporters. If you receive multiple copies, please notify us and pass them along to friends.

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Spring 2008  Pawpourri
It’s a dog’s day on Saturday, May 10, 2008, when the League hosts its 13th annual Walk for the Animals! Animal lovers from across the DC-metro area will once again kick-off Arlington’s Neighborhood Day with the League’s biggest fundraiser of the year. Thanks to the support of over 500 registered walkers, and our many sponsors and donors, last year’s Walk was our most successful to date—raising over $82,000!

“Homeless and neglected animals across Arlington County benefit from the funds raised at the Walk, which help support the League’s many programs including low-cost spay/neuter, low-cost rabies and microchip clinics, humane education, and community outreach,” said Debra Rose, President, Board of Directors. “We look forward to coming together once again to participate in this exciting event while supporting a wonderful cause.”

The Walk begins and ends in Arlington’s Bluemont Park (329 N. Manchester Street, Arlington, VA 22203). Owner-accompanied dogs more than four months old and humans of all ages are invited to participate. For their safety, cats and other pets must remain at home. Information on how to register or donate can be found on our Web site at www.awla.org, where you can create your own personalized fundraising Web page. From your page you can spread the word and collect pledges from friends and family around the world!

Registration is $25 per person in advance and $40 on the day of the Walk. All pre-registered walkers receive a Walk 2008 t-shirt, and participating dogs receive their very own bandana. In addition, walkers who earn $75 in pledges will receive a sunglasses case and those who earn $150 or more will also receive a handy tote bag.

On May 10th check-in will begin at 8:30 a.m. and the Walk kicks off at 9:30 a.m. Walkers can choose between a three-mile walk or a one-mile stroll through the park. Before and after the Walk, Bluemont Park will come alive with exciting demonstrations, entertainment, and displays at our various sponsors’ booths. K-9 units, the Department of Agriculture’s Beagle Brigade, and fly-ball teams have all put on exciting shows in past years.

Sponsoring the Walk is another great way to participate. Sponsors benefit by promoting their businesses while showing community support. There are a number of sponsorship levels available to businesses of all types who want to help make a direct impact on homeless animals. For more information on Walk sponsorship, contact Kelly Blakemore at (703) 931-9241 x 216.

All proceeds from the Walk will help the League to continue its important work with the community’s homeless and neglected animals. For more information about the event and to register visit www.awla.org/animal-fundraising-walk.shtml or call (703) 931-9241 x 200. We hope to see you in Bluemont Park on May 10th!

All photos from the 2007 Walk.
13th Annual Walk for the Animals

When: Saturday, May 10, 2008
Check-in: 8:30 am
Three-mile Walk: 9:30 am
One-mile Stroll: 9:45 am

Where: The Walk starts at the main picnic pavilion in Bluemont Park at 329 N. Manchester Street.

Registration:
Register online at www.awla.org

Can I collect pledges?
Absolutely! The more money you raise, the more animals you help. When you register, you can send an e-mail to your friends and family asking them to make a donation in your name. Remember if you raise $150 or more you receive a tote bag!

Pet Requirements:
Dogs are welcome, but please leave your other pets at home.
No dogs under four months of age, in poor health, or in heat.
Dogs must wear I.D. tags and be current on rabies vaccinations.
Dogs must be on leash at all times.
No flexi-leads or leashes longer than six feet will be permitted.
Water, clean-up bags, and veterinary aid will be available.
Owners are required to clean up after their dogs.

This is a rain or shine event.
No bikes, scooters, skateboards, or skates.
Children 12 and younger must be accompanied by an adult.
13th Annual Walk for the Animals
Saturday, May 10, 2008
Bluemont Park
Register online at www.awla.org
Details on page 10

Shop to Support the League!
Another way to help the League is to shop for your pets’ needs in our retail section. Many popular items are priced far less than at pet supply stores in our area. So in addition to helping homeless animals, you are also getting a bargain when you shop.

Rabies & Microchipping Clinics

Please bring dogs on leashes and cats and ferrets in carriers.
Rabies Shot: $10    Microchip: $25
March 27 • April 24 • May 22 • Aug 7
Sept 25 • Oct 23 • Dec 4
6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

League Hours
Visiting:
Noon – 7:00 p.m. Monday
Closed Tuesday
Noon – 7:00 p.m. Wed. - Fri.
Noon – 4:00 p.m. Sat. - Sun.
Receiving incoming Animals:
8:00 a.m. – 10:30 p.m. daily
Emergencies: 24 hours a day

Pawpourri

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