

71 Oglethorpe St., NW
Washington, DC 20011
202.726.2556

New Animal Program Graces the Airwaves

Dr. Gary Weitzman lends his expertise to NPR's "The Animal House"

"My dog is terrified of hiccups, and my baby gets hiccups every day. What should I do?" the caller asks.

It turns out that Dr. Weitzman happens to know that you can purchase recordings of hiccups, which together with a can of Vienna sausages might just do the trick. And with that, it's on to the next question about a dog who rolls on dead birds.

Since last June, Dr. Weitzman has been the in-house pet expert for "The Animal House," WAMU-FM's weekly discussion that explores

the latest in animal science, pet behavior, and wildlife conservation. He fields calls on a wide range of health and behavior issues, mostly about dogs and cats, but with occasional queries about horses, chickens, rabbits, and even, yes, a hermit crab.

The Animal House

"You never know what people will ask. It turns out that there are people out there who are living with some pretty unusual animal problems, like the

(continued on page 4)

The League Unveils its Newly Renovated Cat Playroom

The League's cat adoption area has undergone a major renovation to transform the space into a cutting-edge, thoughtfully designed feline playroom. Cats are now able to run along an overhead catwalk, scramble up and down rope-covered climbing poles, and jump from perch to perch around a waterfall.

The cat room reconstruction took just one month to complete. Corian® benches were constructed as a place for people to sit and interact with cats on the floor; climbing poles

and sets of ascending perches cater to the cats' natural instinct to climb; and an overhead "skywalk" allows cats to introduce themselves to visitors at eye level. The

(continued on page 4)



HOURS

Closed Mondays

Tuesdays - Fridays:
11:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Saturdays & Sundays:
11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.



Celebrating Three Years of Dog Walking Partnership

The Washington Animal Rescue League and DogCentric are celebrating the third anniversary of a very special partnership this month. Since October 2006, DogCentric has provided 3,000 hours of dog walking services for the homeless shelter dogs at no

cost to the League - a donation worth nearly \$100,000!

The dogs are always eager for their morning walk as the League's staff arrives each day, a time when volunteers are sparse and staff is confronted with multiple additional duties

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A Letter from the Executive Director



Dear Friend of Animals and the League,

Anyone who is at all familiar with the Washington Animal Rescue League knows that we offer shelter, medical care, and the promise of a new home to those animals who are in the most desperate need of help. You will find us picking up the survivors at puppy mill closures and natural disasters. We were there when Michael Vicks' dogs needed a healing

place to recover. And our doors are always open to those sick or injured animals whom other shelters do not have the ability to help.

But what many people don't realize is how many animals living in our community benefit directly and greatly from the League's broad range of offerings. Many of these come under the umbrella of our new "Project Rescue Program." Here are just a few examples:

- Low-income pet owners can bring their animals to our Medical Center for life-saving treatments at a rate they can afford, even at no charge if need be.
- Our busy low-cost vaccination clinics, which so many of our neighbors depend on to protect their pets, are now weekly affairs.
- The League maintains a Rescuers' Food Bank, where people who are struggling to provide for their animals can get free food, supplies, and equipment.
- Our dog obedience classes are deliberately kept affordable to allow everyone access to the most modern, humane, and effective training methods.
- Free professional advice on training and animal behavior is available from the League by telephone or email.

- Spaying and neutering are always free at the League's Medical Center, and we hold special monthly spay/neuter clinics for feral cats and pit bulls, two types of animals that suffer most from the pet overpopulation crisis.
- The League provides temporary emergency shelter for pets of people fleeing abusive situations or made homeless by fires or other disasters.
- Our humane educator carries the message of kindness towards animals to schools and other groups throughout our community.
- Regular League events, like Mutts Masquerade and PawFest, give everyone opportunities to enjoy their animals' company and celebrate the bond they have with them.

Given all these programs, I'm always a little reluctant to refer to the League simply as a "shelter." We are a shelter, of course, but the truth is, we do so much more. The vast majority of animals whom we help are not residents of our shelter.

The Washington Animal Rescue League has a long history of defining the future of animal welfare work. In addition to our full-service Medical Center and uniquely designed shelter, we are re-envisioning an animal protection group as a community resource where everyone who needs help for their animals can find what they need.

As always, we welcome your partnership in this pioneering work. If you have the desire to help animals, your neighbors, and your community, the League offers lots of ways for you to do all three. Please join us in making the world a better place for animals and the people who love them.

Warmly,

Gary Weitzman, DVM, MPH
President and CEO

A WARL-wind Weekend: Two Days of Fun for a Cause!

Mutts Masquerade



A Halloween Hike to benefit The Washington Animal Rescue League

Saturday, October 31

Registration opens at 7:30 a.m.

Costumed walk for dogs and people begins at 8:00 a.m.

Trick-or-Treating from 8:00 – 11a.m.

Rock Creek Park (Candy Cane City at Meadowbrook Park in
Chevy Chase, Maryland)

- 2-mile fundraising walk
- trick-or-treating for dogs
- vendors of up-scale pet products
- canine costume contest
- microchips and veterinary booths

\$25 per individual, \$15 children under 12

Fee includes a registration bag (useful for carrying canine and human trick-or-treat goodies!).

PawFest 2009

The Washington Animal Rescue League's annual open house

Sunday, November 1, 12-4pm

At the League, 71 Oglethorpe Street, NW, Washington, DC 20011

Shelter open house and haunted Medical Center
red-tag adoption specials
refreshments and live music
community yard sale and family activities

Free admission

For more information, visit www.warl.org or call (202) 726-2556



New Animal Program *cont. from page 1*

woman whose dog is scared of hiccups,” Dr. Weitzman explains. “It can be a real challenge to give the right advice sometimes, especially in a minute and a half, but it’s always fun to talk to them.”

“The Animal House” is meant to be both substantive and entertaining for a broad audience—both those with pets and those without them. Beyond that, its producers hope to deepen human understanding of animals and explain the powerful bonds that link us to the animal world.

Dr. Weitzman takes questions each week. But half of each hour-long program is devoted to different guests, who talk about everything from bats to sharks, from lions to feral cats. Guests have ranged from the head of

the National Zoo to Jane Goodall.

Those in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area can catch “The Animal House” every Saturday morning at 7:00 a.m. on 88.5 FM. Those in other locations—as well as anyone who might have missed the original broadcast—can find all the episodes and podcasts on the Internet at http://wamu.org/programs/the_animal_house. Beginning next year, the show will air on other public radio stations across the country, and listeners from Miami to Seattle will have the chance to find out, among other things, what to do with a dog who is terrified of hiccups. So if your public radio station is not airing the only animal programming on NPR, give them a call and let them know!

Cat Playroom *cont. from page 1*

waterfall, which has been a popular feature of the cat room since the 2006 renovation, has been retained and incorporated into the new playground.

Adoptions director Jamie Scotto first conceived of the idea to re-design the room. She noticed that it was the cats who were out on the floor of the cat room who got adopted and reasoned that, by increasing the space for cats to roam freely and giving them an environment that allows them to show off their best feline characteristics, more cats would find homes.

Her theory worked: adoptions have increased 50%

since the new cat room has opened, and the time that cats spend waiting for their new homes has been cut nearly in half.

Although the new cat room had already been fully functional for about a month, an official grand re-opening event, Cocktails and Cupcakes for Cats, was held on October 1. Patrons enjoyed cocktails and cupcakes in the League’s cat room and brought home gift bags for their own cats. No one, however, had a better time than the residential cats, who think that their new playground is really something to “meow” about!

DogCentric *cont. from page 1*

including feeding, medicating, and cleaning up after the dogs and cats. DogCentric provides two dog walkers each and every weekday morning to offer the dogs a bathroom break and opportunity to stretch their legs. This assistance frees up staff, saving essential resources that can be dedicated to helping animals get adopted.

“As dog lovers and animal rescue advocates, we are thrilled to give back to the homeless dogs housed at the League,” explains Marisa Landau, general manager of DogCentric. “It is so rewarding for us to help them gain confidence and learn to trust people. We see first hand the difference that consistency and positive interactions with people can make in the dogs’ personalities.”

President and CEO Dr. Gary Weitzman notes, “Every

dog gets walked at least three times a day. Not only do we want to help them with house training, but we also want them to get the experience of being with people. DogCentric’s walkers play an essential role in the League’s daily operations. We are amazed by their commitment to the shelter and are so appreciative that they have pledged to continue to provide such critical assistance in the current economic climate.”

The collaboration between DogCentric and the League is the first of its kind and continues to serve as a model for the nation. HAPPY 3rd ANNIVERSARY!

Help support the Washington Animal Rescue League by supporting our partner, DogCentric. Find out more at www.dogcentric.com.

A Fond Summer Memory

Caring Kids Camp at the League

“I like animals and I want to learn more about them. I have a dog and I enjoy having him to play with...” wrote 12-year-old Eric on his Caring Kids Camp application. The week-long camp, a collaboration between The Washington Animal Rescue League and the D.C. Metropolitan Police Department, was held August 10-14. It emphasized positive relationships between children and animals, including the responsible care of animal companions and advocating for all living things.

“Establishing a bond between kids and animals is important on many fronts,” according to Debbie Duel, the League’s humane educator. “It helps them learn about animal care, but it also empowers them to speak

up for animals and, in a broader sense, shows them that they can be agents of positive change.”

To that end, the children learned about

ways they

can help animals in the community—by adopting from shelters, finding affordable veterinary care, and even reporting animals in trouble to the proper agencies.

“The Caring Kids Camp offered children positive interactions with animals—perhaps for the first time,” MPD Neighborhood Resource Officer Heather Straker points out. “This leads to empathy, and empathy leads to responsibility. Prevention is always preferable to intervention.”

Campers visited with cats and dogs housed in the shelter, toured the League’s Medical Center, and met firefighters and police officers and their canine partners. They explored their creative side through a workshop led by local artist/illustrator Carol Hilliard and later posed



for pictures taken by professional photographer and League volunteer Jesse Rowton. Understanding the importance of caring for all life was stressed during a short trip to the community garden across the street from the shelter and a day-long journey to Poplar Spring Animal Sanctuary in Poolesville, Maryland, where campers were introduced to pigs, goats, sheep, horses, chickens, and other rescued farm animals

The Caring Kids Camp was made possible through the generosity of Ward 4 Councilmember Muriel Bowser’s office, Friendship Hospital for Animals, community supporter Keith Jarrell, Whole Foods Market of Silver Spring, Papa John’s of the National Capital Region, and the Safeway on Piney Branch Road, NW.



Tails of Hope

Margot

The world can be a cruel place, as Margot, an 8-week-old kitten orphaned on the streets of Washington, found out. Without a mother to care for her, Margot soon became gravely ill. Her eyes swelled up to the point where they could not open, leaving her blind. Parasites were consuming her from within, and in anticipation of her imminent death, flies covered her with their eggs.



When a passing thunderstorm soaked her to the skin and lowered her body temperature to dangerous levels, the flies nearly got what they were waiting for. But at the last minute, a

woman found the kitten on the sidewalk outside her apartment building, scooped up her limp body, and drove her to the League.

When she arrived, the Medical Center staff predicted that Margot had no more than an hour or two of life left in her. As an emergency measure, they gave her warmed subcutaneous fluids and called in Dr. Jan Rosen, the League's medical director, on her day off. By keeping Margot warm and hydrated, Dr. Rosen kept her alive overnight. Staff could then begin force-feeding the young cat, who was still too weak to eat on her own.

Gradually, the food strengthened Margot's body and a course of antibiotics beat back the infection. Her eyes opened and, although one had a corneal ulcer, they began to heal. Margot's vision was saved. The kitten gained weight and learned to stand on her own. Then one happy morning, she greeted her caretakers with a weak but audible "meow."

Once she recovered enough to exhibit a distinct personality, Margot became, in Dr. Rosen's words, "as sweet as can be." This may have been due to the efforts of the Medical Center staff; for hours they carried the feral-born kitten around the hospital in their arms to acclimate her to the company of humans.

After about a month in the Medical Center, Margot was moved to one of the adoption spaces with the large windows in the lobby, but she spent

almost no time there. She was soon adopted and now lives in Northwest Washington with an older couple, who also have a dog from the League.

Jerry

Jerry, a young adult Shih Tzu, was hard to look at when he was first brought into the Medical Center in mid-August. His left eye had been knocked out of its socket, the result of being struck very hard in the head by his guardian's boyfriend. The guardian had surrendered Jerry to the Washington Humane Society, and they transferred him to the League's Medical Center for treatment.

League veterinarians rushed Jerry into emergency surgery and replaced his eye in its socket. A few days later, Dr. Kelly Caruso, the League's volunteer veterinary ophthalmologist, came by to see how she could help the dog. She did more reconstructive surgery and managed to save the eye so that it did not need to be removed. But she was doubtful that Jerry would ever be able to see out of it.

All in all, Jerry spent more than a month as a Medical Center patient. At first, he was generally scared and especially reluctant to have anyone touch his head and face—this is not at all surprising considering he was hit so hard, but it did make it difficult to give him his eye medications.

Gradually, the gentleness and patience of the Medical Center staff won him over, and Jerry stopped objecting when it was time for his medicine. He also

gained some weight, which he needed, and became very energetic. After the center closed in the evenings, Jerry would race around the floor and exam tables with his best clinic friends: Betsy, a dachshund from a puppy mill, and Jingles, a Yorkshire terrier surrendered because he had a liver problem that was costly to treat.

Within just a day of moving from the Medical Center to the adoption area, Jerry got adopted by a grandmother in suburban Maryland. His days of hardship and trauma are finally over!



A Letter to Our Donors

Dear Generous Friends of the League,

Thank you all for your very strong support of the League over the years. You have been extremely kind with your contributions that have allowed us to find homes for thousands of animals, provide low- and no-cost veterinary care for thousands of pet owners in need, and bring the message of humane treatment of animals to classrooms throughout the Washington, DC area. And they accomplish even more than that—as you know from reading our newsletter.

In my experience as a fundraiser, I have worked with many donors in many states. It is such a rewarding career to work with kindred spirits who care about the same causes you do and who are passionate about their philanthropy. I look forward to working with many supporters of the League as well.

If you would like to learn more about making a significant gift to the League, please contact me anytime, and I will be more than happy to discuss whatever contribution you are considering. Perhaps you would like to support a specific program. Maybe you would rather give appreciated securities (stocks, bonds, or mutual fund shares) and avoid capital gains taxes. Or you might want to donate closely held assets from a privately held company. There are many options.

You may also wish to consider what is known as a gift-in-kind, particularly if you are donating through your company or some other organization. The League is always interested in hearing more about donations of capital items and services, such as office equipment, veterinary medical equipment, or, say, free or discounted printing or mail house jobs. Let's say your company does a tremendous amount of business with a printer or mail house; perhaps you can negotiate with that printer to handle League items at no cost. Such an arrangement could cover a significant expense for our charity.

Finally, I can help you with a gift from your will or estate plan. Planned gifts, as they are known, will help the League fulfill its animal welfare mission far into the future. Such donations can also reduce estate taxes. One option you may want to consider is making the League a full, partial, or contingent beneficiary of your qualified retirement plan (401k, 403b, IRA, Keogh, pension, etc.) or of your life insurance policy. Doing so is a fully revocable action that can be handled easily through your financial institution or

your human resources office. Often, you can download the form from a Web site. It's simple, fast, and changeable at any time.

If you plan a gift through your will or estate plan, please let me know so

you can become a member of the League's 1914 Society. The League was founded almost 100 years ago in 1914, and planned gifts from folks like you will allow us to help animals for another century and beyond.

Again, thank you for your thoughtfulness. Please contact me anytime so I can help you fulfill your philanthropic objectives. Your efforts will help us help thousands more animals.

I look forward to meeting you one day soon.

Sincerely,



Rob Blizard
Chief Development Officer



As of September 8, the League has a new development director. Rob Blizard brings 20 years of professional experience at the Humane Society of the United States and Mt. Vernon to the aid of animals in need. He is available at 202-375-7754 and rblizard@warl.org. Information on giving to the League is also available on our Web site, www.warl.org.

How You Can Help the Animals

Your Support is Always Appreciated

Here's how you can help:

ON-LINE at www.warl.org to make a secure credit card donation or to see our current wish list of items we need.

PHONE 202-726-2556, ext. 316 to make a VISA, MasterCard, or American Express donation.

MAIL your gift to The Washington Animal Rescue League, 71 Oglethorpe Street, NW, Washington, DC 20011.

MONTHLY GiVING in any dollar amount can be charged to your credit card or automatically deducted from your bank account. Call 202-726-2556, ext. 217 or email development@warl.org to sign up.

TO VOLUNTEER, call 202-726-2556, ext. 217.

PRIVACY NOTICE: Please contact the development office with questions regarding anonymity of donations, sharing of names, or address corrections. We will gladly comply.

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We know you can't take them all home...

The Washington Animal Rescue League has an animal sponsorship program. If you are unable to adopt but want to help specific dogs or cats find their forever homes, you can make a donation and become their sponsor. The League spends an average of \$500 for each animal's care, and any amount you can contribute will be a huge help. Please visit the shelter, call 202-726-2556 ext. 316, email development@warl.org, or visit www.warl.org/pdf/Sponsorship_Program.pdf for more information.

Delta, a very shy but sweet beagle, could really use a sponsor.



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