

71 Oglethorpe St., NW  
Washington, DC 20011  
202.726.2556

Fall Newsletter 2011

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or visit us at  
**www.warl.org**

The mission of the  
Washington Animal  
Rescue League is to  
rescue, rehabilitate,  
and re-home animals  
who have nowhere  
else to go. We  
are committed to  
strengthening and  
preserving the  
human-animal bond by  
supporting animals in  
their homes through  
affordable veterinary  
care, community  
outreach, and  
education.



## The Future of Animal Rescue

As the League approaches its 100th anniversary in 2014, we are launching one of the most significant and ambitious efforts in our century-long history. We have purchased the 45,000-square-foot property adjacent to our current facility, where we will create the National Rehabilitation Center for Animals (NRCA), a major expansion of our animal protection work. Animal victims of cruelty and neglect from all over the nation—puppy mill refugees, the survivors of dog fighting rings, dogs and cats rescued from hoarders, and more—will have a place to recover from trauma and start new lives. And members of our local community will have access to an array of enhanced services like a high-volume spay/neuter clinic, affordable veterinary care, and animal behavior and training work.

As Dr. Gary Weitzman, League president and CEO, points out, “With all the pressing

needs around us—animals caught in disasters and cruelty cases, a never-ending influx of low-income neighbors who need our assistance to keep their much loved pets, and the constant and tragically high intake of animals in local animal shelters—we are being called upon every day to do more for more animals. We really have no choice but to expand.”

With more than triple the League’s current space, the NRCA will, when renovations are complete, constitute an entire campus dedicated to animal welfare and protection. It will include:

- Supportive housing for animals arriving through our disaster and cruelty rescue program, as well as from local partner shelters and the public.
- Expanded Medical Center access for shelter animals and low-income animal guardians.
- A teaching hospital providing the next

*(continued on page 4)*

## Community Cats: Who Cares for Them and How?

Once a month, the Washington Animal Rescue League holds a free spay/neuter, vaccination, and parasite treatment clinic for feral cats. Volunteer Marty King coordinates the trapping and transportation of the cats from all corners of the District of Columbia. She also raises, socializes, and finds homes for kittens born on the street. Recently we talked with her about her rescue work.

**League:** How did you get involved with feral cats?

**Marty:** I started feeding alley cats in my neighborhood in the 1990’s. I would also grab the kittens and find them homes whenever I could. At some point, I realized that I was running out of friends to take the

kittens. A friend told me about Alley Cat Allies and their TNR programs, and I trapped my first cats on my birthday in 2001.

**L:** What is TNR and how does it work?

**M:** TNR stands for trap, neuter, return. “Trap” is gathering cats up by humane methods; “neuter” is transporting the cats to clinics for surgery, vaccinations, and other care, if needed; and “return” is bringing the cats back to their familiar



*(continued on page 4)*



# A Letter from the Chief Executive Officer



Dear Friends,

Your life has challenges, my life has challenges, life is full of challenges. That's a given. It's how we approach those challenges that makes all the difference.

At the League, I like to think we take a "head-on" approach to challenges. Whether they're large or small, we embrace them as opportunities. We don't try to avoid them; we're more likely to rush out to meet them.

For example, when we find that our shelter is always full of needy animals and we have no more room for the many others still looking for refuge; when we have great and promising ideas for innovative programs that will save lives and assuage suffering but nowhere to house those programs; when more and more desperate pet guardians with low or fixed incomes come to us for help; and when the building next door goes up for sale...we buy it.

When a group of dedicated feral cat volunteers approaches us to say that, although there may well be as many feral cats in DC as there are people, they are willing to trap and monitor all over the city—in every neighborhood in every quadrant until every last cat is accounted for—but they have no money to spay, neuter, vaccinate, and treat the cats for parasites...we tell them to bring us all the cats they can trap.

When a shelter in West Virginia calls to report that they have lost their animal control contract and have a week to find alternative housing for 100 dogs...we jump in the rescue vehicle at 5:00 a.m. the next morning for the ten-hour trip there and back.

And when another shelter calls to say that they have an older dog, a long-term stray, who has been shot, whose wounds are now badly infected, and they can't afford the surgery...we tell them to have the dog at our Medical Center first thing the next day.

These are just a few of the challenges that the League has faced this summer. Some of them are now resolved: the West Virginia dogs were rescued and re-homed, and the shot dog recovered and was adopted. Other challenges—the creation of the National Rehabilitation Center for Animals and the struggle to save feral cats—are ongoing.

And while we might not successfully address every challenge, it won't be for lack of trying!

As I write this, the League is working hard on the ASPCA's shelter challenge, trying to increase our quarterly adoption rate—August through October—by 300 animals. We're off to a good start. Due largely to our 33-hour, non-stop Adopt-A-Thon, our numbers for August are up by 100 over the same month in 2010. But the push continues.

So we, too, are issuing a challenge: If you have room for a homeless dog or cat, now would be an excellent time to adopt. And I'm hoping that you will help us save more innocent lives by encouraging friends, family, co-workers, and neighbors to come to the League and adopt an animal soon.

If we increase our August – October adoption numbers by 300, we will have placed twice as many animals in homes as we did during the same time period last year. That's a steep challenge. But that's what makes it worth all the effort and determination we are putting into it, don't you think?

If you are like us in that you thrive on a good challenge; if you tend to look for solutions rather than lose heart at the enormity of the problem; if you are drawn to optimistic, hard-working, and creative people with whom you can tackle the challenges that life presents...then I believe you and the League have a lot in common.

And we have a lot of work to do.

Warmly,

Gary Weitzman, DVM, MPH, CAWA  
President and CEO

# Home Sweet Home Adopt-A-Thon

**W**hen the League opened its doors at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday morning for the 33-hour, non-stop adoption marathon, there were 143 adoptable animals in the building: 83 dogs and 60 cats. When the doors closed at 8:00 p.m. on Sunday, there were only four dogs and 26 cats left in the shelter. A fortunate 79 dogs and 34 cats—as many animals as the League typically places in a month—were settling in to their new homes across the Washington metropolitan region.

For the Adopt-A-Thon, the League waived our normal adoption fees in favor of a “pay what you will for priceless pets” policy. The average free-will fee per animal worked out to \$75, though one particularly generous adopter paid \$500 for a four-month-old orange and white kitten. The smallest amount paid was \$1, but those adopters immediately added a \$99 donation.

“The Adopt-A-Thon was better than we dared hope for and a raging success,” according to League president and CEO Dr. Gary Weitzman. “113 animals found the

new homes and new lives they deserved. Scores of excited families were enriched by the addition of a new best friend. And our League family grew accordingly.”

This hugely successful event, in which 80 percent of all the animals at the League found homes, was only possible through the generous support of sponsors Friendship Hospital for Animals, The Big Bad Woof, and ProFeed Pet Nutrition Centers, each of whom had tables piled with give-away’s for the newly adopted and their families.



## Mark your calendars for these events!



### Halloween Dog Costume Contest at Paws at the Park Happy Hour

Wednesday, October 19 ◦ 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Park Hyatt Washington, 1201 24th St., NW, DC (24th & M)

\$12 for two drinks ◦ Proceeds benefit the League.

For more information, visit [warl.org/PawsAtThePark](http://warl.org/PawsAtThePark).

### “First Families and Their Pets at the White House”

A talk by Dr. William Bushong, vice president of historical research & new media at the White House Historical Association

Monday, November 7 ◦ 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. ◦ At the League

For more information, visit [warl.org/SpeakerSeries](http://warl.org/SpeakerSeries)



### Winter Holidays Open House

Treats, entertainment, holiday cheer, and photos with Santa

Sunday, December 4 ◦ 12:00 – 3:00 p.m. ◦ At the League

For more information, visit [warl.org/WinterHolidays](http://warl.org/WinterHolidays)



## The Future of Animal Rescue cont. from page 1

generation of veterinarians, behaviorists, and vet techs practical training in shelter medicine and offering round-the-clock veterinary coverage.

- Specially designed space for behavioral rehabilitation work, socialization, and grooming to prepare animals for adoption, as well as expanded animal training for the public.
- Meeting space for community humane education programs and professional animal welfare training.
- The District of Columbia's first wildlife rehabilitation center.
- Much-needed services for the public, including a possible boarding facility and an expanded pet supply store.

Our existing facility would continue to be used as the League's adoption center. And by housing animals recovering from past trauma in the new center, all of the space in the existing shelter could be devoted to animals ready for their new homes.

"The nation needs a facility like this," Weitzman explains. "And so too does our own community, which is

always our greatest priority."

We currently estimate that the NRCA will require a six-year campaign to be concluded in 2017. This campaign will be undertaken in stages that do not interrupt the ongoing work of the League nor deplete the resources needed to support this work. The first stage, between now and 2014, will focus on retiring the League's debt while building and opening a behavior and training center. During this first stage, large sections of the building will be rented to tenants, including City Wildlife, a nonprofit wildlife rehabilitation group.

"This will not be easily or quickly done," Weitzman cautions. "But our supporters have always backed us generously. With their continued assistance, I'm sure we can build the new center."

As with our pioneering shelter renovation in 2006, the National Rehabilitation Center for Animals is just another way the Washington Animal Rescue League is setting the global standard for animal welfare. For more information on the Center or the upcoming campaign, please contact us at [development@warl.org](mailto:development@warl.org).

## Community Cats cont. from page 1

surroundings following an appropriate recovery period. Dedicated caregivers then feed and monitor the cats to make sure they are safe. These programs work best with vigilant and dedicated caregivers. The program contains the feral cats in colonies, where they lead healthier lives as a result of the vaccines and reduction of negative breeding behaviors.

- L:** What would your ideal goal be for feral cats in DC?
- M:** Ideally, I would like to see D.C. trappers and caregivers organized by zip codes so that calls for help could be answered more promptly. I think that education about feral cats is extremely important. There are many, many caregivers in the city who would benefit from an outreach program regarding the resources available. That would have a great impact on the number of cats, especially those many cats and kittens brought into our area shelters every year.
- L:** Why are the League's clinics important?
- M:** The clinic is important because it allows us to help people faced with feeding an ever increasing number of cats, as well as facing the fact that there is little they

can do when these beloved creatures need medical assistance. The League's dedication of resources to feral cat clinics, and the fact that these clinics are free, is a huge support. It lends legitimacy to our TNR efforts to improve the lives of community cats and the people who care for them.

- L:** What are the biggest challenges you face?
- M:** The biggest challenge we face as trappers/volunteers in this ongoing endeavor in a lack of resources—both equipment and people.
- L:** Other than spaying and neutering their pets so as not to contribute to the problem, how would you like people to help?
- M:** People can help by learning more about TNR and community cats and then communicating what they've learned to their neighbors, friends, and acquaintances. We also face the huge challenge of finding homes for the many kittens we come across, as well as some tame cats who find themselves on the street and join colonies; we always need foster homes and adopters. Barn homes are wonderful solutions for some cats.

# Humane Education at the League

## Campers, Passionate About Animals, Enjoy a Week at the League

**D**uring Session I, *Animals and Art*, Caring Kids Campers used plaster, newspaper, foil, and paint to create owls, dogs, cats, deer, and a variety of other animals. During Session II, *All About Animals*, they interacted with shelter animals, and got up close and personal with reptiles, bats, raptors, farm animals and nearly two dozen rescued horses. And for the third session, *Dog Training 101: Tricks, Treats, and Tips*, they clicker trained four seven-week-old puppies, teaching them to sit, stand, and lie down.

All told, 47 campers, ranging in ages from eight to 14, spent a week of their summer at the League. When asked why they wanted to attend camp at the League, the campers almost unanimously responded as Lily did, "I love animals so much and I would like to know more about them."

One hundred percent of the parents who responded to a post-camp survey said that their student would very much like to attend again. Information regarding Caring Kids Camps 2012 will be available in late February.



## Mark Your Calendars!

**P**rint the coupon below on colored paper (any color is fine; it just can't be white) and present it at the cash register at Politics and Prose bookstore (5015 Connecticut Avenue, NW, DC) on Friday, October 14 between 9 a.m. and 10 p.m. to have 20 percent of your purchase donated to the Washington Animal Rescue

League's humane education program. Create a stack of books for winter reading or get a jump on early holiday purchases. Plus, the League will be there with pre-selected books for you to purchase and donate to classrooms at Takoma and West Education Centers in DC, where we do ongoing humane education.



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RESCUE  
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**Offer is good on Friday, October 14th, 2011**

**from 9a.m. - 10p.m.**

**Politics & Prose located at 5015 Connecticut Ave. NW**



The Washington Animal Rescue League's humane education program is graciously sponsored by Friendship Hospital for Animals



# The WARL Street Journal

## HSUS President & CEO Visits the League

On July 18, Humane Society of the United States president and CEO, Wayne Pacelle, visited the League to discuss some of the convictions and observations he's included in his new New York Times best-seller, *The Bond: Our Kinship with Animals, Our Call to Defend Them*. Speaking as the head of the world's largest and most dynamic public advocacy group



for animals, Wayne noted that, "The trajectory of progress is unmistakable and undeniable: by ever-larger majorities, the conscience of America is asserting itself.

Animal protection has always been a noble cause. Now it's a winning cause too."

Wayne also remarked that the League "...is truly one of the outstanding examples of a modern animal shelter that breaks the stereotype of a depressing place with forgotten animals waiting to die and replaces it with a welcoming, uplifting place where animals are loved and well cared for. Its renovation started a wave of re-building among animal shelters in the country based on their model and the idea that the shelters can be places of healing and rest."

## Coltan

Though it wasn't his real home, Coltan often lived under a woman's front porch in West Virginia. One day the two-and-a-half-year-old mixed retriever came limping back to the porch with blood flowing from a fresh gunshot wound in his chest, and the woman figured she had better call Coltan's owner.

"Whatever," was the man's reaction. "Just turn him loose. He can fend for himself."



The woman decided she couldn't do that, so she brought Coltan to the town veterinarian, who took an initial look at the dog and proposed a treatment plan.

When the woman heard how much the plan would cost, she decided she couldn't do that either.

So Coltan became a ward of Potomac Highlands Animal Rescue, and they drove him to the League's Medical Center. The bullet, evidently from a rifle, had shattered into dozens of tiny fragments, which could not be removed. Infection from the wound had spread throughout his shoulder, so the dog was given IV antibiotics and a skin patch to relieve the pain.

Though they were initially unsure whether they could save the dog's leg—or even if he would survive at all—Coltan did recover. He now lives in a Maryland home—inside, not under the porch—with a family that has another retriever.

## Emergency West Virginia Rescue

In late July, the League drove to Fairmont, West Virginia,



to pick up stray and abandoned animals who were scheduled to become homeless again when the shelter where they were staying closed on August 1. That shelter had been run under a local government contract for the past year by a private humane society, but they lost the contract and use of the county facility. The League picked up nine dogs and five cats for transfer. While in West Virginia, the League team also picked up 12 dogs at a shelter in Buckhannon, West Virginia, which had run out of space and was facing the prospect of euthanizing adoptable dogs. Among the dogs were two six-week-old puppies, who had been dropped into the shelter's overnight collection box and found there the next morning. Almost all of these West Virginia animals found homes during the August 6 and 7 Adopt-A-Thon.

## League's behavior and training program expands

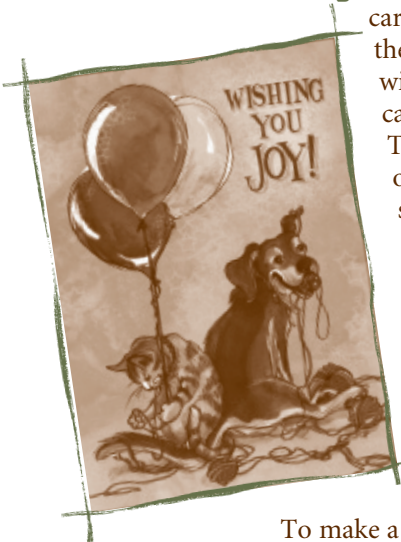
With so many animals arriving from hoarding situations and being transferred from other shelters, where they were not adopted due to ongoing behavioral problems, the League found that it needed to increase dramatically the amount of behavioral rehabilitation it does. That department now consists of three certified trainers, two training assistants, and four interns, who are learning dog training on the job. An additional 49 volunteers have been certified in the Open Paws for Shelters behavioral enrichment program.

# Four Great Ways to Support Us at Year's End

**Sponsor an Animal.** On average, the League spends \$800 on the direct care of each animal we rescue. Some cost us considerably more, and adoption fees never cover the entire cost of an animal's care and rehabilitation. For a donation of \$50 or more, we will place a card on a dog den or cat condo in your name or the name of a loved one. We will also send a holiday sponsorship card to your loved one, letting them know about the sponsorship. Cards will remain on dens and condos until Monday, January 9, so you can meet the lucky cat or dog whom you sponsored. To make a sponsorship donation and send a special card, please use the enclosed reply envelope or visit [warl.org/AnimalSponsor](http://warl.org/AnimalSponsor).

**Send a Greeting Card.** A "Wishing You Joy!" card, designed exclusively for the League by local award-winning artist Carol Hilliard, can brighten someone's Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, or Christmas and help us save more lives. Birthdays, wedding anniversaries and adoption anniversaries are also terrific occasions to honor someone special—human or animal. A personalized, elegant card will notify your friend or loved one of your generous gift.

To make a donation and send this



greeting, please visit [warl.org/Donate](http://warl.org/Donate) or [warl.org/Unconditional](http://warl.org/Unconditional).

**Create a Lasting, Loving Tribute** for an extra-special someone in your life (pet or person). For \$1,000, you can honor them with a 75-character, brass-finished plaque on our sunlit Honorary/Memorial Wall in our lobby. For \$2,500, you may use a 60-character paver in our front sidewalk. Our shelter is visited by tens of thousands every year, so your kind commemoration will be seen by many animal lovers. We will send a card letting your loved one know about your generous donation. For more information, please visit [warl.org/Plaque](http://warl.org/Plaque) or [warl.org/Paver](http://warl.org/Paver). Please note that because they take weeks to produce, plaques and pavers may not be ready for the holidays.

**Help Us With Our Wish List.** The League maintains a *List of Donor Opportunities* for items costing \$500 or more, which you can view at [warl.org/Opportunities](http://warl.org/Opportunities). Please contact us to underwrite one of these much-needed items. You (as well as someone you may choose to honor) will receive credit next to the item on the Web page for at least one year. And a card will be sent to the honoree you designate.

For more information about any of these ideas, please contact the Development Office at 202-375-7756 or [development@warl.org](mailto:development@warl.org). To ensure that your loved ones receive a greeting card by Christmas Eve, we must receive your donation and information by Monday, December 12.

## Leveraging Your Charitable Giving

Please join us for a League-sponsored estate planning seminar, "Creatively Leveraging Your Charitable Giving," by John Isaac, CLU, CASL, of Northwestern Mutual Financial Network on Saturday, October 22, at 12:00 p.m. in the League's board room. This informative presentation will cover ways to make charitable gifts using existing assets like life insurance benefits and appreciated property while avoiding capital gains tax. You may be able to make a charitable gift that is much larger than you may ever have imagined. Some ways can provide an exponential return to the charity.



RSVP is requested by Tuesday, October 18. For more information or to RSVP, please visit [warl.org/Seminar](http://warl.org/Seminar) or contact Renee Smith, events manager, at 202-375-7746 or [renee@warl.org](mailto:renee@warl.org).



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## Different Assets, Same Happy Animals... and Tax Benefits

**T**here are many types of assets one can give to the League to support our work. Most people think of donating cash, but did you know that you can give securities such as stocks, bonds, and mutual fund shares? By donating assets that you have owned for more than one year and that have appreciated over that time, you can avoid capital gains taxes and receive an income tax deduction based on their value at the time of your contribution. From a tax standpoint, gifts of securities can be more efficient than cash.

Appreciated securities can also fund a charitable gift annuity (CGA) with the League. When funding a gift annuity with appreciated stock, you do not eliminate the tax on capital gains altogether, as with an outright gift of stock; however, you significantly reduce the exposure and can spread it out over several years.

For more information on stock gifts, please review our fact sheet on the topic at [warl.org/Stock](http://warl.org/Stock). Our CGA fact sheet is online at [warl.org/Annuity](http://warl.org/Annuity).

In certain cases, the League will also accept the donation of non-liquid assets such as real estate, art, jewelry, and valuable collections. We encourage you to discuss such gifts with us and with your tax advisor before proceeding.

For information on other ways to support the League, including in your will or estate plan, please contact our office or visit [warl.org/PlannedGiving](http://warl.org/PlannedGiving) for a series of fact sheets. We also offer two fact sheets on providing for pets in your estate plans and pet trusts.

**To make a donation or  
ask a question of our  
Development Office:**  
**Phone:** 202-375-7756  
**E-mail:** [development@warl.org](mailto:development@warl.org)  
**Web site:** [warl.org/Donate](http://warl.org/Donate)

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