

Shelter advises community about responsible pet ownership

By LEIGH ANN McDONALD
Features Editor

Summer's arrival brings its own "baby boom," but human babies are not the problem. Unwanted kittens, puppies and other animals are.

The Orange County Animal Shelter is overcrowded throughout the year, but the summer months increase the problem, said Pat Sanford, executive director of the Animal Protection Society (APS). "There are many more babies born from May to September," she said. "We will have to slow down our animal control activity during the summer."

APS is the volunteer community organization that operates the shelter, housing more than 7,000 animals each year. During 1988, the number of animals increased by 14 percent, and the shelter is now housing twice its capacity. "We've been increasing fast," Sanford said.

But increasing business at the animal shelter causes no joy for the organization. It only means that more animals will be injected with an overdose of sodium pentobarbital, the euthanasia method recommended by the Humane Society as being the least stressful. A shelter volunteer holds each animal, petting and talking to it, as another injects the lethal substance. Only 14 seconds pass before the animal lapses into unconsciousness.

Because APS hires people that love animals, shelter volunteers are placed under much stress when they must practice euthanasia, Sanford said. More than 65 percent of the animals are put to sleep each year. "It's ridiculous — outrageous," she said. "It's a complete waste of life. So much of what we have to do to kill animals could be avoided if the community would become more responsible."

Community responsibility and awareness are the keys to keeping pets safe in their homes and relieving some of the shelter's burden.

Sanford said. Shelter volunteers help teach the public about caring for animals by providing a humane education program. These volunteers go to public school third-grade classrooms and talk to students about pet ownership.

The shelter also gives people who adopt animals an APS Friends of Animals certificate, allowing owners to have their animal spayed or neutered for one-half the cost of going to a veterinarian.

But the shelter cannot promote awareness about animal control on its own. "Orange County needs to have better differential licensing fees for animals," Sanford said. The fee is incentive to have pets spayed or neutered because owners must pay higher taxes on unsterilized animals. Orange County now has differential licensing fees, but Sanford said the difference in taxes is not great enough to have any effect on the animal population.

"In Orange County, the human population is growing," Sanford said. "This growth and the lack of strong enforcement of animal control laws contributes to the animal overpopulation."

About 50 percent of the homeless animals are brought to the shelter by people who do not want to care for them. The other 50 percent are brought by animal control officers. An "open door" policy at the shelter allows any type of animal to visit for a while.

"We've sheltered horses, parakeets, a peacock, hamsters and the standard dog and cat," Sanford said. The shelter's missing-pet service attempts to match animals brought in with reports of lost animals. If an animal is a stray the shelter keeps it for five working days, giving its owner a chance to claim it. After this period, the animal is available for adoption. People adopt about 1,200 animals from the shelter each year.

Adopting a pet is not free, however. A female dog costs \$67, a male \$50. Cats are cheaper; a female costs \$49, a male \$44. But this price includes such things as distemper shots, deworming, a physical examination by a veterinarian and sterilization, Sanford said.

All of the pets brought to the shelter are available for adoption; walking through its rooms is like walking through a pet store. Many of the pets are babies, such as several multi-colored kittens living with their mother in one of the steel cages. Even rabbits and birds are available.

But college students looking for a pet are usually not good pet owners, according to Sanford. "They should wait until they graduate and are settled," she said. "Pets are a 10 to 15 year commitment, but they often end up like foster children. They are passed from person to person and often develop behavior problems."

Homeless animals are not always confined to the four walls of the shelter until they are adopted. The APS operates Outreach, a pet visitation program where volunteers take shelter animals to local retirement and nursing homes and let residents visit with the animals. "It is the only time that these people who desire contact with animals can touch and feel them," Sanford said.

Although placing pets in responsible, caring homes may be its most important function, the APS is more than a dog pound. The organization operates an Emergency Rescue Service. Volunteers are on call day and night to respond to animal emergencies. "Our people are trained to go out and rescue (animals) and then transport (them) to a vet," Sanford said. "It is usually for animals that are abandoned, hit by a car or up a tree."

The APS also operates a wildlife rescue and rehabilitation service that



June Poineau, kennel technician, cares for kittens and other animals at the shelter

DTH/Elizabeth Morrah

is renowned statewide. Members rescue and rehabilitate injured or orphaned wildlife and then return them to their natural habitat. Advocating animal protection

laws is a function of the APS. They are now petitioning Orange County in an attempt to persuade county officials to pass a law against animal leg traps made of steel.

Although APS performs many functions in Orange County, they cannot do it alone. Animals are not just their owners' concern, they are the responsibility of everyone.

Washington internship program offers students experience, credit

By HART MILES
Staff Writer

Students interested in the "independent sector" of American society may want to participate in a new program next fall

offered by The Washington Center, a non-profit educational organization.

The independent sector consists of foundations, advocacy groups, membership associations and non-

profit organizations. The program, Internship Initiative in the Independent Sector, places 25 student interns with senior level managers and executives in Washington, D.C. foundations and non-profit organi-

zations. The American Council on Education and the National Organization for Women are two such organizations.

These internships will provide leadership development and encour-

age values that emphasize working in the service area, according to Teresa Sparks, Senior Program Associate of the center. This new program was created because of "the increasing evidence that a majority of students have shifted from concern for social issues to preoccupation with financial security and personal career aspirations," she said.

A student must be a second-semester sophomore or above, in good standing at a U.S. institution of higher learning, and have at least a 3.0 grade point average to apply for the internships.

UNC does offer academic credit for internships. A student can receive a maximum of six hours credit for the program, which lasts from Sept. 2 to Dec. 16, according to Robin Joseph, experiential learning coordinator for the University Career Planning and Placement Services. A student must remain enrolled in school to receive credit.

The fee for the fall program is \$1,345. Students selected for the Internship Initiative in the Independent Sector receive a \$1,000 stipend. Scholarships, awarded on the basis of need, merit and availability of funds, are available to members of minority groups, but they do not completely cover student tuition. Housing arranged through the Washington Center costs an additional \$1,330 for the fall program.

The center also continues to offer internships in all career fields for students.

UNC senior Agustin Diodati received an internship as a law clerk through the center. He worked at the law firm of Tendler and Biggins last summer in Washington, D.C.

The internship required a 40 hour work week, Diodati said, but he normally worked 50 to 55 hours a week by his own choice. Weekly seminars, taught by senators and

other leaders, were also mandatory. "The Washington Center is good in that it finds you an internship, which is hard to get without connections," Diodati said.

But the cost and the required seminars are two drawbacks to the program, Diodati added. He also recommended that students find housing on their own without going through the center.

The center secures rooms for interns from Woodner Apartments, about one and a half miles from the White House.

The application deadline for fall internships is June 1. For more information, contact Teresa Sparks of the Washington Center at (202) 289-8680.

The center is also offering a two week symposium this summer called Crisis and Choice in American Foreign Policy. It will take place in Washington and features speakers such as William Colby, former Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, and Lawrence Korb, former Assistant Secretary of Defense.

The symposium is designed for students interested in careers in foreign policy or those who just enjoy following foreign affairs. It runs from Aug. 14-26. An optional third week on American-Soviet Relations will be held Aug. 7-13. Students will review recent submits between President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev.

Academic credit is usually not given for such symposiums, but students can ask individual department faculty members for special consideration, said Robin Joseph.

The registration deadline for Crisis and Choice in American Foreign Policy is May 2, 1988. For more information, talk to Loretta Hawley of the Washington Center at (202) 289-8680.

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