

S.P.C.A. Shelter Aids Lost, Hurt Animals

By MIKE EGGERS
Press-Herald Staff Writer

A small puppy wanders aimlessly through the streets of Torrance, cold, wet, and shivering... across town another dog has been the victim of a hit and run accident... the second that night.

owners come in to claim them or they can be placed in a new home.

The S.P.C.A. — an around-the-clock operation — is concerned with everything which affects animals and their welfare. Started in 1897, the S.P.C.A. has helped thousands of animals ranging from ocelots and monkeys to boa constrictors and goats.

Four trucks from the Hawthorne branch cover the area from San Pedro to Inglewood and Redondo Beach to Gardena, where on an average day, hundreds of residents report stray or injured animals. The goal of every

S.P.C.A. branch is to find homes for these animals.

Our story begins when an animal is picked up as a stray wandering through the streets. It is then taken to the pound where it is tagged according to breed, sex, and demeanor. If the animal is wearing a license tag, it is kept for 10 days. After that it is up for adoption by anyone. If it doesn't have a tag, the animal is kept for six days before it can be adopted.

Hopefully the owners will come in to claim the lost animal. All it takes from the animal is the "wag of a tail" and the kennel men know it's the right owner. Three-year

kennelman Jim Grant explained the adoption procedure this way: "If the owner comes in to claim his animal he must first show some identification or proof that he is the owner. If he doesn't have tags or other identification, then it's left entirely to the response of the animal."

If you go down to the Hawthorne kennels at 12910 Yukon, one thing is for sure, you won't walk away saying they don't have the right kind of dog for you. If you like the short fat ones, try the Basset hounds or a terrier; or if you're a little more adventurous you might

want to try the big, white Alaskan Samoyed, and if you really want to go all out, they even have a St. Bernard up for adoption.

If you tend to lean toward the unusual, snakes, ocelots, baby pheasants, goats, monkeys, and rabbits are available, but you had better hurry because these don't last long. If you're inclined toward fowl, plain chicken, valuable falcons, and hawks are looking for a roost.

Don't worry about getting a sick animal at the pound; a county veterinarian comes out every week to check on the welfare of the animals,

and if you decide to adopt one, the S.P.C.A. will give you a certificate for a free examination of "your" animal at the veterinarian of your choice.

Most stories have a sad chapter and this one is no different. What happens to those unlucky few dogs that seem to get passed by everyone comes in to adopt? The kennel keeps them as long as possible, but some dogs get too old or they just are not "cute" enough to be adopted. It's sad, but sooner or later the day comes when the pound just can't keep them any longer.

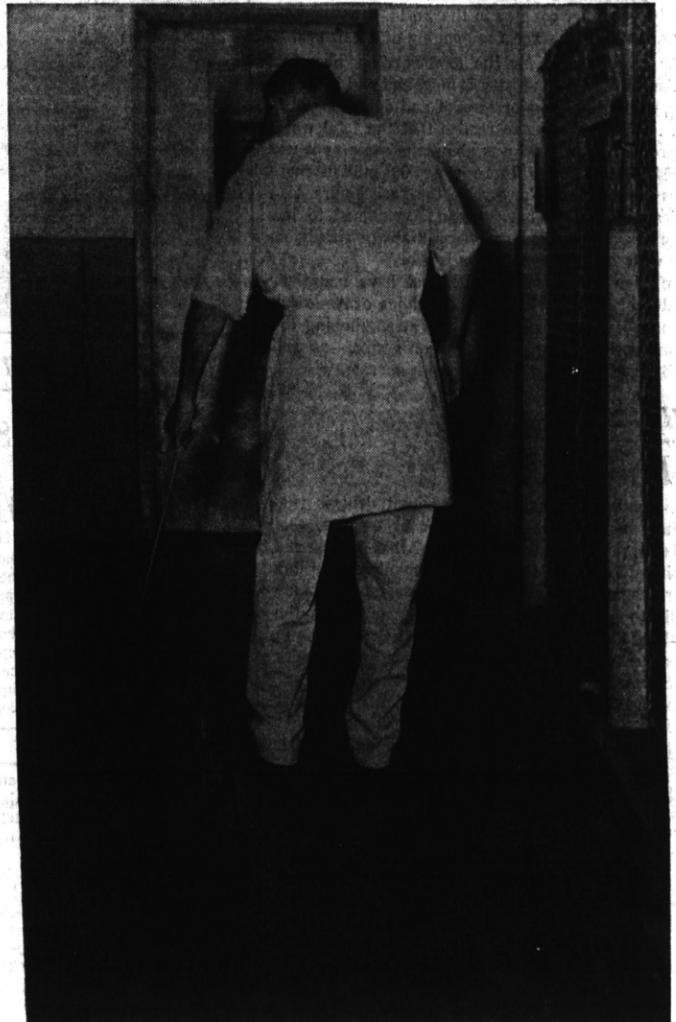
The dogs have to be destroyed.

It's a morbid sight. I watched seven of them, with their sad little eyes peering through the cages begging for another chance, being put into the vacuum container, where two seconds later they never would whimper again. A sad sight and one that you don't forget the next day or the next week.

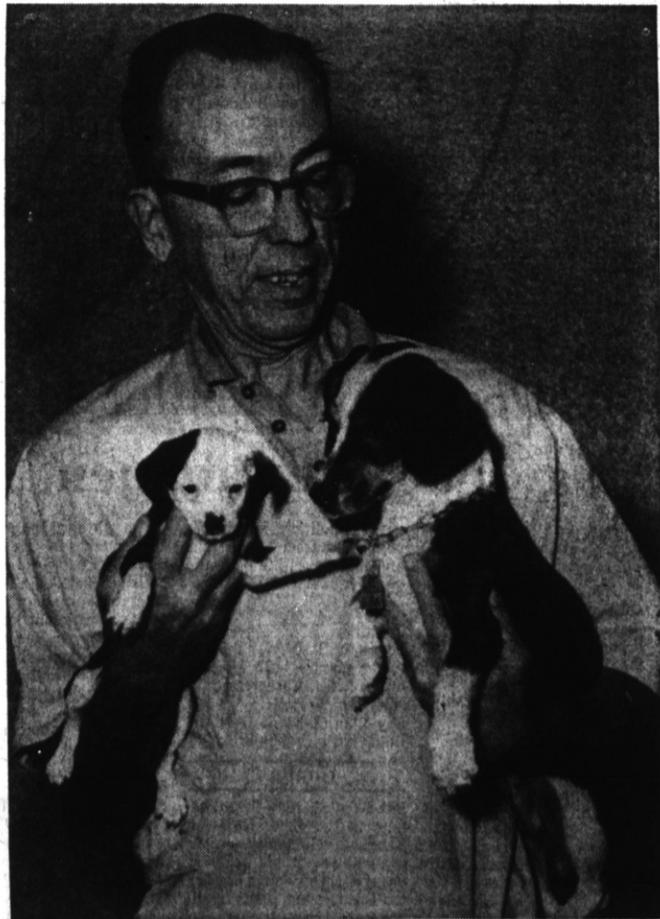
The next time you start to kick or get mad at that dog of yours, think about that little puppy wandering aimlessly through the streets—it could be on your street... or it could be your puppy.



CONFUSED . . . Not sure whether he should hide or come out into the open, this mixed German Shepherd plays peek-a-boo with other residents at the shelter in Hawthorne.



THE LAST WALK . . . Take a long hard look at this cocker spaniel because it's the last time anyone is going to take him for a walk. Although the S.P.C.A. kennels keep lost or stray dogs as long as possible, some dogs get too old or sick to keep and the animals have to be destroyed.



FEROCIOUS ANIMALS . . . Kennelman Jim Grant holds two of his "boarders" in the section for quarantined animals. Grant handles all of the "mean" animals but he still believes that dogs "bite only from fear." Both dogs are mixed terriers. That's mother on the right with her son.



SAD EYES . . . This sad-eyed cocker spaniel is waiting for someone to adopt him at the county pound, 12910 Yukon Ave. in Hawthorne.



SOMETHING UNUSUAL . . . For the man who has everything, the S.P.C.A. shelter in Hawthorne has just the right gift. Billy, a favorite of the kennelmen, is available for adoption, too.

Press-Herald
Photos by
Mike Eggers



NEED A WATCHDOG? . . . His ears perked and eyes shining, this big white Alaskan Samoyed seems to be saying, "I'd make a great watchdog." He is just one of the many dogs awaiting adoptions at the county pound in Hawthorne.