

# Humane Society says animals suffering from recession

**By WILMA BLOKHUIS  
Special to The Champion**  
Last year's declining economy seems to have taken its toll on abuses against animals and pets in Milton, Oakville and Halton Hills.

Already this year, the society is investigating the abandonment of 71 chickens on Highway 5, found January 2.

More than 400 cruelty to animals complaints were received last year resulting in 26 seizures, and one charge of cruelty being laid, according to statistics released by the Oakville Humane Society.

The number of complaints has al-

most doubled over 1990 when the society received 256 calls resulting in two seizures — fewer than the previous year when 273 complaints were received resulting in four seizures.

## Abuses increasing

With last year's worsening recession, the number of animal abuses increased, said Linda Dent, the society's animal control supervisor and cruelty inspector.

"I think the economy is 90 per cent to blame for it. A lot of animal abuse stems from people's frustration. People are less tolerant of other

people's pets.

"Not only have the number of complaints almost doubled, but the severity of the complaints has also risen greatly," noted Ms. Dent, adding most complaints require "fairly routine" investigations regarding proper food and shelter.

She said the number of animals abandoned by their owners "was overwhelming last year," coupled with an increasing number of animals being "dumped" on the society "by people who have not taken the responsibility of bringing them to the shelter and paying an adoption fee." For this reason, the humane society is operating the shelter at a deficit.

"It's not a serious deficit," commented Elizabeth Thompson, manager of the Oakville Humane Society's animal shelter. "But, we've been running at a slight deficit since the summer."

Explaining the shelter's budget is about \$325,000 annually, Ms. Thompson said, the shelter is running "slightly over \$10,000 in debt."

"This is the first time in several years that the shelter is running at a deficit," stressed Ms. Dent. Animals "dumped" on the society include "dogs tied to the front door, and in one case, a puppy tied to the bridge on the laneway."

Many kittens, cats and smaller animals have been left in boxes around the shelter property. The number of requests to take animals for adoption, and others are not being picked up by their owners "because they don't have the money to reclaim them." For this reason, visits to veterinarians for treatments have also been delayed, said Ms. Dent.

The number of written orders to provide adequate food and shelter, and to visit a veterinarian, doubled

last year and in 1990 from the previous two years. Last year, 40 such orders were issued, and 36 in 1990, compared to 19 and 12 in 1989 and 1988 respectively. Most of these orders, issued under the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, were complied with by owners.

Among the cruelties to animals investigated last year by the society include two cats thrown from a moving truck window on Ridge Drive near Lorne Skuce School last May.

"Unfortunately, no license plate number was obtained (by witnesses) and the cats, both domestic short hairs and declawed, were recovered and later adopted out. We found them hiding in the bushes near the school," said Ms. Dent.

## Yelping in pain

In another instance, a puppy was thrown or had fallen from an apartment balcony near Kerr and Stewart Street. "The puppy was found on the ground yelping in pain," she said. "It was taken to a veterinarian and residents were questioned. No witnesses were found." The puppy was euthanized.

"During mid-summer, a Lhasa Apso dog picked up on a rural road as a stray that was said to have been dumped and hanging around for a day or two, turned out to have major problems," stated Ms. Dent's report.

"The dog was so matted and dirty that he was quickly shaved down. Upon shaving the dog, it was found he was eaten raw as he was covered in maggots which he played host to

because of his matted condition and warm muggy weather."

The owner of the animal was never found, however, the dog responded to treatment and three months later, was adopted.

And, again, last summer, the owners of two cats and a dog went on vacation, leaving their pets without food or water in a 33-degree Celsius (90 Fahrenheit) apartment. After several visits, the animals were seized and adopted.

The society has also dealt with reports of a number of young boys tossing the classroom hamster "around like a ball," several cases of cats shot using pellet guns, and cats returning home with unusual injuries after lengthy absences, "including one covered in some type of oil product."

Cruelty to animals is a criminal offence punishable by a maximum fine of \$2,000 or six months in jail. However, laying charges is "difficult because of a lack of witnesses, not enough information, and several instances where the owners are never found," said Ms. Dent.

The increase in animal abuses investigated by the Oakville Humane Society compares with pet killings in Toronto which increased by 65 per cent over 1990 for the first seven months last year, and beatings were up 42 per cent. During the first seven months last year, 38 animals were killed, compared to 23 in 1990. Abandonment of animals had also increased in Toronto mainly due to neglect because people were not able to afford to look after their pets properly.

## WANTED!

A limited amount of exhibitor space is still available in the Milton Mall Lifestyle Home Show. JAN. 29 - FEB. 1. If your business could use direct exposure to thousands of interested consumers over an exciting 4-day period, then the Milton Mall Lifestyle Home Show will definitely be of interest to you! To obtain a Reservation Form or for more information, please contact during the hours of 9-5 p.m. Dave Jenkins now at 827-4632.

*The Jenkins Agency*

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Last 2 days - Wed. & Thurs. KUFFS 7:30 p.m.

**2** HELD OVER 2nd WEEK  
**The Hand That Rocks The Cradle** (No Family)

Today & Thursday 7:30 p.m.  
Fri., Sat. & Sun. 7:00 & 9:00 p.m.  
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**3** HELD OVER 2nd WEEK  
**Beauty and the Beast** (No Family)

Today & Thursday 7:30 p.m.  
Fri., Sat. & Sun. 7:00 p.m.  
Mon. to Thurs. 7:30 p.m.

Fri., Sat. Sun. 8:45 p.m.  
**FOR THE BOYS**

## CRIME STOPPERS OF HALTON

### Variety-store thief takes New Year's Eve present

Halton Regional Police in Burlington and Crime Stoppers of Halton are seeking the public's help in identifying the lone male, who ended the year, 1991, by holding up a variety store in west Burlington.

At approximately 8:45 p.m. on Dec. 31, a lone white male entered Oak Variety, 175 Plains Rd. at White Oaks Drive in Burlington. He accosted the female clerk with a 5 inch black handled knife and demanded the money from the till.

After taking about \$200 cash in small bills from the cash register the suspect ran out of the store. The Halton Regional Police K-9 Unit was called in and followed the culprit's trail to the area of White Oaks Drive and Old Orchard Road.

The wanted man is described as male, white, in his early 30s, 5 foot 6 inches tall, approximately 160 pounds, with a medium build. He was wearing a blue knit hat, beige coloured suede jacket, blue jeans and black gloves. He has what is described as an old burn scar high on his right cheek beside his nose.

If you have any information that leads to an arrest in this or any other case, you may be eligible for a cash reward of up to \$1,000. You need not give your name and your information will be treated with complete anonymity. January is Crime Stoppers month. Keep a good thing going. Please call 1-800-868-5151 or 825-TIPS, that's 825-8477.



The Halton Board of Education is committed to preparing today's students for tomorrow's challenges. If you have a child who will be 5 years old by December 31, 1992, then now is the time to take action on Kindergarten Registration!

There's a public elementary school nearby with caring people waiting to help you, and your child, with this important step. To make registration easy, please make sure that you bring a verification of your child's date of birth and proof of school

North Centre  
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East Centre  
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West Centre  
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## IT'S TIME...FOR KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION!

support to your neighbourhood school. We're ready to become a partner with you in the education of your child.

Registration has already started and we encourage you to register your child by March 30.

If there's anything you need to know, we're happy to help. Just call your local school principal, or the Education Centre in your area. We're looking forward to working with you.

**Milton Youth Soccer Club Inc.**  
P.O. Box 254, MILTON, ONT. L9T 4P2

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