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Year End Review
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Pet owners in the San Fernando Valley joined with all city pet owners last year in the enhancement of animal welfare in the greater Los Angeles area. Major strides were recorded in all aspects of animal care and control.

In two prime categories of animal regulation--animals handled at the city animal shelters, and unwanted animals destroyed--substantial decreases in volumn were recorded in the two San Fernando Valley shelters, operated by the Los Angeles City Department of Animal Regulation.

At the East Valley Animal Shelter, located in North Hollywood, and the West Valley Shelter in Chatsworth, a total of 53,726 animals was handled in fiscal 1973-74. This number was 4479 less than the number of animals handled at the Valley shelters in 1972-73.

According to Robert I. Rush, general manager of the city animal regulation department, the encouraging reduction in the animal traffic at the shelters is due principally to a sharper exercise of pet ownership responsibility, and public participating in the low cost spay and neuter clinic program.

"Because pet owners are exercising tighter controls on their animals, our impound rate is decreasing," Rush points out. "And the fact that pet owners are taking advantage of the low cost spay and neuter fees at the East Valley Spay and Neuter Clinic (13131 Sherman Way, North Hollywood) also helps

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reduces our traffic because there are less unwanted puppies and kitten on the street."

In addition to the decrease in animal volumn at the Valley shelters, there is a corresponding reduction in the number of unwanted animals destroyed. In the past fiscal year, 38,812 animals were destroyed. In 1972-73, 44,610 animals were destroyed. The lowered destruction rate is also reflected city-wide. In the city's six animal shelters, there was an imposing 9.7 per cent decrease in animal destruction last year, compared to the previous fiscal period.

In the areas of pet adoption, San Fernando Valley residents, more and more, are finding the objects of their affection at the East and West Valley animal shelters. More than 6000 animals were adopted at the two facilities in 1973-74, an increase of nearly 800 animals over the previous year.

All dogs in the greater Los Angeles area must be vaccinated against rabies every thirty months. To facilitate the inoculation program, the City Department of Animal Regulation, in conjunction with the Southern California Veterinary Medical Association, conducts public low cost anti-rabies clinics in February, May, August and November. Last year, Valley dog owners responded to the community health program in large numbers. A total of 11,129 dogs received anti-rabies vaccinations in 1973-74. Information concerning all clinic schedules may be obtained at any time by calling 485-5755.

Wildlife is an important part of the Valley scene, and the conservation of that wildlife is a responsibility of the animal regulation department. Rather than destroy the wildlife,

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the department, through its unique Animal Airlift, relocates small wild creatures, humanely trapped in urban areas, to a new habitat in Angeles National Forest. Since the inception of the wildlife conservation program in 1969, more than 2200 wild animals, trapped in all parts of the city, have been flown by helicopter to new homes in the Forest.

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