

ANIMAL SERVICES



A "liger" – lion/tiger mix, one of the rare animals that have been handled by East Valley.

Llamas and Ligers and Bears, Oh My!

**East Valley Animal Shelter,
14409 Vanowen St.
Van Nuys, CA
91405**
• 2nd in a series

Counselor Tanya Edwards visits the next shelter on her tour, East Valley.



The East Valley Shelter has a brightly lit, spacious, and beautifully decorated lobby, where you can receive information on adopting and pay the adoption fees.



East Valley has a beautiful exercise yard, where the volunteers can take the dogs and let them run free.



Animal Care Technicians: The word "care" in their titles does not describe all that the ACTs do. They receive abandoned/stray/or owner-release animals. Pictured are, from left: Sheryl Perez, ACT Supervisor, 23 years of City service; Eardley Norman, 4 years, and Luz Ruiz, 4 years.



Welcome to the Cat Condo, a cat room equipped with great toys, comfy furniture, and a great, sunny view.



The Cat Room, where you can find cats of all shapes, sizes, and ages, ready for a good home.



Capt. Jan Selder, Director of Operations for West LA, East and West Valley Shelters, 16 years of City service. Capt. Jan shows off an information sheet on a typical foster animal candidate. This little kitten, less than four weeks old, was abandoned, extremely malnourished, and underweight.

Story and photos by Tanya R. Edwards, Club Counselor



What is a "liger," you may ask? Well, when I visited Animal Services' East Valley Shelter in November, I found out.

According to Capt. Wendell Bowers of the East Valley Animal Shelter, it is "an exotic cross breed of a tiger and a lion" and is among the many exotic and strange animals that his shelter has had to rescue. Other animals include alligators, mountain lions, and a "huge" hippo that was on a wild animal preserve. Being located in the San Fernando Valley, it's one of the shelters called in during wildfires like the one in Sun Valley, where they had to rescue and house llamas, horses, and goats until the danger had passed and the owners could come claim the animals.

If that is not exciting enough, they are also called in the event of flooding or to rescue animals during drug busts, which usually resulted in cobras being added to mix at East Valley. Capt. Bowers has even managed the rescue of large animals including horses that had to be airlifted to be removed from mud during a flood. I guess that would lend credibility to the fact he oversees the "number one" Animal Shelter in the City, based on the number of adoptions as well as being the largest and busiest shelter. They currently have approximately 121 cats and more than 200 dogs for adoption. They have been the filming location for the Animal Planet channel and shows including "Pit Boss."

Capt. Jan Selder, Director of Operations for the West Los Angeles, West and East Valley Shelters, says she is "extremely proud of their foster program." The foster program allows anyone who is interested to care for animals that are a little more difficult to place like senior dogs or "dark-colored" dogs, because statistics show that light-colored animals get adopted faster. Why? She speculates, "Dark-colored animals tend to blend into the background of the cages and may not get noticed as readily as those that stand out



Capt. Wendell Bowers, who started out as an Animal Care Technician at the West Valley Shelter in 1988, is a true animal lover, based on his personal animal brood of two dogs, one cat, a fish, a rabbit and a guinea pig.



A loving terrier looks for a new home.

more." To help get these animals adopted, they have hosted events including "best friends," which focuses on the adoption of dark-colored animals. Also in need of foster care are the animals that are rescued who are younger than eight weeks who may need to have special attention or be hand fed. Capt. Selder encourages anyone interested in becoming a foster animal caregiver to go on the Website www.laanimalservices.org and complete an application.

More than anything, the ongoing message that Capt. Bowers and everyone that I have met through my visits to the shelters want to emphasize is, **please get your pet spayed (female) or neutered (male) to help lessen the number of unwanted pets** and for the health of your pet, and if you are looking for a pet, please check-out at your local animal shelter first.



Capt. Bowers checks on all of his little buddies, making sure that all the kennels are clean, the animals have ample food, and there are no sick or injured animals.



Veronica Perry, New Hope Coordinator and Rescue Organization Liaison, with her little pup, CoCo Chanel. Coincidentally, she named her dog the same as my little Chihuahua! As a New Hope Coordinator, it is her job to bring "new hope for a loving home" to as many animals as possible. If an animal is in the shelter for more than a week she will send out a request to the humane and rescue organizations to find foster homes.



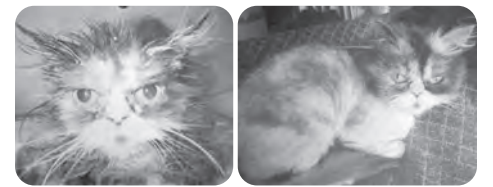
"Hopping" for a new home is this cute little rabbit.



Small dogs are housed together in the outdoor, spacious, two-room kennels. Each kennel has a rear area away from public view for animals that prefer privacy.



A playful kitten swats at his information sheet, checking to see if all the information is accurate.



Pictures of success: Pictured on the left is the "before" picture of a kitten brought in who had suffered abuse and neglect. After the care provided by the team, she is happy and healthy, shown in the photo on the right.



East Valley hosts a Citywide employee photo contest, where employees are encouraged to send in their best photograph of a shelter animal. The winning photos are displayed in the lobby.



In the lobby is a bulletin board called "Wags and Brags," where community members who have adopted animals can send in thank-you letters, and there are also posts about outstanding community members like "Superstar Performer" Delaney Klace, a little girl who set up a table at a local hiking spot selling water and dog treats to the hikers. She raised \$66 in three hours, which she donated to the East Valley Shelter.



From left: Capt. Wendell Bowers and Aaron Owen, Animal Control Officer, 4 years of City service, Club Member, who recently rescued a large 120-pound buck (male deer) caught by its antlers in tall grass. The deer was kicking and thrashing trying to get untangled, when Bowers and Owen together had to use a long tree trimmer, which could reach the deer's antlers, to cut the grass from a safe distance. Once released, the deer happily bounded away. All in a days work at East Valley.



Behind the scenes are the wonderful administrative staff, from left: Kathy Bostick, Clerk Typist, 5 years of City service, Club Member; Priscilla Coloso, Sr. Clerk Typist, 15 years; and April Dunham, Clerk Typist, 4 years.