

mean only beatings and torture, but, as is more often the case, ignorance and neglect) takes place in every country.

In Japan, because of people's lack of knowledge and common sense about pet-care there are overwhelming numbers of cruelty cases. My six months in Japan have been spent working for Animal Rescues in Kansai (ARK), a refuge centre in Kansai where I've seen hundreds of bad cases, each one more shocking than the last. I've dealt with many foreigners' enquiries or pleas both on the telephone and face-to-face. I realise there are people who would like to help but don't know what to do. Let me enlighten you. Firstly, I'd like to point out that adopting a dog or cat is not ideal unless you are going to live in Japan for the next ten years, or are willing to take the animal with you when you return to your country. But there are other ways to help. Here are some:

1. If you are a teacher, introduce the topic of Better Treatment to Animals to your students. This is virtually unexplored and ignored by them. Combined with some practical assignment (measuring the lengths of dogs' chains, or noting how many had had puppies) this can become an interesting educational project.
2. With your spare time and energy why not organise a fun event with your friends to raise funds for animal welfare and be a voice for the animals?
3. Don't be afraid to make polite but firm suggestions to a dog owner when you see his animal in a bad condition. Gestures are just as effective as words. You'll be surprised how far the shock of having a *gaijin* point these things out goes.
4. Encourage everyone you know with a female pet to have it spayed — it's the only effective long-term solution to the problem.
5. Whether you can offer practical help, ideas or need advice or assistance with an animal problem, please ring 0727-37-0712.
6. For those willing to donate — ARK's account: ARK Daihyo, Fuji Bank, Tenma Branch, No. 1611189. Your donations will support and maintain ARK, and leave you with a good feeling of having helped the animals. □

Paula Cowie

Dear Editor,

In addendum to your article 'Animal Weak in Japan' of the Sept. 1990 issue, No. 163, by Elizabeth Oliver, I wish to refer to another aspect of animal abuse that results from unwanted animal population and irresponsible human management of such populations — namely, the selling of animals for research from the so-called animal shelters designed supposedly to provide refuge for unwanted animals. This practice is often justified as 'saving human lives,' but

animals is duplicative and unnecessary. can also produce falsely safe results in drug testing, for example, as in the notorious case of Thalidomide. The original developers of the polio vaccine, who won the Nobel Prize for their work, **recommended** that it be developed in human patients rather than in animals, although that did not ultimately occur. Yet many persons assume that drugs and procedures must be tried out on animals prior to human use. A classic example of this misconception is in the case of cancer where the disease can be reproduced in human cells grown on culture plates and new drugs tried on these or by terminally ill patients who hope for a cure. Yet shelters are selling healthy animals to research facilities where they are infected unnecessarily with disease and suffer agony in terms of pain, solitary confinement, addiction withdrawal and loneliness. A far-thinking and ever-increasing minority is now questioning such practices in the names of humanitarianism and good science. We feel that procedures should be practiced on mannequins and cadavers rather than on live animals, and that federal funds should be reallocated to benefit sick people and to protect homeless animals, rather than being used to add animals to drugs or infect them with disease. The NIDA (National Institute of Drug Abuse) of the United States has a budget of \$700 million this year in order to addict healthy animals to cocaine, alcohol and other drugs to see what effect it has on them. But the Washington DC Drug Abuse Services Administration has only \$31 million for public drug treatment centers, and that is why they wait for human addicts to receive treatment for weeks and months! Monkeys even have holes drilled in their skulls to pour in the drugs. Rather than waste tax dollars on cruel, useless animal experimentation, we must move into progressive alternatives that will benefit humanity instead.

Lise Olse

Dear Readers,

How many of you have experienced the 'What's your purpose in Japan?' question when meeting students, teachers, or the man who runs the local sushi shop? Irritating isn't it? But they have a point (what is your purpose in being in Japan?). Let me tell you what happens when I answer this question. When I say "Working with animals," they smile and know what I mean — but when I mention animal welfare it draws a blank.

Many Japanese people don't fully understand the concept of welfare for animals, or realise why there are over a million unwanted pets handled like garbage and killed every year in this country.

In general, Westerners are more aware of domestic animals' needs and have some compassion for any neglected dogs and cats they see. Of course, cruelty (which doesn't