

Need for Corrective Action Seen at Pound

Overcrowding, Sanitation Lack Faced by Dogs

By ERIC WENTWORTH
Mail Tribune Staff Writer
A visit to the Jackson county dog pound in Medford shows a real need for corrective action.

The county owns the property, at 2872 Howard ave. But, as part of Berrydale, it was annexed to Medford in May, 1957.

Some 300 dogs are impounded there each month, according to Chris Hagler, 25-year-old county dog control officer. Of these, about one third are claimed. The others are electrocuted.

Lack of Sanitation
All dogs brought to the pound endure, however briefly, overcrowding and a lack of sanitation.

The pound itself is situated behind the small white house where Hagler lives with his wife and four children. It is approximately 100 yards northwest of the playground of Howard school.

It consists of an aluminum shed with outdoor enclosures at each end, set on a concrete base. Cyclone fencing divides it into four pens. The shed is unheated.

Hagler hoses the concrete at least once a day, without disinfectant, and the water bears its burden of filth into a shallow ditch alongside.

Beyond this, Hagler says, was once a trench three feet deep. This trench is now filled to ground level with dung and sawdust, mushy to the foot and foul to the nose.

Drainage Problem
The drainage problem is bad for the entire area. Water stands in the ditch and in pools nearby. After a bad rain, Hagler reports, the dogs are wading.

Children from the nearby school come often to visit the animals, he said.

Hagler segregates the dogs as best he can in the four pens. One group includes "strays," or dogs that from breed or possession of a collar appear to have owners. Some Hagler recognizes at sight.

A second pen is reserved for females in heat. The other two are for "dogs to go." These are the death cells.

Crowding too many animals into one pen is dangerous, with fights - occasionally fatal - the result. Hagler believes that two dogs to a pen is proper. But there were 35 dogs at the pound Friday.

Disease is another danger from overcrowding. Distemper and infectious hepatitis are especially vicious. Possibly because of the rapid turnover, however, Hagler says he has never seen any real epidemic break out.

He says he has learned to recognize distemper symptoms, and places any diseased animals he notices in the "kill" shed.

But, he admits, "lots get in there I don't know about." He says veterinarians take dogs from the pound to provide blood for transfusions. Hagler kills an average of

Kapers Advertising Program Starts
The 1959 Kiwanis Kapers advertising solicitation program is under way according to Fred Morlan, advertising chairman.

The Kapers, a musical and minstrel review, "Now and Then," will be produced Mar. 4 through 7 at Medford High school featuring the entire membership of the Medford Kiwanis club in choral and novelty acts.

Proceeds from this show will be used to maintain and further the underprivileged children's work in this community.

Captains in charge of the five general solicitation teams are Robert Little, Robert Rix, Jim Ambler, Fred Sears and John Nuich. A special committee to call on various professional groups throughout this area has also been appointed.

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DOGS AND BOG - A morass of manure lies directly beside the dog pound pens. The pens themselves are hosed at least once a day, but the sewage accumulates next to them, in some places three feet deep. Children from nearby Howard school must walk across it when they come to visit the dogs.



HOMELESS DOG - Chris Hagler, Jackson county dog control officer, carries one more orphaned canine to the pound. Some 50 dogs a week are impounded, over half of them brought by owners wishing to dispose of their charges. Hagler himself keeps a beagle and a dachshund at his house as pets.

50 dogs a week, most of them on Saturday morning. He electrocutes them with two wires in the "kill" shed, next to the pound.

Killed in Week
Those killed during the week he hauls to the garbage dump at Camp White. Saturday's bodies go to a tallow company. "The tallow company has to have fresh dogs," Hagler remarks.

Dogs brought to the pound are kept several days, and are advertised in the Mail Tribune. "People have a pretty good

chance of getting back a lost dog," Hagler said Friday. "But most times they don't want them."
"Every year we kill more dogs."

Dispose of Dogs
He said that more than half the dogs are brought in by owners who wish to dispose of them. These people, he explained, have found their animals vicious or unmanageable, or are financially unable to provide for them.

Hagler and his wife keep a list of people who want a dog, and notify them when one appears to fill their specifications. But this means, at least a few homeless dogs are spared execution.

Hagler will have worn the dog control officer's badge for three full years by the end of March. His current salary is \$225 a month. He receives the house rent-free, utilities, telephone and an 8 cents a mile allowance for the panel truck.

His wife, Fern, who helps with many of his duties at the pound, receives \$20 a month for 10 months of the year. Hagler said she has also been allowed to keep the 25 cents a day boarding fees paid by people who pick up dogs.

He drives the truck as much as 2,400 miles a month. Among his many duties besides managing the pound are collecting license fees, impounding unlicensed dogs, reducing damage by dogs to livestock - shooting the marauders if necessary - and investigating claims of those who have suffered livestock losses caused by dogs.

These claims are made against the dog license fund. Demand on Hagler's time, both day and night, are heavy. He will answer calls from farmers reporting molesting of livestock, or from town constables asking him to come pick up a stray canine, at all hours.

"When farmers call me late at night they know I'm not very busy," he says, "and they know I have no excuse not to come."

This winter he spent the early hours of both Christmas and New Year's mornings out in the fields. He has yet to take a vacation in the nearly three years he has worked.

Handle Whole Operation
Hagler and his wife must handle the whole operation practically alone. The one exception is a boy who helps with killing and cleaning the ditch on Saturday mornings. Despite the Hagler's indus-

try, however, the problems of overcrowding, drainage and sanitation grow if anything more serious.

The three-man county dog control board has failed to solve them.

Hagler reportedly asked the board for a septic tank to contain the sewage, but this was considered impractical. He has only one truck in service and cannot use it for both transporting dogs and hauling away excrement.

The proposed Berrydale sanitary sewer, when installed, may help alleviate this particular problem.

Bad Drainage
But bad drainage could prove more difficult, especially since it exists over a considerable area.

Overcrowding, of course, can only be helped by new facilities.

County Judge Earl Miller and County Commissioners Chester Wendt and Ralph James visited the pound Thursday, Hagler reported. This was one day after a complaint about the pound appeared in the Mail Tribune's communications column.

Hagler said the three county court members discussed possible relocation of the pound and said they would order wood chips for the interior of the aluminum shed.

The chips would absorb moisture and provide a more comfortable floor surface.

Relocating Pound
Relocating the pound may

ultimately prove the best solution. But until this occurs, it remains within Medford's city limits.

Medford has no specific regulations relating to pounds, according to City Manager Robert A. Duff. But, Duff said yesterday, the city council could probably "develop" requirements. There are, at any rate, general provisions on the city's books for sanitation standards.

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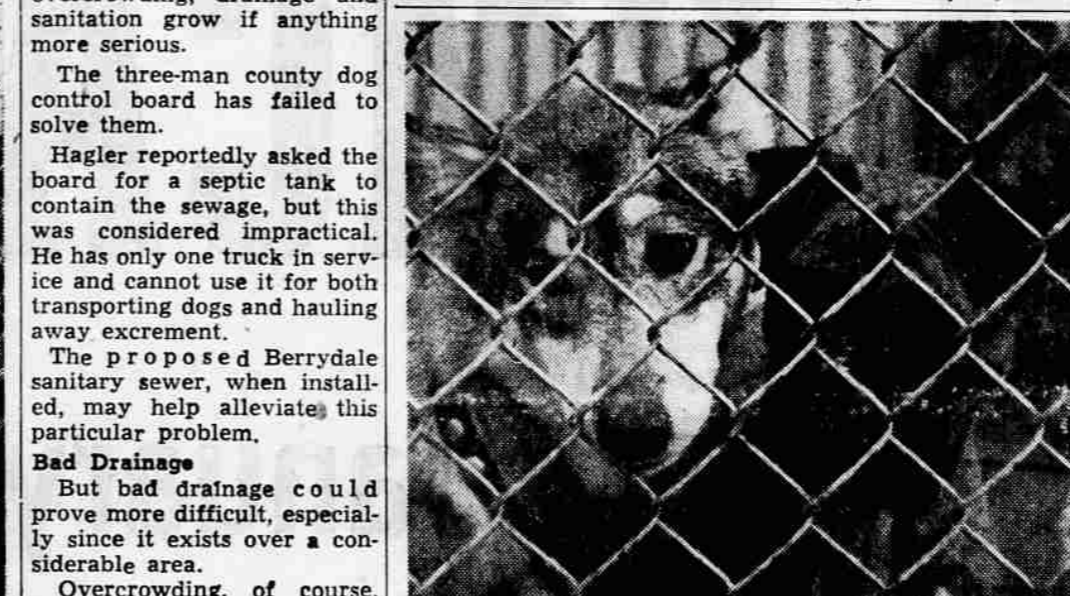
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MAIL TRIBUNE, Medford, Oregon, Sunday, January 18, 1959



ARE WE YOURS? - This downcast pair, a spindly husky and a brindle boxer, are confined in the pound's "stray" pen, reserved for dogs who appear to have homes. If they are not claimed, however, they will be killed like the others. Dogs at the pound are subjected to overcrowding, bad drainage and lack of sanitation.

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2:45—Girls' and Boys' Flounder Class
3:15—Skin Diving Exhibition
4:15—Swim Team Demonstration

GYMNASIUM
2:00—Girls' Baton, Acrobatic, Trampoline
2:45—Boys' Basketball Game
3:45—Women's Volleyball Game
4:30—Handball Game Demonstration, Weight Lifting, Boys' Gym Demonstration

LOBBY PROGRAM
2:00—Lobby Games in Progress—Free Activity

TELEVISION LOUNGE
2:00—Accordion Solos—Singing Groups—Special Music Numbers

SOCIAL HALL
2:00—Induction Ceremony
3:00—Indian Guide Meeting
3:30—Tri Hi-Y, Hi-Y Discussion
4:00—Square Dance Demonstration

REFRESHMENTS
2:00—Service in the Social Hall

2 P.M. to 5 P.M.

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Small Worlds Around Us
By Lynn M. Watkins

Odd-Looking Timber Doodle Looks Down—Sees Up
It's not surprising that the oddest looking American land bird should have such a ridiculous name as "timber doodle."

Had Mother Nature made the slightest miscalculation in placing the eyes in the woodcock, she would have missed the head entirely, as the woodcock's eyes are at the very top of the head, and placed back farther than would seem necessary.

Perhaps Nature was experimenting, and came up with a good idea, for the woodcock can see up at the same time its head is down, and the extreme down position is the normal feeding posture. The eyes are beautiful, very large, coal-black, soft and gentle, and used mainly for watching for danger rather than for food location.

Stout, Dumpy Body
The woodcock's body is stout and dumpy as if the bird were hump-backed. It is just about the oddest looking feathered creature of any marshy swampland, or woodlot. The woodcock has hardly any neck at all, giving the body the humped appearance. The tail is very abbreviated; the legs are too short, the bill is too long, and a complicated series of zigzag markings decorate the feathers on the underside of the squat body.

The upper body cover is brown, with markings so cleverly arranged as to make the bird just about invisible on the leaf-covered forest floor.

This odd-ball of the woodlands has more names than it can shake a feather at, such as Big-eyes, night-partridge, hookum pake, Labrador twister, whistler, timber doodle, and of course, woodcock. It is a member of the

snipe family, and because of its delicate flesh is hunted as a game bird. When alarmed it springs straight up into the air for several feet, flies but a short distance and again seeks cover.

Feeds at Night
The woodcock feeds mostly at night, probing in rich, soft soil for earthworms, or other soft bodied insects, with its sensitive bill. The lower section of the three-inch bill is somewhat shorter than the upper half; the upper, or longer part, is exceedingly sensitive, acting like a flexed finger in probing in the soft earth.

The nest of the woodcock is built on the floor of the forest or swampland. The nesting female depends on her perfect coloration and will sit perfectly still until she is almost stepped on before taking wing. Before she moves she is nearly invisible.

Woodsmen and hunters, as well as some naturalists claim the female woodcock carries her babies between her feet, or legs, transporting them to choice feeding grounds. It wouldn't be surprising if she did, for this odd-ball of the forest is downright peculiar, as well as very beautiful, in a dumpy sort of way.

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