

El Paso is entering its fourth year of a rabies epidemic

Things are different elsewhere, though, says Edwin Beckcom, executive director of the Dallas SPCA. He finds nothing strange about a small dog jumping into an officer's arms. He says most animal control people have a special empathy for their charges and stretch the rules to keep from destroying someone's pet.

BY THE TIME my thoughts changed, Prince was being pushed gently into the large security cage on the bed of the truck. He stood with his tail between his legs giving

us the old shiver trick. We ignored his ruse and climbed back into the cab, where Billy sat thoughtfully behind the wheel.

Battalion photo by Katye Kowierschke

PRESENTS

**SERIES PERFORMANCE #3** 

"What's the matter?" I asked. "I'm trying to decide which op-tion to take," he replied. "I can either put Prince at my place until the pound opens tomorrow or see of

"Pickups are greatest right de semester ends, Rich said. I couldn't argue the point sin knew three other campuses with

Same problem. However, Capt. Edgar Felan College Station Police Departur says his experience is different Billy's. "I find most students

extremely good care of the

Besides, most students war avoid paying the pound-fee war \$7.50 per head plus a dollar city tag. This is the price if ano

can prove the animal has bee

cinated for rabies. Otherwise are given and that cost is adden the bill.

Billy chuckled when he at tioned the per-head figure, here

he says the price can get pret

if a farmer or rancher is fined is

cently," he explained. "There whole in a fence that the ran wouldn't fix. The cows kept get

on the highway, posing a menace. Each time I came out

him to fix the fence and he ign me. The last time I said if I

again, I'd issue a citation for cow individually and it would

fines to pay. I haven't had any complaints so I guess he rep

Besides cows and dogs, Richar he also chases cats. College State

has an ordinance against cats ning loose, so the city has traps

in trouble areas. But felines are harder to control than canines 1976 only 82 cats were impound and 20 destroyed. January to

tober 1977 already shows 63 car

tion has few animal control pul lems. So does Capt. Feldman. However, Dr. A.I. Flowers in of Public Health at the College

Veterinary Medicine, is not so timistic. He believes College si tion residents are the type whom all day, keep their pets confin-then let them out to roam after

But what's so dangerous about

after-five releases? Animals letho

in the evenings quickly run togets to form packs, he said.

problem. One rural resident h nine lambs killed by such a gu-last April. She saw the attack a said most of the pack were obviou

pets wearing tags.

And pack animals can cause an

In a rural atmosphere, said Flor

p.m. He further believes the ain the the control officer should work event ballas, sometimes instead of days.

The officer believes College &

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and 13 killed.

"I had a situation like that

or 30 animals.

same problem.

mals

his owner is home." The College Station pound is lo-cated at the Scarmardo Veterinary Hospital and is closed on Wednesday afternoons.

'Let's try the owner," he said, turning the key. We drove around the corner to the dog's home. The owner of both Prince and a new sixfoot cedar fence, was astounded his dog was loose again. He showed us the repaired holes Prince had dug at irregular intervals under the fence. "I'm terribly sorry," he said.

I UNDERSTAND, said Billy, taking out his ticket book and be-ginning to write. "What I'm doing is issuing you a warning. There won't be any fine this time, but I have to write it.'

The man was pleased and further surprised when the dog catcher of-fered to come back on his day off to help him fix the fence so Prince

couldn't get out. "If folks keep their pets on their property or with them, I leave them alone," the officer said. "But if an animal is losse in the street or a city park, I pick it up. If it's tagged I try to find the owner."

Last year 376 tags were sold in College Station and 435 dogs were impounded. Of these, 136 owners were fined and 63 dogs destroyed. Between January and October, 1977, 300 tags have been sold, 412 dogs impounded and 30 destroyed.

Impounded animals are held three days before being destroyed. Most of the time dogs are taken to the Texas A&M College of Veterinary Medicine where students use them for experiments before taking their lives

"Occasionally I have to kill one myself," Billy said, "because it is unacceptable to the school. Most of the time, though, I try to find homes for those I know they won't take

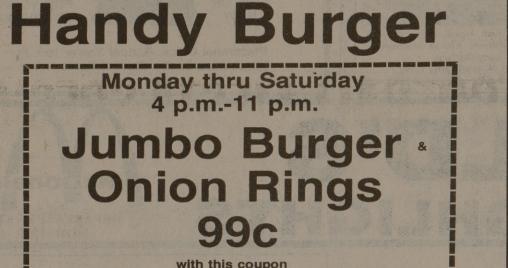
THOUGH HUMANE, these actions mean stretching rules, Rich told me as he drove to the city dump. There was a neat tin shed where he keeps dogs whose time has run out at the pound. The sole occupant was a gold labrador male with a wagging tail and friendly disposition.

"He's so well-trained I know he belongs to someone," Billy said.

We left the dump to cruise some more and Rich said Wednesdays were always light. The number of calls he gets depends on the day of the week, the weather and "whether the Aggies are in town."

ers, the chance is great that an 84th ren animal may give rabies to a dume to wors stray animal, which in turn tax Soviet b to a pet. Flowers says a high pe centage of animal-dumping and at the city's outskirts. Students bring pets with them and desert them when they leave. **TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY** 





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