



Newsletter for

March 2010

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Animal Rights vs. Animal Welfare – where do you fall?

For many years there has been a conflict between Animal Rights people (often called idealists) and Animal Welfare people (often called pragmatists). Even within NHARL you will find a multitude of opinions regarding this controversy.

Pragmatic animal welfare advocates will say change only comes in small steps, that for the animals on farms today, free range is better than caged, a paddock is better than a pen. Let's face it, the whole world is not going to stop eating meat, so in the meantime, can't we please let veal calves have some sunlight, unchain their legs, and let them eat something other than soured colostrums?

Idealistic animal rights advocates will say it is our task to hold up the ideal, to set the example, that it is our job "to believe", or at least, to hope. Aren't titles like "free range" or "humanely slaughtered" merely cover-ups for the barbaric meat business, a way for people to soothe their consciences while causing the brutal and totally unnecessary deaths of millions of animals every year? Is it truly better for a lab monkey to receive pain relief after an experimental surgical procedure, only to have to go through another procedure, and another, and another?

So, what is the answer? Do we let "the perfect" become the enemy of "the good"? Certainly, every one of us must find our way through this dilemma, but my insight on the matter, having been involved in both animal rights issues as an activist and animal welfare issues, as a veterinarian for nearly 30 years is this:

As an organization, NHARL must constantly strive for the perfect. As Linda recently said, "we don't want LARGER cages, we want EMPTY cages". When we act as an organization, or when any of us speaks FOR the organization, there can be no waffling. We can't applaud Stonybrook Farms for their stand against GMO feeds and hormone treatments of their dairy cattle. We need to look past to the suffering of the animals themselves, and to the annual slaughter of their male offspring. There is nothing "humane" about the dairy industry, even if all of the cows have names and the farmers "love" them. (Ask a farmer to see his dairy cow retirement facility some time.)

As with most social justice issues, the change will come slowly. Racial equality came (or is still coming) to America in a series of, sometimes jarring, steps. Issues of sexual identity and preference equality are slowly working their way into the fabric of our society, and it is likely, too, that animal rights issues will come as a series of steps "in the right direction", but those that march for equality weren't asking for gradual improvement. They demanded equality. So, too, we must demand rights for all sentient beings, but we shouldn't count as failures the many steps that it may take along the way.

Kitten Season!

Please remember everyone that with spring on its way, kitten season is about to arrive as well. PLEASE make sure that ALL of your neighbors, friends, family have their cats spayed or neutered – BEFORE that "oops" litter arrives. Cats are often fertile before they reach FIVE months of age. Persuade them, pester them, PAY for them if you have to. There are several good low cost options if they cannot afford their regular veterinarians' fees. Contact us if you need further information on Low Income spay/neuter assistance.

NH Legislation Update

Dear NHARL Friends,

Two thousand and ten has been a good year in the New Hampshire Legislature, so far, for gay marriage, marijuana and abortion ... not so good for animals. Here's a rundown on the bills I've been following :

SB 365, sponsored by Senator Sheila Roberge, would require all animals adopted from shelters and rescue groups to be spayed/neutered prior to adoption. I believe this bill is a follow-up to to Sen. Roberge's successful bill from 2009 that eliminated shelter adopters from eligibility for the state's low cost spay/neuter program. SB 365 passed the Senate on February 10 and is headed to the House Environment and Agriculture Committee its hearing.

HB 1359, sponsored by Representative Tara Sad, requires authorization from the Dept Agriculture for anyone to enter a slaughtering facility for purposes of inspection and makes it optional for the Commissioner of Agriculture to enforce New Hampshire's humane slaughter statute. As the law now stands, a county sheriff can authorize an agent of a humane society to enter a slaughtering facility for purposes of inspection, and the Commissioner of Agriculture is required to enforce humane slaughter laws. Our state veterinarian, Dr. Crawford, insists that this is a harmless little bill which prepares us for NH's new meat inspection service, but I think HB 1359 is a very, very dangerous bill. It passed the House of Representatives on Feb 17 and is headed to the Senate.

HB 1417, sponsored by Representative Ed Butler, gives restaurant owners the option to allow, "properly disciplined companion dogs", into non-food production areas of their restaurants . (This means that my dogs will be dining at home !) HB 1417 passed the House on Feb 17 and is headed to the Commerce, Labor and Consumer Protection Committee in the Senate.

HB 1514, sponsored by Representative Steve Vaillancourt, would have made it illegal to possess or sell the pelts or carcasses of fur bearing animals. This bill was, unfortunately, defeated in the House of Representatives.

HB 1639 , sponsored by Representative Susan Kepner, defeated in the House on March 11, would have set humane standards for tethering of dogs.

HB 1624, sponsored by Representative Susan Kepner, would have set humane standards for dog breeders. This bill was defeated in the House on February 10, however, I believe the testimony presented at the public hearing persuaded members of the Environment and Agriculture Committee that there is a problem with lack of oversight of breeders resulting in deplorable conditions and suffering of many animals. Committee Chairman Tara Sad has made a commitment for her Committee to study this issue further with the intent to propose corrective legislation for 2011.

All in all, not a good year for animals, however, every NH Legislator will be up for re-election this fall. This is a great time to contact your NH legislators and tell them that if they want your vote in November, they should plan on doing better for their non-human constituents in 2011. If not, maybe we'll see some friendlier faces next year!

Jean (In a related item, please see the enclosed copy of an article regarding the just released General Accounting Office report on USDA enforcement of federal humane slaughter laws).

Write for Animals

The NHARL writing group will have its first meeting sometime in April or May. Depending on your feedback we will pick a date and time convenient to everyone. This group is for anyone who wants to improve their writing skills in order to benefit animals. Whether it be polishing a letter to the editor, or developing an idea for a longer piece of journalism, this group will help you hone your writing skills by sharing writing tips and offering constructive feedback with each other.

Tricia Orr, a writing instructor at NHTI, will be available for these meetings and will decide how to proceed with everyone in attendance agreeing.

Contact us for further info or for any questions at 377-0225 or info@nhanimalrights.org

A Place with Heart: The Community Vegan Kitchen of Concord

I have always liked Concord, but I like it even more these days thanks to the recent opening of the Community Vegan Kitchen of Concord. Started by Charles Latchis, CVKC is tucked away inside an unassuming brick storefront on South Main Street. According to the CVKC mission statement, it “is a place that nurtures our sense of community through a mutual concern for all living beings.” And you don’t have to be a vegan to attend the events; you just need to be open to exploring ways to live with greater awareness and empathy.

If you are interested in getting involved in this inspiring endeavor, please contact Charles Latchis at concord.vegankitchen@gmail.com

Recently, the CVKC organizers expanded the weekly activity offerings. There is something for everyone:

Tuesdays from 6-8 - *Literary Discussion Group* will meet to read and discuss books about the vegan lifestyle.

Wednesdays from 6-7:30 – *Organizational Meeting Night* to plan events

Thursdays from 5-8 – *Vegan Cooking Cooperative* – Learn how to make a variety of vegan dishes, then sit down to enjoy them with others.

Fridays from 6-8- *Multimedia night* – Films, video, music, art relating to all things vegan.

Saturdays – *Potluck* lunches or *Dinner/Lecture* events.

Upcoming Events

March 29-Vegan Seder (see below)

April 17-Discover Wild NH Day at NH Fish and Game headquarters in Concord. NHARL will have a booth again this year. Stop by our booth and meet Mitch, our boy puppet, and all of the animal puppets. Also, kids love our “match the animal with their habitat” board game!

April 24-World Week for Animals in Laboratories at Dartmouth College in Hanover, NH. We will have a public demonstration against animal research from Noon until 4pm. Carpooling is available. Please read about the numerous violations in Dartmouth labs (UL article is enclosed) and resolve to take the time on the 24th to oppose the torture that is imposed on so many unfortunate animals.

May 22-Animal Awareness Day This was such a successful event last year that we have decided to make it an annual event! Volunteers needed – please contact Linda at 377-0225 if interested.

June 13-Stratham NHSPCA Paws Walk and other tabling opportunities throughout the summer. (If you would like to see NHARL participate in a local event in your community, please send us the details and we’ll try our best to be there.)

A Vegan Seder for the Liberated Lambs

March 29 at 5:00 pm at the Community Vegan Kitchen of Concord, NH, 55 Main St. next to the Vrinda Center

Join us for The Festival of Freedom, Festival of Un-leavened Bread, commonly called Passover. Using the Haggadah for The Liberated Lamb, a book that includes vegetarian recipes and teachings, (www.micahbooks.com) everyone of all faiths are invited to participate in this seder service, that recalls the story of Exodus, when Jews were slaves under oppressive regimes before their liberation.

A donation of \$5-\$10 will be graciously accepted to cover food cost.

Please RSVP no later than March 22nd to Laura Slitt at 374-1996, or lslitt@roadrunner.com

Your membership and financial help is much needed and appreciated.

___ \$20.00 Regular member, age 15 or over.

___ \$5.00 Student member, Senior member, Junior member, (age 14 and under)

___ \$200.00 Life member, for self and spouse.

\$ _____ Sponsor/Donor who wants to support NHARL, without being a member

\$ _____ Additional Donation

\$ _____ Total **THANK YOU!**

Name _____

Address _____

Email address _____

Giving to NHARL through your will is one of the most important ways you can help animals for years to come. Making a bequest is easily executed with your attorney and can save your estate money in tax payments if the estate is subject to federal estate tax.

NHARL Board of Directors (2010-2012)

Linda Dionne, Cindy Glenn, Melvin Herbert, Emily Murphy, Kat Ranalletti, Linda Rauter and Veterinary Advisor & Board Member Barry Taylor, DVM

Veg News

NHARL continues to pay for the magazine Veg News subscriptions for various libraries around the state (UNH, Portsmouth, Franklin, Berlin, Concord, Manchester, Dover, Nashua, Lincoln, Laconia, Salem, Keene and Rochester) . If anyone would like Veg News in their local library please let us know. Also if anyone would like to contribute to the Veg News fund let us know that also.

Thanks

To everyone for your financial support by continuing your memberships and donations. At year's end our bank account was low but thanks to some very generous donations we are in the black again. We couldn't do this work for the animals without you and we are forever grateful.

Support Animals While You Shop!

The Lucky Dog Thrift Shop, owned by NHARL board member, Kat Ranalletti, will soon celebrate its one-year anniversary! Lucky Dog, on Elm Street in Nashua, opened in May 2009. Since then, the non-profit business has expanded and is now 3,400 square feet fully dedicated to helping animals and the environment.

If you haven't visited Lucky Dog yet, you really must check it out. It is unlike any thrift shop you've ever seen, with like-new clothing items carefully placed by size and color, and items for the home displayed in such a cozy fashion it makes you want to sit down and have a cup of tea.

Perhaps the best part is the Humane Education library, which boasts an array of animal rights' literature, including vegan cookbooks, DVD's, vegetarian starter kits and petitions regarding the latest animal legislation.

Kat is passionate about supporting local animal rescue and advocacy causes, that is why Lucky Dog's outreach center, Tails to Freedom (T2F), has paid the vet bills for several animals in need of medical treatment, including spay & neuter operations. T2F helped cover the expense of a legislator luncheon to raise support for the fur ban bill, and donates to humane charities such as NHARL, GREY2K and more. If all that weren't enough, T2F offers office supplies and furniture to worthwhile humane charities free of charge!

Like with any budding success story, Kat has a need for helping hands to help boost the business to the next level. (She hopes that one day a humane education center will emerge in full swing. Check out www.tailstofreedom.org) Currently, volunteers are needed to run the cash register and help keep the shop tidy. Donations of sofas, tables, and office desks would be greatly appreciated as well.

To learn more about Lucky Dog Thrift Shop visit <http://www.luckydogthriftshop.com>. Lucky Dog is now on Facebook, so if you have an FB account, consider becoming a friend of Lucky Dog.