



Adding Another R to the 3 Rs

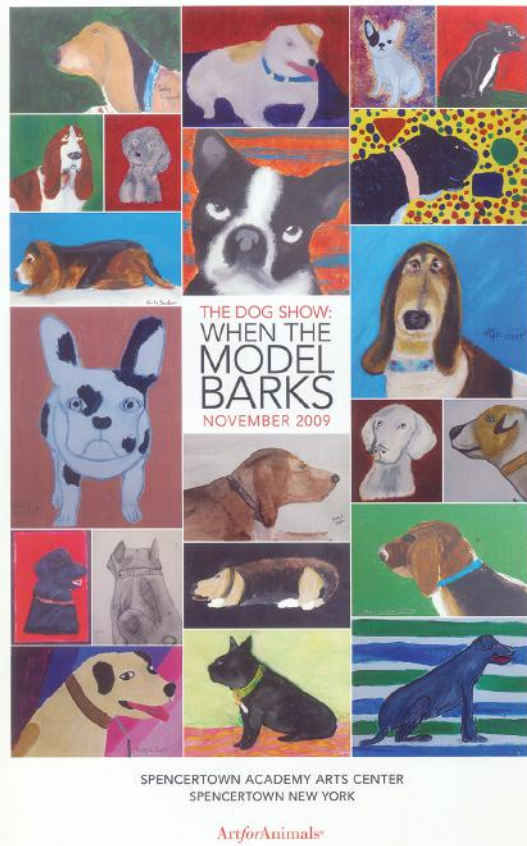
As an educator I always found the first days of school to be exciting. Yet there was always something very sad about it, as students struggled with the excitement of a new year against the background of losing a prized animal to the livestock auction after the Labor Day weekend county fair. They knew to expect what was going to happen, coming from a rural community, but the reality was something else. I shared many tears with them during their visits to my room.

This is the loss they knew about. What about the horses who were sent to slaughter after their usefulness at summer camp was exhausted? What about the baby animals at petting zoos? With all this in mind, NYSHA's focus in our fall issue is how we can all do our part to make this a better world for animals -- after all, it is their world, too. The beginning of the school year is the perfect time to talk about NYSHA's humane education initiatives.

In grammatical terms, "Reading, 'Riting, and 'Rithmetic" leaves a lot to be desired, but let's add another "R" -- Respect. Humane Education is fundamentally about respecting the welfare and rights of others, of all species. It is mandated in New York State for grades 1 to 6, but never enforced and rarely encouraged. At NYSHA we know it is critically important, have greatly expanded our website to include resources for both teachers and others, and are trying to work with the State Education Department and legislators to insure that this law is adhered to.

NYSHA has always been committed to education. We have taught workshops for law enforcement officials, shelter personnel, and the general public. Since many of us on the NYSHA Board have backgrounds as educators, we know firsthand what obstacles teachers face and added this extensive guide to our webpage to assist them as well as administrators. There are resources all over the Internet, but we compiled what we felt were the most useful and practical for a variety of students, teaching styles, and grade levels into a user friendly format.

There are so many easy ways for teachers to incorporate humane ed that



fit in with the curriculum. Years ago in my school we brought rescued dogs in as models for art classes as their caregivers told their stories, encouraging students to take better care of their own animals and to report abuse. We had an art show and sold their paintings, using the proceeds to fund a spay/neuter program. We took older students to a horse rescue facility and while sketching, they heard their harrowing histories and the downside of the racing and other equine industries. To this day students tell me how these activities changed their lives and their attitudes.

In language classes they counted, in Spanish, how many cats would result in careless breeding. They made a poster about responsible pet care in Italian. Reading classes were used at all levels to promote literature about animals. In language arts classes they wrote and shared stories about their own rescued dogs and cats. We suggested that teachers not read stories about farm animals that made their situations seem perfect. All these activities gave teachers an insight into the lives of our students and their pets, and helped with intervention services when necessary. Many suggestions like these can be found on our new humane education page.

We can all be educators. One day I was wearing a lovely summer hat and somebody said I looked like I could be at Saratoga Race Course, considering that a compliment. What an opportunity to explain why I would never go there! It helps to carry around printed information as well. But so many little things make a difference, too. Recently boxes of animal crackers were redesigned with the animals out of their cages -- a subliminal but effective change, the result of public pressure.

Please visit our website -- nyshumane.org -- and pass the link on to teachers and parents you know. Most importantly, contact your local school district and explain why humane education is a priority -- and that it is the law. NYSHA is dedicating its resources to this important issue and is there to help with its implementation.

Laura-Ann Cammisa, Board Member

President's Message

Children are back in school and once again many of them will be confronted with biology class and its attendant lab dissection projects. Now, by law, children and their parents who object have the right to ask for alternatives to dissection.

NYSHA believes that dissecting any animal is objectionable, especially since there are viable alternatives available. Dissecting animals can cause children to become desensitized not only to pain inflicted on animals, but also, subsequently, pain inflicted on humans. Studies have shown that there is a direct relationship between abuse to animals and violence to humans, as outlined in Dr. Harold Hovel's booklet which is available on our website. For some youngsters, dissection could be one of the steps along that path.

To assist in the effort to provide teachers, parents, and children with alternatives, NYSHA has provided several resources on our website: nyshumane.org. They cover the New York State law outlining the rights of children to opt out of dissection, an explanatory document for parents who want their children to be excused, and an opt-out form to submit to the school.

In addition to all this important information, there is a link to humane educational materials that can be used to gain a better understanding of what can be found online from various organizations. With regard to the alternatives to dissection issue in particular, there is a link to the American Anti-Vivisection Society's AnimaLearn page with links to alternatives that are available to teachers and students at no cost, which could save the lives of countless innocent animals who are killed each year to provide students with frogs, etc. to use in unnecessary exercises.

There is no need for dissection in schools with these proven alternatives. Please review the materials that have been placed here and spread the word that these resources are available for easy access on the NYSHA website. NYSHA is currently contacting school districts with this information as well.

You can help us promote a more humane ethic starting with impressionable children by not allowing or encouraging them to participate in the mutilation of animals.

Please always be kind to animals,

Patricia Valusek, President

NYSHA's Calendar

Visit NYSHA's table at **Hudson Valley VegFest** in Poughkeepsie, at Gold's Gym, on November 3 & 4. Information for this entertaining and educational event is at hvvegfest.org.

The **NY Legislative Session** will open in January. Please check NYSHA's website at that time for new animal protection bills that NYSHA supports or opposes and how you can help.

The first week of November is **National Animal Shelter Appreciation Week**. Donate to your local shelter, pay them a visit, and thank the workers for their service to animals.

November is also **Adopt-a-Senior-Pet Month**. Bring an old timer into your family.

Great News on Bills Supported by NYSHA

Two important NY bills that NYSHA actively supported were passed last session. A.62-A/S.4796-A dealt with the proper venue for animal impounding organizations to file security bond petitions. This legislation specifies that the petition hearing will be held in the court where the cruelty charges were filed, preventing the defense attorneys from delaying cases by attempting to move the hearing to superior court venues. We are awaiting the Governor's signature.

He signed into law A.8684-B/S.7388-B which relates to the presence of companion animals living in residences where the police execute a warrant for eviction or dispossession of property. They must now check for animals and ensure that they are properly removed and cared for by the tenant, or by a humane agency, and not abandoned on the premises.

Both of these laws serve to advance the well-being of New York State animals and we are proud of the work we did to support them.

Remembering Julie Tanner

In NYSHA's Fall 2017 newsletter, our Spotlight person was Julie Tanner, an activist who fostered communication among animal protection advocates in NYS about cruelty issues. Sadly, she passed away in April, but her legacy lives on.

It is especially fitting that we feature some of her artwork now in this newsletter. Julie was a teacher's assistant who found beauty amidst all the cruelty and sadness she saw every day, and made it her goal to change whatever she could. She was an "ordinary" person whose extraordinary commitment made a huge difference to everyone she came in contact with, both in the human and animal worlds.



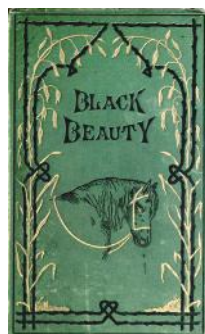
Julie, a talented artist, captured the joy animals give us every day.

She used her position to help students, colleagues, and their pets, spreading the word about humane education. Yet her day and her mission did not stop when she left school – she tirelessly continued teaching kindness everywhere she went. In fact, after we profiled Julie, she was awarded the NYS Senate's highest honor, the Liberty Medal, presented to her by Senator Jim Tedisco.

Rest in peace, Julie. We will always miss you, and dedicate this newsletter to you, with gratitude for the example you set and for all that you did. We, and especially animals, live in a better world because of you.

The Book Corner – Black Beauty

NYSHA's Humane Education Committee has a new feature to offer our members: we will include book reviews in future newsletters to give our members more tools to spread the word about animal advocacy. For our first offering, there can be no better choice than *Black Beauty*, written by Anna Sewell and published just before her death in 1877. Most animal advocates, especially horse lovers, read this timeless novel in our childhoods. It depicts the widespread mistreatment of horses and other forms of societal abuse in Victorian England, when cruelty to horses was much more common than today as horses provided the major sources of transportation and power.



Original cover of this timeless novel.

In the first few pages, Sewell shows us the cruelty that horses are subjected to in sport and the excruciating pain of canine ear crops and tail docks, depicting both the puppies' agony and their mother's distress. Sewell stresses the cruelty to horses of tail docking, abusive training methods, and painful harnessing techniques that satisfied that era's notion of "fashion" in carriage horse equipment.

We follow Black Beauty's fate as he descends the rungs of that era's social order due to human mishandling -- first as the prized riding and carriage horse of the aristocracy, then as the property of middle class owners, then as a public carriage horse for hire, then as a London cab horse, and

eventually to his end in a final peaceful and loving home where, coming full circle, he is cared for by one of his earliest human devotees.

Along the way, Sewell shows us how horses are helpless pawns, treated well by kind humans and abused by ignorant, dishonest, or alcoholic ones who alter each horse's future fate by their mistreatment of their equine victims. Black Beauty hears of the slaughter of hundreds of horses in the Crimean War's Charge of the Light Brigade from a retired cavalry horse, and narrowly escapes death in a stable fire that claims the lives of terrified horses who could not be saved in time.

Throughout Black Beauty's saga, we are introduced to uncaring humans who cause suffering in their equine charges as well as in humans who intercede on behalf of mistreated horses, begging their owners to be kinder. Sewell is diligent in focusing on the whole spectrum of suffering in Victorian England, stressing that the London cabbies abused their horses due to their employers' greed, forcing their employees to overwork themselves and their charges in order to feed their families, resulting in the illnesses and breakdowns of both human and horse. In contrast, she describes proper training methods, harnessing, and stabling designs throughout her novel to educate the reader on overall humane husbandry in hopes of minimizing the suffering that horses endured. In telling her tale thorough a horse's perspective, it provides a view that was unique in that era, opening our own hearts 140 years later to remember how each person's actions promote either pain or pleasure in the sentient being on the receiving end. Holly Cheever, DVM, Board VP

The Vet Is In – The Long Goodbye

As a veterinarian in my 39th year of practice, I am all too accustomed to the heart-wrenching pain that end-of-life issues in our pets create for us. We must face the fact that our companion can't be with us forever, and then we must carefully interpret the animal's status: any physical pain? Mental distress caused by being helpless, painful, and trapped in a failing body? Finally, we have to bring ourselves to load our cats into their carriers and our dogs into the car as we drive our beloved pet to the veterinarian for the very last time for humane euthanasia, feeling grief, guilt, and the pain of loss because our friend's life will end shortly.

For some clients, the turmoil of emotions involved in the Last Car Ride is too painful to contemplate, and for the best of intentions, they elect to have their pet die "peacefully" at home. If the animal's condition is not painful and their passing involves a quick and gentle fading away with no nausea, dehydration, agonal pain, or mental anxiety caused by fear of being helpless, then such a passing may be a kind option.

However, I have experienced distress myself on many occasions due to the owner's imposition of a state of drawn-out suffering in a dying animal, which the owner does not recognize nor acknowledge since it is just too painful to do so. Cats and dogs are their own worst enemies when it comes to telling their humans about failing organs and

crippling pain. Their instincts are the same as when they lived in the wild: thus, they do not whine and beg for more attention when very ill and in pain, but rather become silent, reclusive, and stoic.

Therefore, as our companions' guardians, we must be sure that we are not prolonging their agony because we fail to recognize the suffering in our silent friends, and feel we are doing them a favor by stretching their remaining days as much as possible. Fortunately, the veterinary profession has created a new kind of service that permits humane in-home hospice and euthanasia services, where your pet feels safe in his/her familiar surroundings, is euthanized before the quality of life deteriorates, and you are spared that sad Last Drive. In the Albany area, In the Comfort of Home provides a very nurturing, respectful, and gentle passing for your pet: see www.inthecomfortofhome.com for a full description of Dr. Blankfein's services. Nationally, the organization Lap of Love (www.lapoflove.com) provides not only home euthanasia, but also in-home hospice services for the terminal patient, where all attention to maintaining proper palliative care — pain relief, maintaining hydration, monitoring for disease progression — is focused so that the doctor can help the owners recognize when it is time. Please discuss this critical time in your pet's life with your veterinarian to ensure the kindest passing possible. Holly Cheever, DVM, Board VP

A Mouse in the House?

Unless mice look like Mickey or Minnie, chances are they're not welcome in our homes! But as the weather changes, this is where they frequently want to be. Instead of relying on our fearless felines to stop the invasion with their playful yet cruel efficiency, check out some tips on our website. Until you do, make sure their entrances are all sealed from outside, place strong smelling herbs or mothballs around your foundation, and in the house use humane traps baited with peanut butter and check them at least twice a day. Bring any "prisoners" as far away as possible, placing them under shrubs or near shelter, and leave some birdseed on the ground to get them started in their new life.



Spotlight – Susan Kayne

Humane Education often focuses on companion animals, but next to farm animals, equines are among the most abused and misunderstood. Susan Kayne's passion for Humane Education concentrates in teaching others about the incomparable joy and enrichment that horses bring to the human experience.

Our recent conversation with Susan revealed her profound depth of appreciation for horses, "I have been in love with them for as long as I can remember. They are my friends, teachers, and companions. And I have been blessed to experience the intimacy of harmonious unity with horses as competitive partners."

"To truly see and listen to a horse, as more than an object of envy or worship or desire, requires a recalibration in thinking," she continued. "I believe that by wholeheartedly integrating hands-on time with horses into Humane Education that I can pioneer a new ethical perspective on how we value them." Any of us who have spent time with these magnificent creatures could certainly agree.

The central focus of Susan's mission in redefining how horses are valued is "in changing the narrative to distinguish between that of 'what' horses can do for us to shifting minds to consider 'who' horses are as fellow sentient beings. Contextualizing our evolving social relationship through Humane Education holds the key to seeing through the eyes of another – an orientation that does not come easily to us."

Susan has rescued horses throughout her life, a function she formalized in 2004 when she founded Unbridled Thoroughbred Foundation to help transition retired racing and breeding horses into secondary lifestyles, protecting them from shipment to slaughter. Since its inception, in addition to saving, rehoming, and offering sanctuary to Thoroughbreds, she has expanded the impact of Unbridled through extensive mainstream media outreach, academic presentations, and public speaking.

Susan's voice is strong as she explains that "every horse who we have redeemed from the Kill Pen has a story that must be made known. The

suffering these horses endure in life and up until their last breath is much the same as in the century Anna Sewell penned *Black Beauty*. "

In 2017, Susan earned her credentials as a Certified Humane Education Specialist through The Academy of Prosocial Learning. Why? "I wanted to learn how to create courses and curriculums to deepen our understanding of horses and to shift the moral compass toward that of appreciating them as autonomous, emotional fellow beings who are deserving of kindness, respect, compassion, and protection from harm. Horses are intelligent and sensitive. Humane Ed gives students permission to see the world through the eyes of another, and it offers the opportunity to reintroduce horses as a teaching resource to engage and empower the next generation to create a kinder future for equines and to embody positive change in the world from an entry point of compassion."

Susan's efforts have been recognized and rewarded. In July, she was invited to speak on "Protecting Thoroughbreds from Cruelty and Slaughter in North America" at the University of Oxford Summer School for Animal Ethics.

Alongside the world's foremost legal scholars and animal ethicists, she gave voice to the 10,000 to 20,000 thoroughbreds who are forced to die at slaughter plants in Canada and Mexico yearly. Traditionally, it is believed that horses bred into the Sport of Kings are revered and live out long lives in green pastures. This belief is reinforced when the media portrays "equine athletes" as adored, coddled, and pampered. Susan knows otherwise. "This is true for the likes of Justify, but for the other 20,000 thoroughbreds born in the same year, more than half will disappear across our borders. The betrayal of so many thousands of trusting horses who have willingly done all that has been asked of them and yet are sent away to a gruesome end is simply immoral and totally unjustifiable."

Susan is a stellar example of how any of us can use our voice and respect for animals to make a big difference. See our website for our full conversation with her, and UnbridledTBF.org for more about how this thoughtful woman is making her goal for horses a reality.



Susan and Steve's Adventures, before and after rescue care.

Dr. Holly Cheever Featured at HSVMA Symposium

NYSHA is proud to be a sponsor of the HSVMA Symposium for Veterinary Students on October 13 at Cornell University, with a societal slant this year toward animal welfare issues.

We are equally proud that our own Holly Cheever, DVM, will be continuing her educational outreach as one of the featured speakers! Her focus will be on animal cruelty and veterinarians' roles and responsibilities for recognizing and preventing it.

The Humane Society Veterinary Medical Association, of which Holly was a founding member in 2008, is the welfare arm of the veterinary

profession, not only in terms of how they run their hospitals and serve the public on Native American reservations and in urban homeless areas, but also in their aim to increase awareness of the causes of animal suffering in society.

In addition to her side career as a sought after humane educator with local schools, Holly has been a guest speaker at veterinary universities across the country, testified before Congress, the New York City Council, numerous other government agencies, and has educated countless more in her articles in national magazines. Needless to say, she also is a popular presenter at NYSHA's cruelty investigation workshops.

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