



UFT HUMANE EDUCATION COMMITTEE NEWS

SPRING 2018

FARM SANCTUARY TO THE CLASSROOM RESCUE!



On November 4, 2017, Humane Education Committee held a workshop with presenters, Ben Araya and Samantha Pachirat, from the renowned Farm Sanctuary. Farm Sanctuary is an organization that rescues, rehabilitates and provides a life-long home for farm animals whose destiny otherwise would have been short and brutal, leading to their inevitable slaughter.

Their new humane education curriculum helps middle and high school students interact with Farm Sanctuary farm animals, learn their individual stories, and benefit from an exposure to plant based diets and veganism. Information on factory farming is also included in this curriculum. It is the hope of Farm Sanctuary and teachers throughout the country, concerned with the welfare of farm animals and the preference of a plant-based vegan diet, that a curriculum can be taught in middle schools and high schools which enlightens and educates students on the subjects of factory farming, the need to save animals from a horrible fate, and the benefits of being vegan. Farm Sanctuary is now in the process of presenting this curriculum to teachers ready, willing and able to put it into action in their classrooms. For this reason, we at the UFT Humane Education Committee welcomed with open arms Ben and Samantha on this particular Saturday in early November.

During the months leading up to our workshop, Ben and Samantha visited various classrooms and schools, seeing 1,366 students and their 22 teachers, with feedback coming from 513 students. They concluded that their efforts proved to be a positive eye-opener for the students, encouraging them to further pursue this objective/mission. Through teaching, story-telling, photos and videos, and a virtual reality video, students are exposed (in an age-appropriate manner) to the horrors of factory farming as well as the beauty and good sense of farm sanctuary life. Students connected to the animals in a new and transformative way, learning the individual stories of those rescued, and acquiring an awareness of what happens to them before they are turned into our food. The student feedback reported by Mr. Araya and Ms. Pachirat included comments such as "I learned that pigs cannot lie down when caged;" "that all animals in Farm Sanctuary will live out their natural lives and not be slaughtered for food;" "animals can also be our friends;" "I learned how it feels to be in a cage;" and "being a vegan helps animals." Teacher feedback noted that students were very engaged and paid close attention, the factory farming conditions were very illuminating, the presentation increased awareness of the plight of animals, and that most students reported to have no idea where their food comes from. All of the teachers recommended that the students visit a farm sanctuary.

The highlight of the presentation was the chance to experience the sanctuary through virtual reality which has proved a popular tool for bringing the students to a new level of consciousness regarding farm animals. In part, this video tour is a way for students to experience Farm Sanctuary while sitting in their NYC classrooms.

For the opportunity to have Farm Sanctuary visit your classroom, please see below.

-- Miriam Mendoza, UFT Humane Education Committee Member and Eddie DiDonna

NEWS FROM THE SCHOOLS!

THE ANIMALS AND EXERCISE CLUB

@ The Sheila Mencher School in the Bronx

By Dr. Joyce Bloom, Club Faculty Advisor

The Bronx can boast a unique concept in the implementation of humane education. Once per week after school during the academic year, fourth graders have the opportunity take part in the Animals and Exercise Club. The session consists of an hour of kindness to animals' topics followed by a half hour of a game or other physical activity that is not usually part of the school day, such as rhythmic gymnastics. The humane education curriculum ambitiously aims to give students specific information about the plight of animals in our world so that students will have a feeling for animals and will be inclined, now as children and in the future as adults, to help animals in a practical sense.

On average, for each month one lesson is on a specific animal (such as bats, dolphins, pigs, wolves, bears or worms); one lesson is on an issue (such as animal rights, or problem solving to help a specific species or sustainability for habitat and the earth or appreciating the worth of animals that are scary or aren't attractive); one lesson incorporates creative art (to look at an animal's life and to express a connection with the animal) and one lesson involves student reading (of animal stories which have a humane point). Every lesson involves student activity, for example answering questionnaires, investigating resource materials to solve word puzzles or creating art from recyclable materials. Volunteers from the Club are members of the school's Green Team, a Department of Education sustainability group, and they draw posters for the school-wide recycling campaign. Most lessons involve a take home item that is either a printed resource or written material or an art project that the student created and parents are encouraged to look at.

These hands-on lessons are consistent with State Standards and provide an opportunity both to think about animals and their place on earth as well as to ponder how animals are treated by humans and how the student, as a growing individual can learn to make choices that are humane for the animals and healthy for them. Lessons utilize science, math, health, anthropology and other academic subjects and encourage critical thinking and application of knowledge. Students are challenged to develop a personal skill during each lesson, for example oral reading, responding to questions, organizing materials and time management for a project. The lessons are each stand-alone, (so that students who can come sometimes will always be able to participate right away) but all involve the underlying concept of how

humans can understand and help animals. The thread of their relationship to animals is present in every lesson.

There is an emphasis on manners so Club members write individual thank you notes to people who help the Club, such as the cafeteria workers who make the snacks provided by the school each week or to the Principal, Serge Marshall Davis, who has been entirely supportive of the Club.



Names of Club Members (left to right):
Jeremy M. Shamah K. Luis G. Josh E.- (in front)
Jaden B.- (in back) Alejandro G.- (in front)
Zaden N.- (in back) Kevin G. Victor N.

Pictured –June Nazrat

During the year members make posters on learning themes such as:

What are animal rights? And how does sustainability and care for the earth help animals?

The culminating activity is a showcase of posters where club members wrote and drew highlights of what they have learned and done this year in Club and how they hope to help animals in the future.



NEW YORK CITY KIDS WALK FOR ELEPHANTS

When young people learn the truth about the ways in which animals suffer in captivity, they want to take action—and that’s just what these students did!

First graders at The Magnet School of Global Studies & Leadership in Queens “adopted” an elephant named Minnie at The Elephant Sanctuary in Tennessee rather than fundraising for a local zoo. These kind kids also held a walk-a-thon—in which students, teachers, and community members participated—to raise funds for her care.

They even went on a virtual tour of the sanctuary, during which they learned about Minnie’s past, when she was forced to perform in circuses, and actions that they can take to help elephants who are exploited and abused in captivity.

TeachKind is recognizing these mighty first graders—and their teachers—for setting a compassionate example by supporting a reputable sanctuary. You can be a hero for animals just by doing simple things: never going to any circus, aquarium, or roadside zoo that exploits animals; spaying or neutering your cats and dogs; always adopting from shelters and never buying an animal from a pet store or breeder; and always reporting abuse and neglect whenever you see it.



Elephants like Minnie, who are forced to perform in circuses, lead miserable lives in which they’re denied everything that’s natural and important to them. While elephants in the wild travel as far as 30 miles a day in close-knit family herds, those held in captivity in circuses, at fairs, or at roadside zoos may be confined to tiny enclosures in near-isolation, which often leads to arthritis and psychological distress.

These heroic young elephant allies are leading their generation in making the world a kinder place. TeachKind is also sending Resource Specialist Jessica Fileti and first-grade teacher Janice McIntyre Compassionate Teacher Awards for creating this project that encourages students to explore real-world problems through project-based learning.

Share this story with your students and colleagues to inspire them to take action for animals and remind them that you’re never too young to help animals.



Call for Middle and High School Teachers!

Farm Sanctuary invites middle school and high school teachers in New York City, Philadelphia, New Jersey, and Connecticut to host Farm Sanctuary's guest presenter for our single-class-period humane education presentation, "Meet the Animals: A Virtual Tour of Farm Sanctuary."



Our "Meet the Animals" humane education program has been met with overwhelming success since its inception in the spring of 2017. We have reached thousands of students in dozens of schools. Sign up today to help us reach even more in 2018!



Farm Sanctuary's In-Classroom Humane Education Program fosters a deeper understanding of the lives of farm animals and issues of our modern food system, all through the exciting experience of a "virtual field trip" that transports students from their classroom seats to the green pastures of Farm Sanctuary. Through the media of photo and video, storytelling, interactive learning exercises, and virtual reality technology, Farm Sanctuary's Humane Education Program introduces students to the individual animals who call Farm Sanctuary home and their amazing stories of rescue, healing, and transformation.

To learn more or to schedule a presentation please visit our website: WWW.FARMSANCTUARY.ORG



Humane Education Committee is pleased to announce that we now have Gryphon Press Books on the Dept. of Education list of approved books.

About Gryphon Press: The Gryphon Press exists to bring children beautifully illustrated books about the human-animal bond, books that foster empathy in children for other living beings. Surprisingly, we have found that the realities of our relationships with animals, domestic and wild, are rarely represented in the children's book marketplace.

Our motto, a voice for the voiceless, expresses our sincere belief that there are ears willing to listen to such a voice.

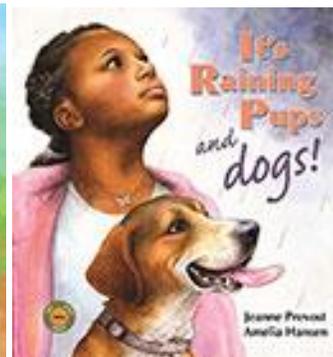
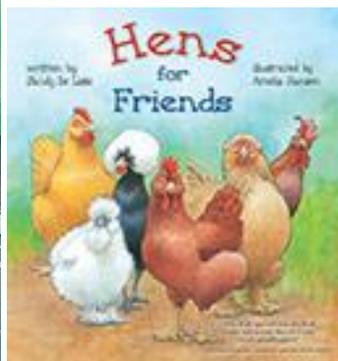
Our books showcase a range of important issues and ideas in Humane Education, including: the joys as well as the responsibilities of pet ownership, abuse and neglect of animals, teaching empathy to children, dealing with overpopulation, getting rid of puppy mills, choosing a pet for its entire life, adoption, fostering, and showcasing therapy and service animals.

Our books approach these issues in an appropriate, engaging, and non-didactic manner and feature detailed information in the back of each book about the issue addressed for parents and educators.

Since the founding of The Gryphon Press in 2006, our books have won numerous awards, including the ASPCA's Henry Bergh Children's Book Award and the Humane Society of the United States' Youth KIND Children's Honor Books awards.

Check back for new books about animals and the important issues that face them. Thank you for your interest in books that are a "voice for the voiceless." All Gryphon Press books are Certified Humane!! Please look through their catalogue of books available at:

<https://www.thegryphonpress.com/pages/news.html>



What readers are saying about The Gryphon Press books...

“The engaging stories published by The Gryphon Press are a wonderful way to teach children the values of empathy and respect for animals. There is sadly little time in the day for this important aspect of education, but these beautiful stories will ensure that we communicate these positive messages to our students through their use as interactive read aloud and as valuable additions to the classroom library.”

—Esther Klein Friedman, Ph.D., Director,
Office of Academic Intervention Services K-12,
New York City Department of Education

Humane Educator Highlight

April Lang, LCSW SEP, is a Certified Humane Education Specialist (CHES). She has created presentations and lesson plans for high school students on the following three subjects: factory farming, cultural and religious traditions incorporating animals, and how our perceptions about animals are shaped through words and images. If you'd be interested in having her present to your class, please email her at moser58@verizon.net or call her at 212-577-1357 to discuss.

LET US KNOW WHAT YOU AND YOUR STUDENTS ARE DOING TO HELP ANIMALS.

If you would like news about your students/activities/events in the Humane Education Newsletters please forward information and photos to Gailfryd@aol.com with HEC news in the subject for possible use in a future newsletter.

United Federation of Teachers Humane Education Committee (UFT/HEC)

<http://www.uft.org/committees/humane-education-committee>

Check out our website for lessons plans and current programs