

# HUMANE ED NEWS

## UFT Humane Education Committee Visited Equine Advocates Sanctuary on June 2, 2012



**Pictured is Bobby II, a former New York City carriage horse rescued from slaughter on June 25, 2010. He will spend the rest of his life at Equine Advocates. He is considered an ambassador for the tens of thousands of urban carriage horses in the US and around the world who are used as carriage horses and then sold for slaughter -- often for human consumption -- after they become old or injured. For more information about Bobby II or other horses at Equine Advocates, log on to <http://www.equineadvocates.org/meetResidents.php?equineID=89>.**

FOR LESSON PLANS about horses created by the UFT Humane Education Committee log on to the following sites.

Grades pre-k to one:

[http://www.equinewelfarealliance.org/uploads/1-1\\_Horses\\_Grades\\_Pre-K\\_to\\_1.pdf](http://www.equinewelfarealliance.org/uploads/1-1_Horses_Grades_Pre-K_to_1.pdf)

Grades two to five:

[http://www.equinewelfarealliance.org/uploads/2\\_Horses\\_Grades\\_2\\_-\\_5.pdf](http://www.equinewelfarealliance.org/uploads/2_Horses_Grades_2_-_5.pdf)

Grades six to twelve:

[http://www.equinewelfarealliance.org/uploads/3\\_Horses\\_Grades\\_6\\_-\\_12.pdf](http://www.equinewelfarealliance.org/uploads/3_Horses_Grades_6_-_12.pdf)

### **UFT Humane Educators Visit Upstate Horse Sanctuary by Cassandra Easterling, Kindergarten ESL Teacher at P.S.102 in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn**

Just before the July 2012 summer break, over 40 teachers, students, friends and members of the UFT Humane Education Committee took part in a chartered bus trip to Equine Advocates Sanctuary located in Chatham, New York. The sanctuary, established in 2004, is a 140-acre safe haven for roughly 80 former race horses, carriage horses, pregnant mare urine (PMU), and horses formerly used in riding camps in addition to ponies, donkeys and mules. The sanctuary residents were rescued from situations of abuse or neglect and most would have been slaughtered for human consumption had they not been rescued. Susan Wagner, President and Founder of Equine Advocates, states the mission of the organization to be "to rescue, protect and prevent the abuse of horses through education, investigation, rescue operations and the dissemination of information to the public."

In preparation for the trip, Kim Korona from the non-profit charity HEART (Humane Education Advocates Reaching Teachers) presented lesson plan ideas as well as information to acquaint sanctuary visitors with the issues currently facing horses. This information allowed participants to have a better appreciation of the issues so that they could understand where the horses came from and why they needed to be rescued. While many New York City residents are

familiar with the controversy surrounding the carriage horse industry, for many, Kim's presentation was their first encounter with the realities of horse slaughter and the use of pregnant mare's urine by the pharmaceutical industry.

After a brief orientation to the facility in the Humane Education Center, sanctuary volunteers and staff members led groups of participants on a tour of the grounds. One of the first stops was the remarkable Feed Room. Here, buckets featuring the name of each sanctuary resident lined the walls. Sanctuary staff members meticulously follow a chart indicating the unique nutritional needs of each animal in order to prepare the proper balance of grains and supplements for their age and medical requirements.

The tour then continued through the various cleverly named areas of the sanctuary, such as "Three's Company" and "Girls Just Want to Have Fun," and "Grumpy Old Men," which house the horses. Each stop along the way featured paddock graphics sharing the names, ages and breeds of the horses in each area in addition to the circumstances from which they were rescued. The tour guides supplemented this information with highlights of each animal's unique story and acquainted participants with ways in which teachers and students can become advocates for horses. Best of all, the horses in each corral decided whether or not they wanted to come to the fence so participants could pet them and feed them apples.

For more information on [Equine Advocates](http://www.equineadvocates.com), log on to [www.equineadvocates.com](http://www.equineadvocates.com).

# GET INVOLVED: 9/12 -6/13 Programs

## Class Book Contest

UFT/HEC is, once again, planning a contest for grades pre-k to 12 students in which students and their teachers work on a humane theme to create a class book, big-book or other tangible product. This contest is designed to impact students' knowledge of humane issues, their attitudes and responsible behaviors.

Last school year, we asked for class books concerning animals, people or the environment. **This school year, we will be asking for the development of class books that focus primarily on the animals who share our planet, excluding any animals kept in the classroom.** The grand prize will be \$100 and three humane books. There will be three first place awards of \$50 and two humane books, three second place awards of \$25 and one humane book and honorable mention awards of one humane book. Last school year, cash awards totaled \$450.

Topics from our Spring 2012 contest included, "Chimp Haven Sanctuary: The Good Life," "The Lives of Horses in New York City," "Respecting Birds in Our Urban Environment," "Cats, Cats and More Cats," "Deforestation," "Doctors Without Borders" and "Respecting Planet Earth." For additional topic ideas, please visit our website at <http://www.uft.org/committees/humane-education-committee> and look under *Humane Education Resource Guide* and *Humane Science Curricula*.

Contest rules will follow in a future newsletter. Entries will likely be due in April 2013. *We are letting you know about this contest now, so you can begin thinking about a topic and a time to work on this now.*

Photo courtesy of United Poultry Concerns. See [http://www.upc-online.org/merchandise/humane\\_child.html](http://www.upc-online.org/merchandise/humane_child.html) for UPC educational materials.

## Bulletin Board Contest

**This contest will focus on the theme of animals raised on farms.** We will be looking for bulletin boards that show knowledge of the characteristics and needs of farmed animals with a focus on their positive traits, especially traits that humans often ignore.

Younger students can draw or cut out realistic pictures of animals raised on farms and provide facts about these animals including how they care for their young, how they play, how they keep cool and their friendships.

Students in grades five and above might show photos of how these animals live on a sanctuary versus how they live when they are being raised as part of "food production" in the United States.

Secondary school students can focus on the plight of farmed animals in the United States, as well as related environmental and human health concerns. For ideas, log on to

<http://www.peta.org/issues/animals-used-for-food/default.aspx>.

For information about animals raised on farms that you can share with your students, log on to [http://www.think-differently-about-sheep.com/Sentience\\_in\\_farm\\_Animals.htm](http://www.think-differently-about-sheep.com/Sentience_in_farm_Animals.htm) and

<http://www.think-differently-about-sheep.com/Chicken-facts.htm> and

[http://www.veganpeace.com/animal\\_facts/animal\\_facts.htm](http://www.veganpeace.com/animal_facts/animal_facts.htm).

United Poultry Concerns is an outstanding source of information about chickens and roosters.

<http://www.upc-online.org>

***This contest is for the Fall 2012 semester and entries will be due on January 18, 2013. E-mail [HumaneEd@aol.com](mailto:HumaneEd@aol.com) or call 212-410-3095 for an entry application and prize listing. We are also designing a farmed animals packet which should be available in October.***





## USING MINDFUL LANGUAGE

**Who Are You Calling Chicken? Using Mindful Language in the Classroom by Cassandra Easterling, Kindergarten ESL Teacher at PS102 in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn**

“Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me.” Or so they say.

But, we, as mindful educators would never use nor allow language in our classrooms that denigrates others based on their gender, race, nationality, language, learning abilities, sexual orientation, family structure or any number of qualities that set individuals apart. Even so, how many of us consider the impact our words may have when the “other” is not a student or a coworker, but rather a non-human animal.

Very often, we hear that Sally is hogging the blocks or Billy is pigging out on cookies. So and so is a bird brain or the fearful child at recess is a chicken. I’m sweating like a pig or this place is a pigsty. We call the sloppy handwriting chicken scratch and when we are very busy we say we are running around like a chicken with its head cut off.

When we use such phrases, our listener understands our intended meaning often without noticing the possible undertones the words carry in their literal sense.

When we say Sally is hogging the blocks, we mean to say that Sally is not sharing. But why do we use this phrase? Is the attribute of selfishness or an unwillingness to share a true characteristic of a pig? On the same note, when we say we are sweating like a pig or the room is as filthy as a pigsty, are these actually qualities of pigs and their habits when given a choice, or are they misrepresentations of this often misunderstood species?

In the case of Sally hogging the blocks, perhaps to say that pigs do not share is correct. Dr. Mike Mendl from the University of Bristol (UK) found that pigs will intentionally mislead other pigs in order to acquire more food for themselves. In a 2002 Associated Press article titled “Pigs ‘share brain skills’ with humans and primates,” Dr. Mendl states, “pigs use their brains to outwit each other in much the same way as humans and chimpanzees. For instance, they were able to learn to follow other animals to desired items such as food before stealing away the prize. Victims of such thefts responded by behaving in ways that lessened the chances of being followed.”

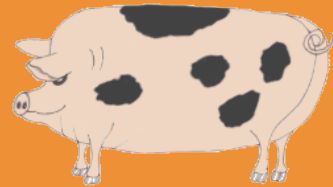
**Log on to the UFT/HEC website at [www.uft.org/committees/humane-education-committee](http://www.uft.org/committees/humane-education-committee) for lesson plans, curriculum units, a summary of award winning humane science projects, workshop listings, P-course information, photographs, our Humane Trip Advisory, Humane Education Resource Guide, Humane Science Units and a **MEMBERSHIP ENROLLMENT** form.**

How about “sweating like a pig” and “filthy as a pigsty”? If the first phrase is taken to mean a literal pig, it would be inaccurate. While pigs are able to sweat to some extent, they are unable to cool themselves effectively through sweating as a human would and therefore cool themselves in a puddle of water or mud. The mud then has the added benefit of protecting their delicate skin from sunburns. On a similar note, pigs are actually quite clean animals and when given the choice will select different areas for sleeping, eating and going to the bathroom.

Along the same lines, if a child is afraid to take a chance, another child may call him or her a chicken. This contributes to a misconception that chickens are not brave, but to the contrary, chickens are known to fight to protect members of their family and a mother hen will even fight to her own death in order to protect her chicks.

As humane educators, it is worth asking ourselves why such phrases are used in everyday conversations and come up in our classrooms. Our language reflects our values and although we are largely unaware of it, believing a chicken to be of limited intelligence (a birdbrain) or a pig to be filthy (pigsty) helps to justify our continued use of these animals.

**“Thank you for being as smart as a pig.”**



**Use free clip art from <http://www.picgifs.com/animal-graphics/> or [http://www.fg-a.com/farm\\_animals.shtml](http://www.fg-a.com/farm_animals.shtml) to create your own thank you cards featuring a variety of animals.**

As a critical thinking activity when discussing idiomatic phrases or when a situation presents itself in a student’s speech, why not encourage students to research said phrase or expression to determine if the meaning of the expression is actually representative of the animal’s characteristics. As a further demonstration of the student’s comprehension of the expression, students could be encouraged to create another phrase with the same message but more humane and inclusive vocabulary.

Colleen Patrick-Goudreau in her podcast titled “Compassionate Cliches” says that humans hold the power to change the perception of non-human animals by changing the way they talk about them. When we become more mindful of our own language usage, we encourage others to do the same as our they become more aware of the violence inherent in their own speech. We create a paradigm shift.

In short, please consider encouraging your students to use language that reflects the many positive animal attributes.

Visit the links in the last column on page two to learn more.

## Setting Up A Humane Ed Resource Center in Your Classroom or School

Would you like to get other teachers in your school more involved in using humane education materials? One way to make the process easier for them is to set up a resource center in your room and invite them to borrow materials. Be sure to label materials as to content and reading level and preview them before adding them to your resource center.

You can begin by ordering or downloading some of the free materials that exist including the following items.

- \* Share the World DVD and poster and
- \* Circus Activity Booklet both suitable for primary school or
- \* Just Choices for secondary school <http://www.teachkind.org/merchandise.asp>

\* Animalessons for all grades that can be downloaded at <http://www.aspcapro.org/animalelessons-newsletter-archive.php>

\* Humane Education Resource Guide has lesson plans and worksheets that

can be duplicated for grades pre-k to six at <http://www.uft.org/files/attachments/humane-ed-resource-guide.pdf>

\* Humane Class Trip Advisory [http://www.uft.org/files/attachments/humane\\_trip\\_advisory.pdf](http://www.uft.org/files/attachments/humane_trip_advisory.pdf)

\* Project PigeonWatch and Project FeederWatch are exciting hands-on programs for students of all ages. Observe birds in NYC, report student observations and become part of a national data base. <http://www.birds.cornell.edu/pigeonwatch/pigeonwatch.html> and <http://www.birds.cornell.edu/pfw/>

\* The Empathy Connection  
This booklet aims to provide teachers and parents with information on the valuable role animals can play in the development of empathy. <http://www.peninsulahumanesociety.org/download/empathyconnection.pdf>

\* Humane Education Advocates Reaching Teachers  
Visit their website and contact them concerning a possible program for your students <http://teachhumane.org/heart/>

\* Animalearn allows teachers to borrow free dissection alternatives <http://www.animalearn.org>

Some book publishers offer high quality humane books for children including:

\* The Gryphon Press at <http://www.thegryphonpress.com/pages/news.html> We recommend all of their books,

\* Dawn Publishing offers some books that meet humane education standards at <http://www.dawnpub.com>. We recommend the following titles for grades pre-k to one:

- *All Around Me I See*
- *If You Were My Baby*
- *Okomi*

for grades 2 - 6:  
- *Discover the Seasons*  
- *Do Animals Have Feelings, Too?*  
- *Lifetimes*

for grades 7 - 12:  
- *Girls Who Looked Under Rocks*  
- all the *Earth Heroes* books

**WE PLAN TO HAVE A FALL 2012 MEETING AT UFT ON SETTING UP A RESOURCE CENTER.**

## Humane Ed P-Course Spring 2012

UFT Humane Education Committee, Humane Education Advocates Reaching Teachers (HEART) and the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) co-sponsored a 36 hour, 3-credit course for teachers for the third time in the Spring 2012 semester.

Teachers learned how to blend humane education philosophies and topics with strategies that enhanced student science and literacy abilities. We went on a bird watching walk in Battery Park, to Seraphim Equine Sanctuary in Locust Valley, NY and to Animal Haven (a cat and dog adoption Facility) in Manhattan.

*We will offer this course again in the Spring 2013 semester. When available, registration information will be in the New York Teachers' Events Column.*



**Spring 2012 P-Course: Teachers and Their Projects**  
Pictured in back row, left to right are Susan Ehlich, Ana Polanco, Lorene Sykes, Cynthia Buynak and Lisa Mercado. Front row, left to right are Sheila Schwartz, one of the course instructors, Jennifer Woo pictured on iPad being skyped into the session, Mayra Gonzalez, Laurie Salomon and Diana Botet.