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animal issues magazine

Summer 2004

TRACS

The Responsible Animal Care

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President's Messageka Crosland

Very recently, media accounts of mutilated cats discovered in Rutland shocked Okanagan residents, prompting families to bring their roving companion animals indoors. TRACS responded by posting a \$500 reward for information leading to the conviction of the person(s) responsible for the slayings, and this amount was quickly matched by an anonymous donor. Other animal protection organizations joined in, with the total reward fund mushrooming rapidly to over \$4000. At the time of this writing, a juvenile male has been allowed to return home following his arrest for possibly committing these crimes. TRACS will monitor the progress of this case in order to ensure that the violent deaths of the three Rutland cats will be handled to the fullest extent of our justice system. In view of the fact that the suspected





TRACS (The Responsible Animal Care Society) will pay \$1,000.00 for information leading to the conviction of the person(s) responsible for recent killings of cats in the Rutland area. Confidentiality is assured.

Phone: TRACS - (250) 768-4803

offender is only 15 years old, we expect that a rigorous rehabilitation program will be implemented on his behalf and in the interests of protecting animals and the general public. We note that a 1999 Canadian study involving 63 suspects charged with animal cruelty showed that 78% of them had also threatened or committed violence against humans.

More horses from Alberta meat pens have been rescued by TRACS, and are available for adoption (see page 12). Our sincere gratitude is extended to Vancouver Foundation and the Doreen Martin Margetts Fund for Animal Care--for their generous grant of \$20,000, given to assist with the purchase and rehabilitation of horses from the PMU (Pregnant Mare Urine) industry. These animals, displaced as a result of PMU farm closures, continue to flood feedlots in the Canadian prairies. In late 2003, Wyeth Pharmaceuticals ended its contracts with numerous ranchers as a result of plummeting sales of the hormone replacement drug, Premarin (produced from the urine of pregnant mares). A 2002 National Institutes of Health study revealed life-threatening risks associated with the use of this drug.

We are delighted to announce completed renovations to our TRACS website (by Red Earth Design, Inc). Please visit our site at: http://www.tracs-bc.ca ...feedback is welcome! Thanks to a generous donation from the SA-HALI Fund (P.R.U. Stratton, Esq.), we were able to implement changes to design that we believe our visitors will enjoy.

TRACS wishes all of our members and supporters a truly inspiring and compassionate season of harvest. We are encouraged by your phone calls, letters, donations and supportive e-mails. Keep up the good work for the animals, and please keep in touch!

The Responsible Animal Care Society

KEEPING TRACS MEMBERS, SPONSORS AND OTHERS INFORMED

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The TRACS executive realizes that we all lead busy lives and that having information in advance helps to ensure that there is enough time to plan ahead and include important events in our schedule. As well as informing our members and interested people in TRACS events though our newsletter, we will be having TRACS volunteers calling you.

Initially, the calls will be made to update our newsletter mailing list. We want to be sure that newsletters are reaching you and that we have up to date phone numbers. We will also be reminding people of membership renewal dates. Another thrust in the initial calls will be to develop lists of people who are able to foster animals or take animals on a permanent basis. These inventories will enable us to act quickly in times of need.

Of course, you are very welcome to volunteer to help at any time and to assist in other ways.

Our calling volunteers will let you know in advance of upcoming events such as garage sales and educational opportunities.

Injured Canada Goose

A Canada goose, who was barely able to walk, was spotted near a lakeside development in downtown Kelowna earlier this summer. A concerned citizen called TRACS wondering if we were able to assist the injured bird. TRACS rallied its members and volunteers and responded quickly. We were able to capture the injured goose and transport him to a veterinarian for treatment. As it happens, the goose had a piece of fishing line wrapped around his left leg which had actually cut into his flesh. His leg had over compensated for the painful injury by producing a large amount of scar tissue, and had become many times its normal size. Surgery was performed the same day. After some recuperation time and another doctor visit, the goose was reunited with his family at the original location. He is still being



Reminder. Aways pick up and properly discard all fishing lines, balloons, soft drink holders, and all other garbage. These may cause serious injury or even death to wildlife.



CAN YOU HELP THESE RESCUED KITTENS?

These lovely, intelligent, playful kittens were abandoned to die in a field near my home when they were four weeks old. They are twelve weeks old now. There are two males and one female. They have had their first shots, deworming and vet visit. They are socialized, litter box trained and are thriving. I am looking for stable, safe, indoor homes with no small children. They will be spayed or neutered before going to a loving home. Please call Thelma at 250-542-0392 for more information.

Does Tradition Justify Animal Cruelty?

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By: Brenda Davis

Cries of outrage regarding serious abuses of cats and dogs have echoed throughout the valley this week. It is hard to understand why anyone would kill and dismember a cat or slit its throat, and then return it to its owners. It is horrible to imagine the pain a dog would experience when a rubber band is placed around the base of his scrotum, painfully restricting blood flow, until his testicles drop off. How can we as human beings be so completely insensitive to animal suffering? Most of us would answer that these actions do not reflect our greater society, rather a small minority of sick individuals. I wonder what it would take for us to feel a similar level of outrage if these kinds of atrocities were committed against animals that are not generally considered pets – let's take pigs, for example. You might



tayrestoperigation to compare pigs to dogs. Pigs are food animals – dogs are pets. But what really separates a dog from a pig? Is it their intelligence or their ability to feel pain? Not at all. They are equally intelligent, and they both experience pain in much the same way people do. I would submit that it is tradition that distinguishes the two species. It is interesting that in some cultures, it is guite acceptable to torture and eat dogs and cats. In fact, in some countries live dogs and cats are brought to your table at a restaurant so you can choose your dinner. The animal is then beaten, drowned and skinned – not all are unconscious when the skinning takes place. It is horrific and grossly inhumane. While we don't bring pigs to the tables of restaurants in our country, their lives are generally no better than the dogs and cats in these restaurants. Young pigs have their ears clipped, their tails cut off and their testicles removed without any anaesthetic or pain relievers. Most are raised in factory farming conditions where they live about 4-6 months in stalls too small to turn around. The air in these factories is filled with noxious gases produced from the animals' urine and feces. As a result, an estimated 70% of these pigs have pneumonia at the time of slaughter. About 50% also have crippling bone diseases. Slaughter is not the painless process many people imagine. Prior to being hung upside down by their back legs and bled to death, pigs are supposed to be stunned and rendered unconscious. However, line speeds are so fast, stunning is not always successful. If the "sticker" (the person responsible for slitting the animals throat) fails because the pig is kicking and struggling to much, the animal moves on to the next station – the scalding tank – where he/she will be boiled alive. It is estimated that as many as 30% of the pigs in slaughterhouses are fully conscious when they reach the boiling tanks. This is life and death for about 100 million pigs in North America each year - a small fraction of the more than 10 billion animals (excluding fish and other sea creatures) that suffer similar fate each year. Should we be outraged? Of course we should. But instead, most people simply ignore it, or somehow justify it in the name of tradition. It is easy to ignore that which we are so far removed from. It is difficult to take responsibility for that which would ultimately deprive us of a tasty morsel of meat. Better to just pretend it never happened. Better just to say it is long standing tradition. Perhaps we might attempt to justify it if our very survival depended upon it. But, alas, not only do we not need this "food" for survival, it actually impairs our survival. Meat is a primary source of saturated fat, cholesterol, and environmental contaminants, and is a significant contributor to the chronic diseases that are responsible for 70% of the deaths in North America. Intensive animal farming is among the greatest contributors to water, soil and air pollution, and is the greatest contributor to desertification, deforestation and species extinction. The truth be told, tradition justifies nothing. It did not justify slavery. It does not justify animal cruelty. Fortunately, we have a choice.

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Letters

Open letter to the Hon. Paul Martin, Prime Minister of Canada, regarding the stalling of animal welfare legislation by the Senate:

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Dear Hon. Mr. Martin:

Justice Ministers in office during the 4- year life of these amendments have repeatedly stated that they have received more correspondence in support of this Bill than any other in history. Last June, this Bill was supported by the industry groups that had previously opposed it - hunting and farming groups, etc. It was passed unanimously in the House last June. It is just OUTRAGEOUS that the Senate continues to stand in its way. This Bill is not controversial anywhere except in the Senate.

The Criminal Code reform is not intended to target industries that use animals; it is meant to appropriately deal with individuals who are cruel to animals.

Humane societies and SPCAs across Canada receive thousands of complaints of animal abuse every year. Their inspectors have quasi-police powers to inspect and enforce compliance with the Criminal Code and other statutes with respect to cruelty offences.

Humane society/SPCA inspectors are sometimes hampered in laying charges for cruelty to animals under the Criminal Code because it is outdated. The Criminal Code does not protect stray animals or wildlife.

Well-documented research has established a high correlation between animal abuse and violence to children and other humans. A study of 152 criminals reported 373 acts involving harm, violence or cruelty toward animals (Killert and Felthous, 1987). A survey of women entering shelters in Hamilton and Owen Sound, Ontario in 1998 found that 61% of those with pets reported that their partners had hurt or killed the animals (Ontario SPCA, 1998). The International Chiefs of Police have widely distributed material on the link between animal and humane violence to the law-enforcement community.

Most Canadians care, shouldn't you?

Mr Roland Houle Kelowna B.C.

Update!!

Honey, rescued from a local feedlot in 2003, has been relocated to a wonderful home in Valemont, BC.



Nutrition Corner

By: Brenda Davis

Low-Carb Peril

The low-carbohydrate craze is gobbling up North America, at great peril to people, and animals. Entire isles of grocery stores have been stripped bare to make room for low carb products; fast food restaurants boast of low carb options; corner stores are decorated with banners luring in low carb customers; bookstores are overflowing with low-carb books. No matter where you turn, the low carb diet is within spitting distance. It's not only an outrageous craze, it's big business.

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There is one thing low-carb gurus get right - refined carbohydrates are not health foods. But that doesn't mean all carbohydrates should be lumped into the same category. Carbohydrates are plants way of storing the sun's energy. Not only are they good for you, they are essential to life on earth.

Solid science overwhelmingly supports a whole foods plant-based diet as being optimal for human health. It not only promotes healthy body weights, but it is the most effective way of reducing risk of chronic degenerative diseases like heart disease, several cancers and type 2 diabetes. A whole foods, plant-based diet, not coincidentally, is brimming with unrefined carbohydrates from beans, vegetables, fruits, whole grains, nuts and seeds. The one thing that whole foods plant-based do not do is bring in the bucks, or the press. What research does show is high fat, high protein, low carb diets lead to constipation, bad breath, headaches and irritability - that's in the short term. Most people can't stick with it long enough to do further damage, but those who do, could be mortgaging their health in the process. In the long term, these diets may actually contribute to heart disease, kidney disease, osteoporosis, a number of immune/inflammatory disorders, and several cancers, including colorectal cancer, prostate cancer and endometrial cancer. If it isn't bad enough that the low carb craze is damaging people's health, one might be moved by what this kind of diet does to the environment, or to the animals that are raised for food. If everyone ate this way, we would have an ecological disaster on our hands, and we would have to expand factory farms all over the country.

Dr. Michael Greger just launched an amazing website putting together a massive number of references and facts about low carb diets. Check it out at http://www.AtkinsFacts.org

The evidence keeps pouring in. Here is a very recent report:

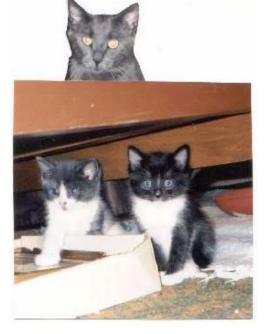
June 23, 2004

Popular low-carbohydrate diets are leading Americans to poor health and spawning a rip-off industry of "carb-friendly" products, health experts and consumer advocates have said....

Full Story: http://edition.cnn.com/2004/HEALTH/diet.fitness/06/23/low.carb.trend.reut/index.html

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Smokey and her babies need your love....



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Spayed/neutered & vaccinated by TRACS.... Yours for a reasonable donation. Adoption contract, veterinary reference required. Call 768-4803

CARING FOR THEIR FUTURE

Animals need long-lasting protection, and **TRACS** has a proven history of acting staunchly and valiantly on their behalf. Please consider making a bequest to The Responsible Animal Care Society in your will, and your compassion will help the animals for years to



Youth Against Animal Abuse members collect petition signatures against the commercial seal hunt, May 2004



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In The

Gibe prosMail April 28, 2004

"A comparison of almost 3,000 research papers published over 30 years in major biomedical journals has found a 30% decline in the number of studies using animals. The analysis, by Dr. Hans-Erik Carlsson and colleagues at Sweden's Uppsala University, also showed use of alternative testing methods."

Source: BBC News

Australia Bans Trade in Cat and Dog Fur

On May 21, The Australian government, responding both to a Humane Society International investigation and a massive signature and public pressure campaign, announced that it would immediately ban dog and cat fur and skins. The Government will amend the Customs (Prohibited Imports) Regulations 1956 and the Customs (Prohibited Exports) Regulations 1958 to stop import and export of the fur of domestic cat and dog species.

Australia's Prime Minister, John Howard, and his administration, said a huge part of their decision to introduce the ban was the over 9000 public comments from people across Australia. "I have received more than 9000 representations from a broad section of the community supporting a ban - the largest volume of correspondence I have received on a single issue in almost four years as Minister," he said.

The U.S. has banned the dog and cat fur trade since 2000, and with this trade in Australia now banned, Asian producers will likely increase their imports of dog and cat fur items, such as gloves, hats, footwear, and toys, into Europe, one of the remaining areas that permits these products. While five EU (European Union) countries, including Belgium, Italy, France, Greece, and Denmark, have already banned the import of dog and cat fur, the EU as a whole still has not banned these products. To date, EU Commissioner for Consumer Affairs, David Byrne, has adamantly argued the EU has no authority to ban dog and cat fur in Europe.

Courtesy of: Fur Free Activist Update June 2004

Available for Adoption:

"Trip" is a shiny black, 5 year old neutered male cat looking for a home. He is declawed, therefore must be indoors only. Trip is very gentle and gets along well with other animals. Please call Betty 979-0505. "Mimi" needs a change of environment. She is a 7 year old spayed female, healthy, vet checked and has all shots including rabies that are up to date. She is a long-haired, black tabby with a very elegant look. Mimi needs to be an only cat. Please call Thelma at 250-542-0392 for more information.

A Backyard Prisoner – The Chained Dog By: Louise Adams

Dogs can live on just food and water but to be happy and well adjusted, dogs need exercise, daily love and attention from their guardians.

There is no worse punishment for a dog than keeping it permanently chained or tethered. Dogs are highly social, pack animals. Isolation with no outlet for exercise or interaction is extremely cruel.

A dog kept chained in one spot for hours, days, months or even years, suffers immense psychological damage. An otherwise friendly and docile dog, when kept continuously chained, can become neurotic, unhappy, anxious and often aggressive. In many cases, the necks of chained dogs become raw and covered with sores from improperly fitting collars and the constant yanking and straining to escape confinement. A chained animal may suffer harassment and teasing from insensitive humans, stinging bites from insects and attacks from other animals. Sometimes the chains or tethers become entangled and can choke the animal.

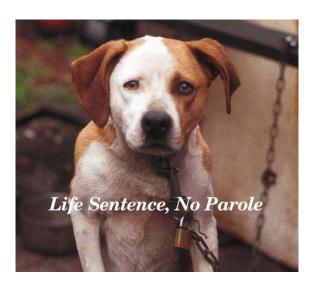
Rarely does a chained or tethered animal receive sufficient care. Tethered dogs often suffer from sporadic feedings, overturned or absent water bowls, inadequate veterinary care and exposure to extreme weather conditions. They are given little or no affection. The confined areas are where the dog eats, sleeps, urinates and defecates. Usually there is no grass as a result of all the pacing. Sadly, too many of these situations exist!

Perhaps the dog is your own and you want to better its life. More than likely, as a TRACS member or sponsor, the dog is in your neighbourhood and you are concerned about its well-being.

We will be writing more about this issue in coming editions of the TRACS newsletter. For additional information, you can visit: www.unchainyourdog.org & www.dogsdeservebetter.com

Chained Dog's Plea

I wish someone would tell me What it is that I've done wrong. Why do I have to stay chained up And left alone so long? They seemed so glad to have me When I came here as a pup. There were so many things we'd do While I was growing up. But now the Master "hasn't time" The Mistress says I shed. She doesn't want me in the house, Not even to be fed. The Children never walk me. They always say, "Not now." I wish that I could please them. Won't someone tell me how? All I had, you see, was love. I wish they would explain Why they said they wanted mine, And then left it on a chain.



-- By Edith Lassen Johnson

Horse Slaughter

In our last issue of AIM, we made reference to a preliminary poll conducted by Ipsos-Reid regarding the opinions of Canadians on horse slaughter. The final results were astounding: 64% (two-thirds) of citizens surveyed across the nation are opposed to the slaughter of horses for human consumption. In 2003, more than 61,000 horses were either butchered in Canada or shipped live out of the country--destined for European and Asian dinner tables--and clearly, this is a practice that the majority of Canadians oppose. More information about poll results can be found at: http://www.ipsos-na.com/news/pressrelease.cfm?id=2252.

Organizations and individuals across the globe have contacted Wyeth Pharmaceuticals in order to ask that horses displaced as a result of PMU (Pregnant Mare Urine) industry closures receive protection from the huge drug company. For over 60 years, Wyeth has depended upon the urine of pregnant mares to produce the hormone replacement drug, **Premarin**. The pharmaceutical behemoth responded initially with a \$3.7 million replacement fund, which proved to be nothing but a "drop in the bucket"--pregnant mares, stallions, and replacement stock from the industry continued to flood auctions, feedlots, and slaughter pens in the Canadian prairies. TRACS undercover video revealed the enormity of the problem in November 2003, and again in February 2004. Recent information from Alberta estimates the number of slaughter-bound horses *in Alberta alone* to be in the 22, 000 to 27,000 range. What is Wyeth doing about the situation? The drug company continues to be silent and is not responding to phone calls, e-mails or letters from our correspondents. Please visit the following website for more information: http://www.stopwyeth.org .

TRACS has identified numerous animal welfare problems related to equine slaughter. From inhumane transportation practices to overcrowded feedlots where illnesses abound, to improper stunning and excessive pain during the butchering process--an abundance of concerns have been revealed through investigations by animal protection organizations. Furthermore, when horses are shipped alive to other countries, all control over the slaughter process is lost, and the animals are basically at the mercy of foreign abattoirs.

In response to public opinion and concern about equine slaughter in Canada, a new umbrella group has been formed to address this issue. The website of **The Canadian Horse Defense Coalition** can be found at: http://www.defendhorsescanada.org . This site contains many eye-



itive reader.

Horses awaiting slaughter at Bouvry Exports in Fort Macleod, Alta.

Animal Rights 2004 National Conference

By: Cory Davis

I had the great opportunity of going to the AR 2004 conference, both as an attendee, and one of the many speakers they had there. I was honoured to represent TRACS as their Director of Youth Programs.

F.A.R.M. or the Farm Animal Reform Movement sponsors an annual Animal Rights conference, which was held in Washington DC at the Sheraton Inn hotel from July 8th to the 12th. For me, this conference was about learning about animal abuse, networking, developing tactics, and finding ways of dealing with animal abuse locally, nationally and internationally. It was a great learning experience and was filled with remarkable activists from all around. I will share my speech with you - it is called *"Engaging Youth in Animal Rights"*.

I believe that the youth of North America are among the most powerful voices the animals have – together we provide a never-ending supply of enthusiasm, creativity and vision. How do we best engage youth in such a way that we <u>would force an end to animal abuse?</u>

I am going to talk a little about four of the major barriers that we face in attempting to reach teens and how to overcome them.

1) Lack of awareness of the issues: Many youth don't get involved in animal rights because they don't know what is going on. If animal abuse issues were common knowledge then youth would more frequently have conversations about them. They would think more thoughtfully about the issue, and some would even become active. But how do we do this? Well first of all we need to plant the seed of compassion towards animals into children. We need people who can talk to kids and not bore them. They could go out to go to the elementary schools and give appropriate presentations to educate the kids. A great example is Anthony Marr - he has a presentation called the Tiger Slideshow, which is appropriate for all ages. It is not something that parents would get mad at it, as is not very graphic and it teaches children to love and respect animals. We need children to grow up, through their entire childhood, learning about animals, and their amazing, and unique qualities. So how do we make sure the kids and teenagers learn about animal abuse? Most schools, if you call them and say, "I have an animal rights presentation about how food animals live and die..." would end up turning you down. Well I got into plenty of schools doing vegan cooking demonstrations, and obviously while doing this, children, teens and their teachers asked questions like, "why are you vegan?" That gives you a great opportunity to explain some of the animal concerns to them as you're performing your meat-free demo. It becomes acceptable because it is all in topic. I also got into a high school current events class where the teacher gave me 45 minutes to show the teens a film called "Meet your Meat", and have an open discussion afterwards. And I was pretty happy about the responses that I received and I got asked lots of great questions. As we were traveling on the tour there was a lot of discussion about trying to get vegan options into schools. In one college, every Monday they had vegan soft serve ice cream and vegan baked goods and the students loved it. We need to encourage schools to offer more vegan options so more people will try vegan food and become interested. I think among the best ways to make teens aware is showing the actual video footage about animal abuse in our own country right on street corners where teens stumble across it by themselves or with some friends and the see with their own eyes the horrors of factory farming. I know fauna vision type equipment is not available to everyone, but it should be used whenever possible. We had amazing responses with the fauna vision on our tour. We had young people covering their eyes and just sitting down calmly and start crying; we had people turning their back and some of these young people went vegetarian on the spot. If you don't have a television set up available, video screening at schools and colleges work too. Marketing is really important ;; putting up posters, placing ads in the school or college newsletters, and including a quote about the video you show from a famous person, if you can. I also found tabling and leafleting useful, but somewhat less so than video images.

AR 2004 Continued...

2) Peer pressure. Most youth want to be accepted by their peers, and will avoid activities that they think their friends will make fun of. Youth are highly influenced by media, advertising and large corporations. Unfortunately, the messages they get from these sources generally do little to advance our cause. In fact, teens are constantly bombarded with messages luring them to fast food restaurants, leather clothing, and the use of other animal products. They consistently receive images reinforcing society's right to do whatever we like to animals, and human supremacy over all other species. To help combat this, we need to use media to our advantage, as well as personalities they admire. Thankfully, more and more movies and television shows are coming out that promote animal rights. We need to acknowledge teens for their efforts to help animals and welcome teens to animal rights groups. In Kelowna, I am the Director of Youth Programs for an animal rights group called TRACS (The Responsible Animal Care Society). This is a brand new program that began when I agreed to join the executive of this amazing organization. If you are involved in an animal rights group in your community, make room for youth, welcome them, and give them the opportunity to reach out to other youth.

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 Core Values. Differences in core values and beliefs can also greatly affect a person's willingness to come on board. Some teens have already started hunting and fishing, or they may believe that God gave us dominion over animals, which they believe allows us to use them any way we wish. These people will obviously be resistant to any animal rights message. While they may be the last to ever want to become vegetarian or listen to us at all. I think we can go a long way towards getting them to understand and respect our perspective. When we were on the CARE tour, we came across several people that were pretty resistant to what we had to say. One quy, when we were showing videos with the fauna vision told us he loves killing animals - he hunts and loves to eat meat, and he said nothing could ever make him a vegetarian. While we really wanted to say something mean back to him, instead we just listened to his perspective respectfully, and then told him a little bit about why we are concerned about animals. The important thing is he was respectful when he left us - far more respectful than when he arrived. We also meet a lot of people who told us that we have every right to kill animals for food because that is what animals are here for, and God gave us dominion over them for that purpose. I think the best we can do with people like this is to listen to them, be respectful, and offer to share information with them. For example, if someone uses the dominion argument you might respond, "I understand where you are coming from. I read a really interesting Christian brochure that discusses the whole dominion thing. It also talks about stewardship, and it is pretty interesting. I have a spare copy if you'd like to see it."

4) Time. Today, teens face more stress than ever. The massive amount of crap we deal with these days makes life very busy, and very exhausting. Many teens find it hard to deal with school, sports, jobs, and chores, let alone getting involved in volunteer work. If we want to encourage teens to get involved, we need to make it easy for them, and not too time consuming. We need to make sure that youth take animal rights personally, and that they know that their contribution really does make a huge difference.

In summary, I believe that there has never been a better time to engage youth in animal rights. On a personal note, most of the people that know me will say that my work for animal rights has changed me – most for the better. I have no doubt it is for the better. Having the opportunity to help suffering animals has made me a better person. It gives me hope for the world. Before I began this work, I felt like there was nothing we could do to save the world – I felt hopeless. Now, while I know that alone I can't save the world, I also know that I can change it in a very positive way – and even if it seems insignificant to some people, I know it is significant for the animals I have helped to protect.

animal issues magazine

These horses have now arrived at Trinity Acres in Kelowna, B.C. They were rescued from an Alberta meat pen and are available for adoption.

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[Photo credit: Paul Mitchell]



Name:

Address:

Love Animals...? Join TRACS

Help TRACS continue its work - become a member and receive our quarterly newsletter.

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