

2014 ANNUAL REPORT



ANIMAL RIGHTS COALITION

because animals matter





Growth. Innovation. Opportunity.

2014 was a year of strategic expansion for ARC. We saw victories and growth in our individual programs and campaigns to help animals. We experimented with new ideas for outreach via social media online, tried out many new events and venues for in-person outreach, and improved our volunteer program with more formal training for volunteers in specific areas of outreach. We learned a lot and we're putting that new knowledge and experience to work right now.

Our Cuddle Coats program exploded after the *Star Tribune* published a feature article about it in the spring. Fur donations skyrocketed after the article and we pursued innovative ways to put all those furs to use, moving beyond our traditional wildlife rehabilitation partners and also providing furs to feral cat colony managers for lining shelters in the winter. We celebrated the closing of one of two Petland stores in Minnesota, a store we'd been pressuring to change its business practices for four years.

Our Vegan Meetup Leader Team grew six-fold and Vegan Meetup now hosts frequent, low-pressure events that give people easy access to others who have answers to their questions about veganism and show area restaurants that there's a growing market for vegan options on the menu.

A key strategy for ARC is creating lots of opportunities for people to not only learn about animal issues, but also find support and community as they process these new revelations. We feel strongly about providing frequent, diverse, and low-pressure opportunities for people to access one another as they start to deconstruct how animals are really treated in our world. It goes back to our focus not only on “conversion,” but also on *retention*—which we feel is just as important. It's so easy for people to have a moment of empathy or clarity but then shut it off again because it's unfamiliar, uncomfortable, or inconvenient, and we want to remove as many barriers as we can to people making ethical choices for animals. It may not sound particularly dramatic, but having conversations and asking people to consider a different world view is making a big difference.

We want to thank our volunteers and donors for your gifts of time, funds, materials, and services in 2014. You are the backbone of the work we do. Absolutely none of what we accomplish could be done without you. Our organization is only as extraordinary as those who support us. Together we'll continue to think outside the box, branch out, and learn and grow, putting each new lesson to work as we reshape the world for animals.

2014 HIGHLIGHTS

10,881

Pieces of informational literature handed out to the public about animal issues

90

Meetups, workshops, and other events held through Vegan Meetup, which grew to over 1,256 members

2,234

Samples of vegan food given out at 5 food sampling events

317

Powerful conversations had about the realities of animals used in agriculture with individuals at 6 different venues through our Pay Per View program

408

Donated fur items taken in through our Cuddle Coats program whose rehab and welfare network grew to 44 partners across the U.S.

18

Demonstrations at Petland stores

13

Vegan grocery shopping tours and 8 workshops about plant-based eating, 94 people total signed up for the Vegan Mentor program (since the start of the program), with 36 current active mentees

7

Free screenings of feature-length films about animal issues, including three sold-out theater showings

88

Families now participating in the VegKins program

Program Updates



CUDDLE COATS

Our Cuddle Coats program reached a major milestone by receiving its 600th fur donation and expanding to 44 wildlife rehabilitation partners. We've increased fur prep sessions to once a week with periodic large-scale weekend sessions to keep up with the donations of furs and the increasing demand for those furs from the partners we supply with them to help rehabilitate and comfort orphaned and injured wildlife.



EDUCATIONAL AND FAITH-BASED COMMUNITIES OUTREACH

We spent more time in the schools in 2014. We debuted our new "Ethical Values and Our Relationship with Animals" brochure which advertises no-cost presentations on topics such as our treatment of and relationship to animals, sustainability, and food justice, at the Education Minnesota Conference. We gave presentations at local elementary schools, high schools, colleges, and community groups (including Fridley Middle School, Southwest High School, Augsburg College, Hamline University, Mankato State University, Minneapolis Community & Technical College, and Normandale Community College classes and Colloquium Series). We also expanded our outreach to faith-based communities, handing out hundreds of leaflets at the Women of Faith Conference and vegan food samples at the Judson Baptist Church Street Festival.



MINNESOTANS EXPOSING PETLAND

The Petland Corporation has been under national pressure to change its business practices to a more humane model and over one-third of its franchises have closed nationwide. Locally, our Minnesotans Exposing Petland campaign saw the close of one of the two Petland stores in the state. Through a Minnesota Data Practices request, ARC uncovered evidence that the remaining store in St. Paul continues to purchase puppies from large-scale puppy breeders and brokers, despite its claims to the contrary. We held 18 demonstrations at Petland stores to educate the public about the problems inherent in selling animals for profit and we had hundreds of conversations with individuals about the cruelty of the puppy, kitten, bird, reptile, fish, and small animal industries.



MOVIE SCREENINGS

We held 7 free screenings of feature films. We co-hosted the Minnesota premier of *Speciesism: The Movie*, attended by over 120 people, followed by a question and answer session with director Mark Devries. We hosted 2 sold-out screenings of *Cowspiracy* at the Lagoon Theater. We co-sponsored the national premiere of the much anticipated no-kill movement documentary *Redemption*. Other screenings included *Peaceable Kingdom: The Journey Home*, *The Witness*, *Diet for A New America*, and *The Cove*.



NEW PROGRAM: NORTH VEGANS

North Vegans launched at the Open Streets Festival. North Vegans is led by Northside residents who want to provide a positive way for the community to meet and greet fellow locals interested in plant-based eating, work on improving affordable access to healthy plant-based meals, and make our local vegan community more inclusive.



VEGAN MEETUP

Vegan Meetup organizes events to provide educational opportunities for those interested in learning more about a plant-based diet. We held 90 meetups, workshops, and other events, and the meetup group grew to over 1,256 members (only 10% of Meetup groups ever grow beyond 500).



PARTNERSHIP WITH CHICKEN RUN RESCUE

We are proud to partner with Chicken Run Rescue for tours, educational opportunities, and occasional rescues. ARC volunteers alerted through our Activist Network rescued two stray chickens, Coyote and Kitty, who could have been eaten by birds of prey or frozen to death, but they're safe and warm instead. Tours of CRR provide vegans and non-vegans an opportunity to learn about CRR's work and to get to know the rescued chickens as individuals.



VEGAN UNIVERSITY

Vegan University helps people adopt and maintain a vegan diet in a way that works for them. We held 13 grocery shopping tours and 8 workshops along with special events such as the Turkey-free Thanksgiving dinner attended by approximately 200 people; two events held in partnership with Whole Foods; annual Hot Dish Cook-Off, which attracted over 115 people; and annual Waffle Party. Our Vegan Mentor program continues to flourish and a total of 94 people have signed up since program began.



PAY PER VIEW

Pay Per View is an outreach strategy where people are offered \$1.00 to watch a brief film about the experience of animals used for food. A trained volunteer then has a short but direct conversation with the viewer about the impacts of our food choices. We had 317 powerful conversations at 6 different venues, and post PPV surveys showed our results are an average of 66% more successful than the national average for this campaign.



VEGKINS

VegKins is a unique program for families raising vegan children, which gives parents the opportunity to come together and build a community of parents raising compassionate kids. We grew the program to 88 families, held events such as the spring "egg" hunt and parents' dineouts, and created an online forum for parents.

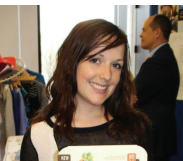


ARC Volunteers at Work

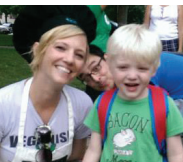


Leadership Updates

In 2014, the ARC Board of Directors promoted **DALLAS RISING** to Executive Director in recognition of her innovative and effective work for animals.



We said goodbye to **JENNA CAMERON**, our Outreach Director, and wished her all the best as she joined Hampton Creek Foods in San Francisco, where she is working to get affordable, great tasting vegan foods into mainstream grocers and the food service industry.



Thanks to the continuing support of a generous donor, we welcomed **CHELSEA HASSLER** as our new full-time Outreach Director. Chelsea is a graduate of the Carlson School of Management at the University of Minnesota. She is bringing this experience to work for ARC by finding and coordinating new events and opportunities for outreach.



ASHLEY PIEDISCALZI joined us as part-time Volunteer Coordinator. Ashley maintains a strong relationship with volunteers through regular communication and helps new volunteers get involved in a way that works for them. Ashley also has a background in graphic design.



We welcomed **MEGAN KOSSE** as a new member of the ARC Board of Directors. Megan is a licensed attorney who has been an active volunteer with ARC at many events and who volunteers with the Cuddle Coats program and does training for our Admin Team.



In Memoriam

We were sad to report that Vonnie Thomasberg, ARC Founder and President Emeritus, passed away in 2014. Vonnie founded ARC in 1980 and for over 30 years defended the rights of nonhuman animals and provided leadership and inspiration.

Jim Mason, author of *Animal Factories* and *The Ethics of What We Eat* with Peter Singer, *An Unnatural Order*, and co-founder of *The Animals' Agenda* magazine sent this tribute to Vonnie:

*"All of us benefit from her work, for she was a pioneer and leader in the building of the American Animal Rights movement. Sensing the rising awareness and restlessness catalyzed by Peter Singer's 1975 book, *Animal Liberation*, she founded Animal Rights Coalition to put that into action for animals in the Twin Cities. She organized some of the very first conferences to bring together speakers and activists from all over the country. Some of the activists who attended her conferences went back home to Boston, New York, Washington, DC, Chicago, and many other major U.S. cities to start ARC-like organizations. Other attendees founded or formed the first staff of national organizations such as Farm Sanctuary and People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals."*

"Thirty years ago I couldn't have dreamt about the significant changes that the animal rights movement would undergo... Never ever apologize for being merciful or caring. Keep up the good fight—it is happening."

—Vonnice Thomasberg

"Her leadership and activism in the Twin Cities was both a model and a motivator for animal activism across the U.S."

Jim wrote about ARC: "Grassroots groups are the energy of the Animal Rights Movement. Grassroots groups are the cutting edge of the Animal Rights Movement. Just look at the history: ARC was among the earliest to organize and take action for animals."

*"I remember with fondness and pride being a speaker on farmed-animal cruelties at your first few conferences in the early 1980s. Peter Singer and I had just published our 1980 book, *Animal Factories*, in which we documented in depth the cruelties of factory farming. Factory farming accounts for at least 95 percent of all animal suffering, yet this horrific abuse was largely unknown or ignored by the existing animal-protection organizations of those days. None that I can recall had any kind of program dealing with farmed animals. Even some early animal rights activists didn't know about it and the few who did, didn't want to tackle it. One prominent activist of the day told me in so many words, "Forget about it, it's a mountain. We should stick to things we can win."*

*"Animal Rights Coalition was one of the first to take on that mountain. You invited me to your conferences to give the facts and figures on factory farming. I showed dozens of color slides that showed the insides of factory farms and the conditions under which farmed animals live out their brief lives. The audiences were shocked, appalled, and soon thereafter motivated to swear off animal foods and otherwise take action on behalf of farmed animals. **ARC was at the forefront of activism for farmed animals.**"*

"Your courage was contagious. Your first steps for farmed animals encouraged other grassroots activists to tackle the issue. It was only a bit later in the 1980's when Farm Sanctuary, Humane Farming Association, and Farm Animal Reform Movement formed to focus on factory farming and other farmed-animal abuses."



Changing Lives

ARC connects with thousands of people to share the message that animals matter for their own reasons. Here's some of the feedback we received in 2014 about how we're doing:



"ARC has played a huge role in my ability to be an advocate for animals. I have learned that educating others is the first step to helping animals, and to approach people with kindness. I was vegan before I started volunteering with ARC but I didn't have the huge support system that I do now. I had no idea that ARC had so many amazing programs for educating the public, and I am so happy to be a part of it!"

– Alexandra Beane

"Dallas Rising came and spoke to a group of fifth graders at Maxfield Magnet Elementary School in St. Paul about animal rights. She was invited by our public achievement group 'abuse patrol' to shed light on animal abuse and how to advocate for animals. Dallas spoke and gave our group wonderful ideas to help end animal abuse locally. We gained new insights and are so grateful for her time and her passion for animals. The students came away informed and motivated to advocate for animals in the Twin Cities. We would encourage other schools in the Twin Cities to invite her in to inform and educate their youth. "

– Kara Underbeg, Maxfield School



“I went without the intentions of going vegan any time soon and to gain some education. I thought it was going to be too difficult, too expensive, and a laborious process. POOF! I became vegan overnight after this workshop (Help! I’m Going Vegan). The facilitators were so helpful and non-judgmental and didn’t pressure us to make any changes. Honestly, the volunteers played a large part in changing my life... The hands-on experiences that are available to advocate for animals are endless with ARC. It has been an extremely helpful outlet for my sadness about what happens to animals every day. I feel like I’m really part of a family. Extremely grateful that I live in Minnesota and have something like this right in my backyard.”

– Melanie Jacobs

“So glad these animals that lost their lives have the chance to be honored by helping other wildlife.”

– Jan Eckhardt, Cuddle Coats fur donor

“Kudos to you for presenting one of the best colloquia in our nine-year history. You challenged assumptions in a well-developed and thought-provoking way that made an impression on all who were in attendance.”

– Richard Brown, Normandale Community College

FINANCIAL REPORT

The Minnesota Charities Review Council Standards of Accountability state that at least 65% of an organization’s annual expenses should be for program activity.

ARC exceeded this standard by directing 86.2% of our expenses back into programming for the animals and our community.

- Programs: 86.2%
- Administrative: 6.5%
- Fundraising: 7.3%

INCOME

Individual donations: \$110,276
Other revenue: \$19,348
TOTAL REVENUE: \$129,624

EXPENSES

Programs: \$60,289.00
Administrative: \$4,563.00
Fundraising: \$5,036.00
TOTAL EXPENSES: \$69,888.00