

animal culture

EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY, PROMOTING THE HEALTH AND WELFARE OF ALL SENTIENT BEINGS



THE RESCUE ISSUE

VOL 3 ISSUE 6 JULY 2021

Welcome To Animal Culture

The *Animal Culture* team welcome you back to our magazine! *Animal Culture* aspires to educate, to motivate, and to celebrate! We are here to educate our readers about animal issues, to motivate you to act on these issues, and lastly, to celebrate victories for all sentient creatures.

We are excited to have in our July 2021, our annual rescue issue, a Feature on Edgar's Mission, a farmed animal sanctuary in Australia; we talked to founder Pam Ahern. Our Special Feature this month is Sophie Gamand, of *Pit Bull Flower Power* fame; she updated us on her current projects and her upcoming move from New York to Los Angeles. We featured one of her photos on this issue's cover. Visual Culture highlights the work of artist and curator Jane O'Hara. Lastly, we have our regular, powerful, and tireless contributors – Lisa Karlan, Vet Paul Ramos, and Mark Bekoff without whom Hold Lisa Karlan in your thoughts; she is still in recovery from a stroke she suffered in April. We are following her progress and sending healing energy her way, in hopes that she will be back with new recipes in no time. Please see "In The News," as wolves need our help! This is a critical issue and one of our responsibilities is to bring you news that we hope will inform and motivate you.

We are supported by our Patreon page, where you can become subscribers, and gain access to *Animal Culture* and special content. Please consider being a Patreon subscriber, and share *Animal Culture* on all your social media, with all your friends and family. As of late January, Patreon is giving us the option to offer patrons an annual subscription option, with a 10% savings! And to all our loyal family of subscribers, thank you for your incredible support. We have made great gains for the animals on many fronts over the years but there is much work to do. Please help us help those who cannot advocate for themselves. Join us to create a powerful voice for animals, a voice needed now more than ever.

For the animals,
Mary Holmes, Editor-in-Chief

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DEDICATION

This magazine is dedicated to all sentient creatures; the young, the seniors, the wild, the captive, the abused, neglected, lost and the hidden. We, along with many others who are represented in these pages, will never stop working for you. We will never give up.

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TIPS FROM ANDY

FOR A MORE HUMANE WORLD



PHOTO © JON KAWA

Our mascot, Andy, offers good advice

What to Look for In a Trusted Groomer

Many concerned animal caregivers ask, "How do I find a good groomer, not to mention, a trusted friend who I feel safe about leaving my family members with?"

There are some very concerning stories we have all heard and many do not end well. So where do you start? Family and friends' recommendations are a great first step. If someone feels right for you, have a one-on-one conversation with the groomer before you make an appointment. That is a great time to see the facility. Ask how your companion animal will be housed when not on the table. Crate? Cage? Cage-free in an enclosed area? Is there a visible first aid kit? What is their emergency plan in case of evacuation? Ask yourself – Do I feel comfortable with this groomer?

We spoke to our good friend and professional groomer, MJ Nejad of MJ's Pet Spaw in Mission Viejo, California. www.mjspetspaw.com/ MJ has a very successful business based on something we all look for: expert care and knowledge of his field, compassion and love. Below are the tips we discussed:

Any animal companion parents must find a great fit for their companion's personality, they must ask questions and find a groomer or groomers who have the following personal qualities:

- Be an animal lover
- Be passionate about it, to the point that one is willing to do it for free when he/she sees an animal in need
- Be patient with every animal

- Possess good animal handling skills and the ability to deal with unexpected behaviors
- Be knowledgeable about the breeds and their special needs
- Be an active member of the community and give back
- Understand the dog's body language and respect them
- Know when to stop grooming before the situation gets dangerous for the animal
- Always think of the animal's safety and experience as a priority
- It is important to read the customer feedback and ask people about referrals

As a potential client, ask a salon-based groomer for a tour of the facility and ask a mobile groomer to show you the mobile unit

Ask how the groomer got into the business and why

MJ's final tip to us?

"A **dog** is the only thing on earth that **loves** you more than you **love** yourself."

Take your time and feel good about your choice. Good luck!

Love,

Andy

From left to right: Monty, Pam Ahern, Joy, Potts, Red Baron and Polly



The Mission To Never Walk Away

Pam Ahern and Edgar's Mission

BY MARY HOLMES
ALL PHOTOS ©EDGAR'S MISSION

Edgar's Mission is a farmed animal sanctuary in Lancefield, Victoria, Australia, about 40 miles north of Melbourne. It was founded in 2003 by Pam Ahern, and is currently home to about 450 animals. Ahern grew up rescuing animals – dogs and cats, and as an adult she and her mother ran a shelter for dogs and cats. In 2003, however, the trajectory of Ahern's life veered another direction. They had closed the shelter, finding appropriate accommodations for the animals in their care. James Cromwell, of "Babe" fame was visiting Australia. Ahern was working with Animals Australia on a "Save Babe" campaign. The Code of Practice for Pig Farming was under review that year, "Save Babe" was working to get the use of gestation crates banned, and James Cromwell was in Victoria.

As Ahern opined, the universe was aligned. "We thought, wouldn't it be a great opportunity to get media into it, if James would come on board, being the great advocate for animals he was, and in particular pigs. He got an Oscar nomination as a result of "Babe." James could actually help us create media awareness. The big deal was, could we even get in touch with this Hollywood actor? We did. James is the most amazing human being and he couldn't do enough to help our

Edgar, Pam and Chiquin



cause, and readily wanted to come on board and advocate for farmed animals.”

They decided to do a photo shoot of Cromwell with a pig. They approached a children’s farm and asked to borrow one. Then Ahern had a better idea. She went to a commercial piggery and bought – Edgar Alan Pig. “I lived in the country at the time, and I’d been a life-long animal lover. I’d always harbored a desire to have a pig. This was a great opportunity. So that was when Edgar Alan came in for this photo shoot. And the photo shoot went so amazingly well. It gave James the idea of doing an actual trip to Parliament House in Melbourne. He was going to walk up the steps of Parliament House with Edgar Alan Pig by his side, and demand a better deal for pigs.”

To accomplish this, Edgar had to learn to walk on a lead and be comfortable around humans. Ahern took him to her local park in Kilmore, walking Edgar on one side of her, and her dog on the other. “People came from everywhere to marvel at Edgar and his unique brand of pigginess. It was watching people’s interactions with Edgar that really got me thinking that the best ambassadors, the very, very best ambassadors to change the way people view the animals on farms are the animals themselves.

To people’s minds, Edgar eloquently worked his way into their hearts. And reminded them that’s where pigs really should be. That’s really how the sanctuary began.”

She commented that, if she and her mother had still been running the dog and cat shelter, she couldn’t have taken on opening a farmed animal sanctuary. As she stated, “There was somewhere else I needed to be.” Sadly, Edgar passed in 2010, at the age of seven, but the Mission lives on, as does Edgar’s spirit. Edgar’s Mission is designed to bring a smile to people’s faces. Ahern says there’s a science behind it. “We’d call Edgar and people would just smile. Right from the get-go we’ve opened their hearts and minds because they’re smiling. When you are smiling and when you’re engaged everything opens up. When you come to the sanctuary we have a lot of colour at the sanctuary. It’s very, very colourful, and bright, because colours make you come alive. When things are dark and damp it shuts us down ... I really want people to connect with themselves, and what they believe in. And they can connect with the goodness of the human heart.”

We detoured to her three-decade long career as an equestrian. She saw a picture of a horse at the age of five, and made up her mind she was going to get a horse, despite the fact her family lacked the space and finances for one. “I went to

the local pony club and that’s where my relationship with larger animals really began. I got a pony, became a very successful equestrian, beyond anything I ever could have imagined. I always thought that would be my life. I would ride horses until the day I died, a ninety-nine-year-old grey-haired lady.” She was a successful equestrienne, twice winning the Garryowen Perpetual Cup at the Royal Melbourne Show.

An ad in the local paper led to her subscribing to an organization that sent out pamphlets about which cosmetics were tested on animals, and which were not, her first revelation. That led to an announcement about an upcoming anti-fur rally. Ahern phoned the organizers, and asked if she could participate, even though at the time she was a meat-eater. The organizer responded, “That’s fine. It’s not so much what’s on your plate. It’s how it gets there. Will you think about that?” Ahern went to the rally, in her leather shoes, leather belt, and wool skirt, and overheard protesters talking about the book *Animal Liberation*. She bought it, despite her father’s dire warnings about liberationists, and their ilk. Not that far into the book, the author Peter Singer remarked about an RSPCA meeting he’d attended with friends. After talking about all they were going to do for the animals they broke for afternoon tea – ham sandwiches. He remarked on the disconnect and, as Ahern told the story, said, “I thought, ‘My gosh, you’ve got a point.’ Here was I sharing the cause of animals, saying I was deeply involved about them, expecting people to be able to take me seriously, and I was eating them. So, overnight I became a vegan. This was over 30 years ago in country Victoria.”

Sunday and Ruby



Blossom and Snuffles



Then there was her withdrawal from the equestrian world. "I loved horses, and I had this incredible relationship with these animals. I learned so much about animals but also so much about myself and what was possible. This kid from suburbia who had little financial backing, no horsey parents at all, that I was able to achieve what I was able to achieve while working two or three jobs at a time. I remember when I won the Garryowen Trophy; it's like the Melbourne Cup of the equestrian world. The last time I won it I remember riding around the arena with all the accolades, the cheering of this wonderful achievement, and there was this incredible sense of pride for what I'd been able to achieve, but there was also a sense of sadness because I realized that this was the last time I was going to do this. It was time for me to get down off my horse and really champion the cause of animals." She commented on the controversy about vegans and horses, "I truly believe we don't have the right to judge people. To tell them what to do or not. We have to really encourage people to think about what they're doing, because when we judge people or put them in a position where they're feeling shame or being threatened we've lost any lines to communication. The world isn't going to suddenly convert to what I think is right. It's really about encouraging people on their journey. But don't get me wrong. If I had a wish right now it would be for never again for an animal to suffer at the hands of a human. Never again."

At the time we spoke, Edgar's Mission had a population of 446, including chickens, turkeys, ducks, sheep, alpacas, pigs, goats, and cows. Ahern mentioned a common thread – the cost of feeding, and veterinary care. The population is relatively stable; some animals get well enough to be rehomed, and others come in to take their place. "It's one of the saddest and hardest things we do, with rehoming, because I love these animals deeply. But also, I know it's by finding a home for that animal means you can rescue other animals." The FAQ's on the website have voluminous information for those thinking of starting their own sanctuaries. She takes this very seriously. "It's really important that people do look at their resources for starting sanctuaries and making sure – it's a huge commitment. It's a huge commitment. You can't walk away from these animals. You've rescued them. We've been threatened by bush fires twice, once at the old sanctuary, once at the new one. Evacuating and leaving the animals was never, ever an option for me. I've saved them; I'm not going to abandon them again."

Ahern's goal for Edgar's Mission is to get accreditation with the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries, which is already in process. Her greatest accomplishment to date, in her humble words, is "I'd like to say I hope I've inspired kindness in others. If I've done that, I've done well."

She closed our interview by saying, "I always sign off my presentations and talks with people – I really want people to think about one important life-defining thing is the question, and how we answer that question – if we could live happy and healthy lives without harming others, why wouldn't we?" Well said. Well said, indeed.

For information about Edgar's Mission, go to:

<https://www.edgarsmission.org.au/>



THE WRITINGS OF MARC BEKOFF

Marc Bekoff, Ph.D., is professor emeritus of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at the University of Colorado, Boulder, and co-founder with Jane Goodall of Ethologists for the Ethical Treatment of Animals. He has won many awards for his scientific research including the Exemplar Award from the Animal Behavior Society and a Guggenheim Fellowship. In 2005 Marc was presented with The Bank One Faculty Community Service Award for the work he has done with children, senior citizens, and prisoners and in 2009 he was presented with the St. Francis of Assisi Award by the New Zealand SPCA. Marc has published more than 1000 essays (popular, scientific, and book chapters), 31 books, and has edited three encyclopedias.



What the COVID-19 Crisis Is Telling Humanity

Humans are largely responsible for the alarming increase in zoonotic diseases.

Used by kind permission of Marc Bekoff | <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/animal-emotions>

KEY POINTS

- Two physicians with impeccable credentials tell us in an easy-to-read essay what we need to know and do about the ongoing global COVID pandemic.
- Humanity has to recognize the oneness of all life.
- What is good for nonhuman animals and the planet is also good for humanity.

I recently read an excellent essay by [Dr. David Wiebers](#), Emeritus Professor of Neurology and Consultant Emeritus in Neurology and Health Sciences Research/Epidemiology at Mayo Clinic, and [Dr. Valery Feigin](#), Professor of Neurology and Epidemiology and Director of Auckland University of Technology's National Institute for Stroke and Applied Neuroscience, titled "[What the COVID-19 Crisis Is Telling Humanity](#)." It was first published in the prestigious journal *Neuroepidemiology* and reprinted with some additional text and commentaries in *Animal Sentience*.

"What the COVID-19 Crisis Is Telling Humanity" is a very concise and easy-to-read, detailed summary of the ongoing global COVID-19 pandemic, and I'm pleased that Dr. Wiebers could take the time to answer a few questions about this landmark essay.

Why did you and Valery write "What the COVID-19 Crisis Is Telling Humanity"?

The COVID-19 crisis, while creating incredible hardship and destruction, has also provided us with important information,

messages, and opportunities relating to the future of our species and other lifeforms on Earth. We felt compelled to point out the most pertinent of these latter aspects, along with what we thought were the relevant implications not only for the medical community but also for all of society.

How does your essay relate to your backgrounds and general areas of interest?

Valery and I have been trained in medicine, neurology, and epidemiology, and the COVID-19 crisis has impacted all of these areas enormously, along with the broader field of brain health, which is central to all health and includes cognitive, psychological, psychiatric, and neurological aspects. We have also had a longstanding interest in protecting nonhumans as well as humans, and I have always personally viewed my work in animal protection as an extension of the work I do in medicine. The primary goal of the medical profession is to decrease the amount of unnecessary death and suffering in human beings—and the animal protection community simply wishes to extend this same goal to beings other than humans.

Who is your intended audience?

Our intended audience was an all-encompassing one, including the medical and scientific communities; governmental, non-governmental (NGO), corporate, and academic entities; the One Health and One Welfare communities; the animal and environmental protection communities; and broader society, because all are greatly affected by these issues, and all will be needed as part of the solution.

What are some of the topics that are woven into your piece, and what are some of the major messages?

As we begin to find our way through this crisis, it is imperative for us as a species to reflect deeply upon what this and other related human health crises are telling us about our role in these increasingly frequent events and about what we can do to avoid them in the future. Our failure to do so may result in the unwitting extermination of all or a good part of our species from this planet.

The COVID-19 pandemic is the latest example of how human behavior in connection with other lifeforms has brought about an alarming increase in zoonotic diseases in recent decades with the potential to cause massive amounts of societal and economic devastation. The time has come for us to rethink our relationship with all life on this planet—other humans, non-humans, and the Earth. In this context, a One Health and One Welfare approach, rooted in the premise that human, animal, and environmental health and welfare are inextricably linked, becomes imperative to our collective future.



Source: MiroslavaChrienova/Pixabay

Rather than simply attempting to react to crises like COVID-19 after death and destruction are already upon us, we need to have the vision, wisdom, and compassion to address the fundamental underlying causes and act now to mitigate and prevent the numerous disasters that are literally waiting to happen.

The Chinese government should be applauded for taking the much-needed step of banning the trade and consumption of wild animals in China on February 24, 2020. Although shutting down this \$74 billion wildlife farming industry has been criticized by some as economically harmful, such harm pales overwhelmingly in comparison to the vast health and economic threats to China and the world involved in continuing to allow business as usual. Other nations throughout the world should also ban the trade and consumption of wild animals associated with live-animal markets. Such a ban should also apply to the import, export, and internal transport of live wildlife or wildlife meat intended for sale in wildlife markets.

Intensive confinement of animals in factory farm operations should be discontinued worldwide for the sake of animals, humans, and the environment, and we should rapidly evolve to eating other forms of protein that are safer for humans, including a wide range of time-honored, fundamental, plant-derived food sources as well as the more recently developed plant-based meat/dairy and egg alternatives, and even cultured meat (which is produced by culturing animal cells). Additional investment in plant-based agriculture to grow crops to feed humans rather than livestock for human consumption would feed far more people while utilizing far less land and water, allowing for the preservation of vital ecosystems for innumerable species.

The COVID-19 crisis has provided us with a wake-up call, an opportunity—and it is important that we as a species awaken to the imperative for us to change and that we act in ways that are beneficial to all lifeforms. What is good for nonhumans and the Earth is virtually always in the best interests of humans, given the profound interconnectedness of all life. All that we do depends upon abundant plant and animal life as well as clean air and water—and each of us can have a positive impact upon these fundamentals by demonstrating and inspiring enhanced mindfulness, beginning most basically with what we eat and how all of our daily choices and actions may be affecting animals and natural habitats. Ultimately, the survival not only of other lifeforms on this planet but also of ourselves will depend upon humanity's ability to recognize the oneness of all that exists and the importance and deeper significance of compassion for all life.

What are some of your current projects?

We are now focusing a great deal of attention on global brain health and its connection to a One Health approach, the overarching importance of brain health to overall health, and a number of global COVID-19 research efforts.²We are also active in efforts to carry out the suggested actions on behalf of all life that we have laid out in this current paper.

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By Marc Bekoff with David Wiebers.

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2) For more information on the One Health approach click [here](#).

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Lisa Karlan's

Plant Based Recipes

Lisa Karlan is Producer/Host of "Hey Doc! What's New in Plant-Based Medicine" appearing on JaneUnchained News Network most Fridays at 10 am PST/ 1 pm EST at: facebook.com/janevelezmitchell, facebook.com/LKarlan YouTube.com/c/janeunchainednews and twitter.com/LKarlan. She is also a Certified Food for Life Instructor with Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine and the recipe author for *Animal Culture Magazine*.



UNFORGETTABLE CHILI

with a secret ingredient

INGREDIENTS

- 1 large yellow onion, chopped into 1/4-inch cubes – reserve 1/4 of chopped onion for topping
- 3 (15 oz.) cans (1 each) organic black, kidney and great northern white beans (drained and rinsed)
- 1 1/2 jars (26 oz.) organic marinara sauce (no salt added) (Trader Joe's) or similar product
- 1 can (14.5 oz.) organic tomatoes diced & no salt
- 2 Tbsp unsweetened cocoa powder --> secret ingredient
- 3 gentle shakes of chili lime seasoning blend (Trader Joe's)
- 1/2 tsp cayenne pepper (use more to increase spiciness)
- 1 Tbsp Sriracha sauce
- Optional: 12 oz Beef-Less Ground Beef (Trader Joes) or Beyond Meat Beefy Crumbles, or Gardein Ultimate Beefless Ground
- Suggested toppings:
 - 1/4 chopped onion, 1/2 cup toasted pepitas, 1/2 cup chopped fresh parsley

DIRECTIONS

1. Water sauté onions in a hot dry pan, adding 1 Tbsp of water at a time when onions begin to stick and to deglaze the pan until they are translucent and slightly browned.
2. Add beans, marinara sauce, and diced tomatoes and beefless ground meat
3. Add cocoa powder, chili lime, cayenne pepper and sriracha sauce
4. Simmer on medium heat for approximately 12 minutes, or heat in an Instant Pot pressure cooker on high pressure for 5 min.
5. Serve Unforgettable Chili over a bowl of brown rice or a baked potato
6. Suggested toppings: finely chopped onions, toasted pepitas & chopped fresh parsley

Lisa Karlan, Certified Food for Life Instructor with Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine and contributor to JaneUnChained News Network, JNN.

Meet Saucey.



We Believe He Matters.

We are animal rescuers, educators, and advocates.

Why do we do what we do?

Because. They. Matter.



Artist/Activist as a Work in Progress

The Work of Sophie Gamand

BY MARY HOLMES

ALL PHOTOS ©SOPHIE GAMAND

We caught up with Sophie Gamand, artist, photographer, activist, and creator of *Pit Bull Flower Power* to catch up with her on her life during the pandemic and what she sees for the future. Topics included her upcoming move to the West Coast, her work with HSI concerning the South Korean dog meat trade, her shelter dog work, the ongoing influence of *Flower Power*, her concerns about the lack of equity and diversity in the rescue community, and the topic of “fake rescues.”

Like most of us, she was forced to take somewhat of a hiatus during the pandemic. Referring to it, she stated she felt she was “going through a transformative phase in her life as an artist and an advocate.” Nonetheless, she commented it wasn’t that drastic a change for her, being in lockdown. “It’s been great. Honestly, I feel bad – the beginning, when everybody was freaking out, I realized I’ve always lived in quarantine because I’m an introvert. I would always be home alone, slightly depressed, eating too much. Wait, this is not normal? This has been my life for the past ten years. What’s the problem? I understood that people were freaking out, but at the same time I was like it held up a mirror for me. It’s so unhealthy. I’ve lived like this my entire life.”

Her work with Humane Society International was slowed considerably by the pandemic also, but she had some encouraging news. “I would say the biggest project I’m working on now is with the South Korea dog meat trade. I’m working with HSI – Humane Society International. They have

an amazing program where they work with dog meat farmers in South Korea and they help them transition to humane businesses like flowers, vegetables, construction work, things that do not involve animals.” The concept is to work with the farmers, transition them to other businesses, close down the dog meat farms, and get the dogs adopted out in South Korea.

According to Gamand, young South Koreans do not want to farm dogs. “Local advocates and activists have done amazing work, and the Humane Society too. They hope that in the next few years they’re going to be able to put an end to it, and there are still thousands and thousands of dog meat farms. (Ed Note: As of November of 2020, according to the *Washington Post*, there are still some 4,000 dog meat farms in South Korea, housing something like 1.5 million dogs.) “HSI wants to support a foster and adoption culture in South Korea. They basically asked me if I would be open to a project that is similar to *Flower Power*, the idea being to rebrand dog meat dogs, show them as pets, promote them as adoptable, and encourage the culture of adoption in South Korea.”

She added, “We started the talks a couple of years ago. But this year, I’ve basically been focusing on that, and every month I travel to a city, and photograph some of the dogs that were rescued from the farms through HSI and were adopted.



Portrait of 2 inquisitive shelter puppies, Shelter Dogs Series.



Aria, Pit Bull Flower Power
Aria was abandoned at a New York City shelter when her owner moved. She was pulled by a smaller shelter. Despite being a "pocket pit" (on the smaller side) and very sweet with everyone, Aria waited 4 months before her adopters found her, thanks to her portrait. The shelter was convinced that Aria had suffered from "black dog syndrome" and that her stay with them had been that long only due to her fur color. Black and brindle dogs do tend to be adopted last.

I photograph them wearing things that I've made. It's a little different from *Flower Power*, but it's in the same family." Are South Koreans really going to adopt dog meat dogs? Gamand responded, "I think the younger generation is open to it. The South Korean President adopted a dog from a shelter." (Ed. Note: According to BBC News online [BBC News from Elsewhere 27 July 2017](#), President Moon Jae-in made good on one of his election promises by adopting a dog from an animal sanctuary.)

Gamand feels strongly about the human-animal connection. "I'm a huge advocate for supporting the humans. If we don't help the humans, we can't save the animals. It goes hand-in-hand, right? I like this project; it kept me busy and looking towards the future a little bit, and I've been photographing a lot of dogs. Those farms have purebred dogs, like Golden Retrievers and Boston Terriers and Huskies, all the way to jindos and tosas, which are the two main meat breeds. The series will portray a lot of different

breeds, and I'm super excited about it."

Another subject on which she feels passionate is what she describes as a lack of equity and diversity in the rescue community. "Observing my life, observing the system in which I live – for me the rescue community is such a huge part of my life. How does the rescue community intersect with the system of oppression against minorities and people of color? How does the work of the rescue community intersect with that system, and are there areas where we can improve? For example – access to adoptions, adoption fees. I can understand a rescue group needs to charge a fee for adoption, but I think it also excludes people that are underprivileged from adopting, and that raises a question for me. Why do we feel like people who are underprivileged should not have access to pets? Of course, it's because pets are expensive; I understand the economics behind this. But from the inclusion perspective, it bothers me. I wonder how we can improve



Flower, Pit Bull Flower Power A1199475 was a resident at a high intake shelter in California. He was euthanized after our shoot, before I had a chance to network him. I named him Flower, because no dog should die unnamed.

this – to give better access to vet care, and resources to underserved communities. Just because you are economically challenged doesn't mean you don't deserve to have a dog that loves you, and you love in return. Actually, you might even need a dog more than anybody else."

//

I would say the biggest project I'm working on now is with the South Korea dog meat trade. I'm working with HSI — Humane Society International.

//

We've made substantial progress in this country in banning the sale of "bred" dogs and cats in pet stores. Many localities only allow

animals from rescue facilities to be adopted from pet stores. Gamand believes, as do many others, that though these city ordinances are laudable, they are prone to loopholes. Herein lies the problem of "fake rescues." Some breeders, particularly puppy mills, fraudulently register as rescue groups, and thus still are able to "adopt" dogs out for a fee from pet stores. Gamand is confident we can eliminate these loopholes going forward; the public needs to be educated further.

Flower Power is still a big part of Gamand's life. "You know, I haven't been able to let go of the project, but I did slow down the past couple of years and it's been great. I think I was reaching my limit in terms of building crowns and traveling. It was a lot. Since the book came out, I slowed down on the project, and now I'm actually excited to do a little bit more maybe. As I'm moving West, I'm going to do a month-long road trip there, and I want to stop in shelters. I think I'm going to bring crowns. It's weird because as an artist I guess I was ready to move on, and I really needed to change. But I also recognize that the project is still going

When Harry Met Minnie

BY MARTHA TEICHNER

Who would benefit from reading this book? Anyone who has ever had an ongoing relationship with any member of the non-human species. On the surface, it's the story of a woman with a bull terrier who takes in the bull terrier of a near-stranger who is dying from cancer due to her living in close proximity to Ground Zero before and after 911. As if that isn't enough, it's much *more* than that.

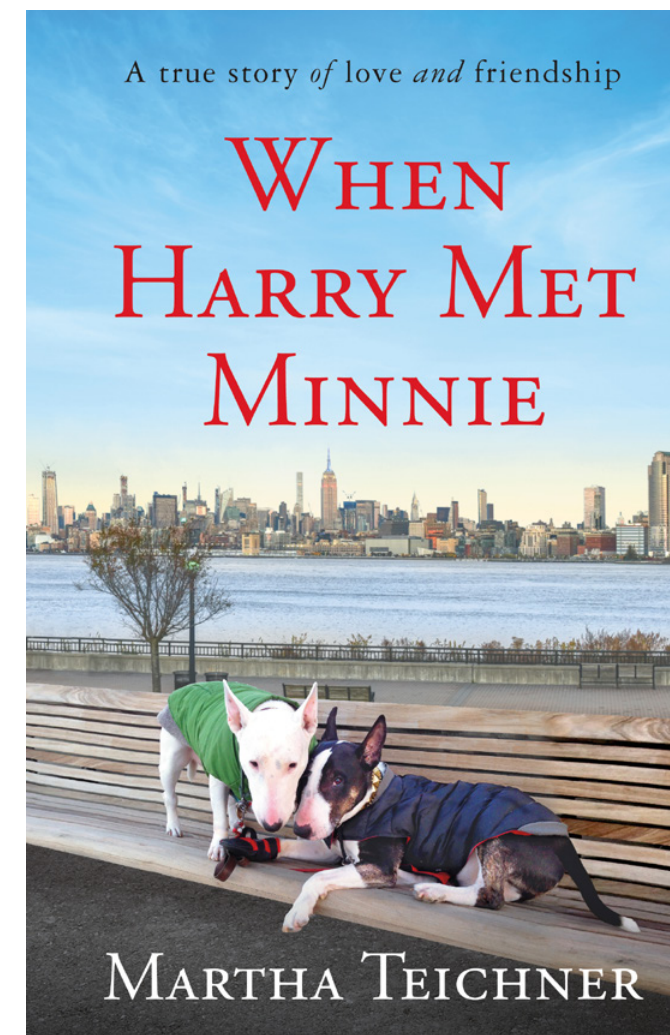
What first brought this book to my attention was the title, as I am a big fan of the movie *When Harry Met Sally*. Martha Teichner, the author, has been a CBS correspondent since 1977, and part of the *CBS Sunday Morning* show since 1993. She earned her chops as a war correspondent, and has years of writing experience, but this is her first book. She is a storyteller with few equals.

The setting couldn't be better – Manhattan, a dog lover's paradise. If you've ever been to the City, and visited Central Park, dogs abound; dogs of all shapes and sizes and colors. New Yorkers love their dogs. It isn't easy to live with a dog in New York; most New Yorkers don't have convenient back yards. In fact, many New Yorkers have to schlep their dogs down numerous flights of stairs, or take lengthy elevator rides, just to get their dogs out of the building for exercise and toilet requirements. And the weather may not always be to your liking. Nonetheless, most times when you see New Yorkers out in the streets or in the parks with their canine companions they have smiles on their faces, often in conversation with others with their own dogs in tow. On many occasions the humans see dogs they know and call them by name while the humans remain anonymous. My theory about New Yorkers abundant attachment to their canines is – where else, in what urban maelstrom, would it be more important to keep in touch with nature, than the Big Apple?

It was just such an encounter that introduced Martha and Minnie, by proxy, to Carol Fertig and Harry. One Saturday morning, she ran into Stephen and his dog at the Chelsea Farmers Market. In days past, Martha used to walk her bull terriers at Chelsea Pier; Stephen walked his dog there as well. The two of them used to chat when they ran into each other. Several years had passed when they encountered each other at the Market. Stephen asked about her dogs; one of them had passed since they last met. Without much further ado, Stephen told her he had a friend Carol, who was dying of liver cancer. Carol's bull terrier was 11 ½. Would Martha consider taking him in?

Stephen introduced Martha and Carol via email. Martha was, naturally, reluctant to even think about taking in a stranger's dog. Nevertheless, the two agreed to meet. Over the course of the next several months, Carol and Harry won over Martha and Minnie. They arranged play dates for the dogs, who got on well. And so did Carol and Martha. The story unfolds with the four of them becoming totally entwined in each other's lives. Carol and Martha shared much in common. Harry and Minnie became fast friends.

The story unfolds layer by layer; the humans are becoming



more comfortable about Harry's upcoming adoption. Teichner shares the joys of human friendship and love, and her growing affection and love for Harry, interspersed with oh, so New York vignettes. The book is a treasure.

The day comes too soon – Harry moves in with Martha and Minnie when Carol becomes too ill to take care of him. The saga continues until sadly, Carol loses her fight with her cancer. But the story doesn't end there. It's up to you to read the book to its conclusion.

In summary, if you love New York and New Yorkers, you'll love *When Harry Met Minnie*.

And if you love dogs, you'll read it from cover to cover, in one sitting, and recommend it to all your friends. Buy it at: https://www.amazon.com/When-Harry-Met-Minnie-Friendship-ebook/dp/B084M1WTQC/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=when+har-ry+met+minnie&qid=1623465394&s=books&sr=1-1



Sasha Roo, Shelter Dogs Series. *Sasha Roo was pulled from the city shelter by a small rescue. She waited 4 months for a home. Ultimately, her foster family decided they didn't want to give her up.*

strong and that people really rely on it, like people in the rescue community and people's families. I think people saw *Flower Power* as such a powerful tool. It's done a lot of change for the pit bull advocacy community. I don't think I can stop and let it go yet."

Gamand is in the process of moving to Los Angeles. The road trip is planned for the month of June; in July she will set up housekeeping somewhere in the city. Asked what was next on her agenda, she was somewhat vague. "Honestly, I don't really know how things look like. There's a project that I've been dying to work on for years and years and years. I feel like each time I talk about it I'm jinxing it. I've been wanting to work with the dog prison programs out in California – the Pawsitive Change program for example, where they basically pull from shelters, and then the dogs are trained by the inmates in maximum security prisons. I love, love those programs. I love what it means, what it does, and I would love to get involved.

Now that we're moving out West, I'm hoping that I can make that happen. We shall see. It's very complicated. Lots of logistics. I want a bigger space than I had in New York, and I want to make art. Honestly, I'm dying to make more art. I feel like I've been in a rut; I haven't been able to really do the work I've been wanting to do in a long time so I'm hoping to take some time, find a home somewhere, cocoon a little bit, and then make some art." *Animal Culture* looks forward to catching up again with the very active Sophie Gamand (right).



For more about Sophie Gamand, go to: sophiegamand.com



We Are All Connected

By Dr. Paul Ramos BS BVSc MVSc MRCVS

Paul is a wildlife veterinarian who has lived and worked across the world, looking after all sorts of creatures from critically endangered stick insects to rescued Asian elephants. After receiving a Zoology degree, he put on a backpack to travel the world for a year. . . 20 years ago. Along the way Paul became a vet, then a wildlife vet, and now considers himself a passionate storyteller with one core message: we are all connected.

Paul received his Vet and Master's degree from the University of Melbourne and after a few of years in practice went on to complete a residency in zoo medicine at the Royal Melbourne Zoo/Zoos Victoria in Australia. He has worked as a vet in both non-profit and private sectors with work ranging from clinical practice, governmental & hospital ethics committees, animal rescue, conservation and field research.

In 2018 Paul discovered a passion for storytelling and redefined his role in how he was going to help bring about change. Since then he has co-created an award-winning documentary film, is currently a vet on Nat Geo Wild's "Jungle Animal Rescue" / "Jungle Heroes" and is one of the top vets on the app TikTok (@vetpaulramos).

Maldives Sea Turtle Rescue

ALL PHOTOS © PAUL RAMOS

"Minnie I've got a turtle that needs help; I'm coming your way," the voice on the radio said just as we were about to wrap up morning duties at the Marine Turtle Rescue Centre of the Olive Ridley Project. Resident vet Dr. Minnie is leading the team of volunteers this April morning in this tropical Maldivian environment, the elements ensuring that there is no shortage of cleaning, fixing and more cleaning. We are all glad for a change of activity.

Barefoot and ready, we quickly made our way to the jetty just in time to see the boat come into view. Abbas, the Maldivian guide and voice over the radio, had spotted a large Olive Ridley sea turtle floating in the ocean, caught up in a floating, tangled mess of fishing line and nets.

We jumped onboard, cut the thick ropes from his massive flippers, and rushed him to the hospital. The large male turtle was bleeding from the tightening netting that had been his floating prison, cutting into him and slowly constricting his front flippers – so much so that they were now grinding on open bone. The turtle likely had been trapped floating in the open sea for several weeks. Another week or two and they would have been amputated, sealing his fate.

We named him Abba after his rescuer, and it was obvious that he would need help if he was ever going to go back to the sea. For the first week, Abba didn't eat. But after surgery, IV fluids, pain relief, antibiotics and careful wound care he soon began swimming and even diving down – a promising sign. After all, many turtles entangled in such 'ghost nets' have buoyancy problems due to air trapped under their shell, the result of injuries like torn lungs from the struggle to free themselves.

By week three Abba had gained back his strength, leaving us at times a tiny bit frustrated (at bandage changes!) but mostly really delighted to see him act quite wild. His wounds were also on the mend. The once exposed bones were covered with healing tissue. It seemed he was going to get to keep his flippers.

When it was his time, Abba was released from the beach. He was too big and too wild to put into a container on a boat. Once he got a whiff of that sea water there was no stopping him, as he furiously rowed towards the water, finally disappearing under the waves. Despite what was probably the first time being on land since his birthday as a hatchling some 30-100 years ago (we can only guess the age of this old mariner!), he just knew. It was time to go Home. We all hoped that Abba would at last make his way back to the coasts of India, where he was destined to breed and produce many more of his endangered kind.

Abba's story is unique: he was one of the lucky ones. Abandoned or discarded fishing gear, or "ghost nets," is responsible for the killing of millions of marine animals every year. This is a problem that is simultaneously surprisingly extensive and generally unknown – including to myself. I went to the Maldives as a volunteer vet to learn more about turtle medicine but returned with a much greater appreciation for how our activities can have real impact in other parts of the world, now and far into the future. More on ghost nets and ocean plastics in another article...

Fortunately, there are some out there who can help some of these impacted animals. Since 2013 the Olive Ridley Project has physically removed over 5 tons of ghost gear from the Indian

Ocean, worked with fisheries to try and prevent these nets from entering the Indian ocean (they don't even occur in the Maldives – more on this another time!) and since 2017 have treated 150 sea turtles in a purpose-built Marine Turtle Rescue

Centre. They are doing great work – to learn more about sea turtle conservation visit www.oliveridleyproject.org. You can also see Abba's rescue on a viral video seen over 1.8 million times at my TikTok channel @vetpaulramos.



1. Dr. Minnie examining Abba as he arrives at the clinic. 2. Dr. Minnie and Vet Dr. Paul Ramos giving Abba IV fluids. 3. Intern Zein going through the ghost netting. 4. Bones of animals found in the ghost netting.

The COURAGE and CONSCIOUSNESS

of Jane O'Hara

BY MARY HOLMES
ALL PHOTOS ©JANE O'HARA | ALL CAPTIONS BY THE ARTIST

Jane O'Hara is primarily a painter and a curator. O'Hara is a *Courage of Conscience Award* honoree from the Peace Abbey – which honors individuals and organizations that have distinguished themselves through humanitarian causes, peace and social justice activism. Her website states, "O'Hara's work, both as painter, and as curator of *Beasts of Burden*, is centered on our complex relationship with animals. She uses surrealism and creates a narrative to point out how the animal condition poses a duality. Intrigued and disturbed by how our insensitivity to animals raised in captivity is at odds with the casting of human traits on our pampered pets, her paintings create an unnatural stage for the animals' situation to point out people's tendency to impose their own agenda."

Her Artist Statement, also on her website, was striking in that she referred to an epiphany she had about animals and their place in this world. In part, "Many years ago I was happily doing paintings of the animals I've always loved. Then I came across the Byzantium exhibit at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art. Those saints had sacrificed their lives to God, in every screen, every painted icon. But what about animals, I wondered. To what higher powers have they sacrificed their lives? ... From that point on I have also used my artwork to give voice to those not so lucky as our pampered animal companions and protected creatures of the suburbs."

O'Hara, for all her accomplishments, is quite unpretentious. When asked about the *Courage of Conscience Award*, she said she had been in touch with Peace Abbey via email, to suggest someone she felt was deserving of the award. When she received a response, she found out they had chosen her. She felt both surprised and humbled she'd been chosen, considering some of the past recipients. O'Hara added, "But I also just was very excited to be able to represent animals, you know, the non-human animals. . . it's just wonderful to be able to bring animals to the forefront, and visual arts, to stand next to the human rights activists and humanitarians."

Some artists we've spoken with do occasional curating; O'Hara self-identifies as a painter/curator. It appears she finds curating as

fulfilling as creating art. "When I first curated, I came up with the idea for the *Beasts of Burden* exhibition. I've been feeling there's so many angles and approaches I would love to do with my artwork. As you can see, when you look at my artwork, I do have a variety of ways that I approach the subject matter, but I just got this idea that there's other artists and they're going to do it in uniquely different ways from myself and I love that. It's very exciting to see what ways different artists have for sharing their visions and their message. It's an opportunity to do that and I think together collectively it gives a very comprehensive and profound way of reaching that goal."

She talked about the dichotomy in the ways we view animals. "I find it intriguing and disturbing how we can put our animal companion friends or wild animals, just seeing them romanticized in a special way. At the same time, we turn a blind eye to what goes on behind closed doors with animals in entertainment, in the food industry, in science, and hunting, and all the other things. I play with that idea quite a bit with different paintings I do." Her *State of the Union* series is a good example. "I'm working on a series called *State of the Union*; I have a show lined up at the New Bedford Art Museum in 2023. I'm doing every state, where in the background I have the state flag and the state animal and images that the state would like to project about their state. And in the bubbles, I have examples of things that go on with animals in that state that they should not be proud of." She pondered about doing a traveling exhibition with this show and whether states would want to showcase their states depicted in such a manner. These paintings all look like "kitschy postcards" by design.

O'Hara's answer to the question about when she developed a compassion for animals was surprising. She talked about her brother. "My brother, who's a year younger than I, is developmentally disabled. So he doesn't speak, he never spoke. I always had a dog, and so I sort of developed this ability and appreciation of communicating without words. As my brother was



Sacrifice, from Animal Tales: Degrees of Sentience, 2010, 60" x 14" (each panel), metal leaf and oil on wood.

COMPASSION ARTS FESTIVAL

Compassion Arts Festival is a virtual arts festival for cultivating a deeper understanding, respect and compassion for the life we share the planet with. Each year, *Compassion Arts Festival* selects an artist for its annual *Artists for Ahimsa Award*, to honor and highlight individuals using their artistry in a three-fold mission in

work that: inspires compassion for animals, helps animals directly, and provides a platform for advocacy for others.

Past honorees include filmmaker Allison Argo of *Argo Films* and *The Last Pig*, and artist advocate Cyrus Mejia, co-founder of Best Friends Animal Society and Ravens Heart Gallery.



The Last Picture, 2019, 16" x 20," acrylic on wood. "My painting was awarded to Jo-Anne McArthur by Compassion Arts in 2019 for her tough work going behind the scenes to record the misery animals endure in agribusiness, fashion, and entertainment with her Nikon D4s. Here in *The Last Picture*, all animals run free at last." Jane O'Hara



THE COMPLEX RELATIONSHIP

we have with animals is sometimes funny—but mostly disturbing. We cherish our animal companions but do our best to ignore the invisible animals used in food, entertainment, clothing and science. We've been deluded into thinking there are degrees of sentience. I create painted worlds to bring into focus the completely unequal experiences that animals have.

(Above) *New Order*, from *Animal Tales: Degrees of Sentience*, 2020, 40" x 38," acrylic on canvas.

(Left) *Lion King*, from *Animal Tales: Degrees of Sentience*, 2018, 12" x 16," acrylic on board.

I AM INTERESTED

in opening hearts and I try to create narratives that aim to separate our thinking, certain opinions about what animals are all about.

taken away to an institution when I was six and he was five, I think that probably informed some of my feelings about having to speak for those that can't speak for themselves." She agreed that for many people, her brother was an Other, as most humans assess non-humans, adding, "I've come to realize it's actually important for my story of who I am, and how I developed. I have gratitude towards him, although he would not know it for that, because it was a unique relationship."

Another surprise came when she was asked what her proudest accomplishment was. "I would say becoming vegan is my proudest accomplishment. I've been learning a lot about animals and animal rights and what goes on before I became vegan, but becoming vegan was so powerful, much more than I ever could have imagined in that it unlocked a lot of defenses I had in place before I became vegan, trying to defend my lifestyle even if it was just on a subconscious level. So there's a freedom that came with it and to really be a compassionate someone who lives alongside animals and not feel like I'm living a lie."

Unlike many we have interviewed for this feature, O'Hara does not consider herself a political artist. "I guess I don't open with that. I am interested in opening hearts and I try to create narratives that aim to separate our thinking, certain opinions about what animals are all about. I get nervous about labeling, I guess. I consider myself kind of a bridge artist. I want to bridge across to those that are not already believers. I didn't feel like calling myself a political artist or an animal activist because it can be a label that makes life easy for people to, 'Nah, that's not for me.'"

Her future goals, besides completing and exhibiting *State of the Union*, include doing more presentations about her work, like the one she did for Compassion Arts; more virtual art shows; and maybe a *Beasts of Burden* redux. The pandemic's silver lining is that it made her think more about virtual art and art shows. "I'm interested in kind of digging into that idea of virtual presence and obviously, I'll have a website, but just different ways put things together in a way that it's going to reach people. I think the biggest thing is – I want to reach all types of people, not just preach to the choir. I want to do that through art, through various art institutions, and museums."

O'Hara is hopeful for the animals and our planet, and the growth of veganism. "I just pray that what seems to be happening in opening of eyes and hearts as to what goes on with animals is going to make a big change of direction. A sea shift change where

people realize that their taste buds aren't more important than an animal's life or that watching animals in captivity or trained to do tricks isn't fun. That animal testing is big business. It's not only unnecessary but it's not even reliable. And basically that animals are not ours to use, that they have their own lives and their own interests, so that is my goal. My way of contributing is to try and offer alternative ways of seeing animals. . . . I think the whole vegan movement has definitely made leaps and bounds. I can't even believe it. There's hardly a restaurant that you can go to that, doesn't offer some vegan meat or something."

Again she comments on the power we have when we collaborate, even mentioning the good *Animal Culture Magazine* does disseminating the information we do. "It's such a collaborative world. When we're trying to speak for the voiceless, there's just a lot of ways up the mountain and I just I love all of the sharing that goes on; it's a very generous spirit between all the different kind of ways up the mountain and there's a lot of them."

For more on Jane O'Hara, visit her website at: <https://www.janeohara.com/>



New Dawn, 2018, 12" x 16," acrylic on wood. 2018 Compassion Arts' Ahimsa Award for Emmy Award-winning filmmaker, Allison Argo, for her deeply moving documentary, *The Last Pig*, and her lifelong career devoted to advocating for animals through numerous films as a writer director and filmmaker.

IN THE NEWS

BY MARY HOLMES

Canis lupus, informally known as gray wolves, are under attack, specifically in the states of Montana, Wyoming, and Idaho.

Gray wolves were once found throughout most of the North American continent. They served an important purpose in the ecosystem by keeping populations of deer and other herbivores in check. By the 30s, they had been hunted and trapped to the point of extinction in the U.S. When the Endangered Species Act was passed in 1973, gray wolves were one of the first species to be listed for protection.

According to a press release made by the Center for Biological Diversity on October 29th last year, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife service, that day, finalized a rule that removed protection from all gray wolves in the lower 48 states, except for a small population of Mexican gray wolves in Arizona and New Mexico. This decision was made based on evidence that the gray wolf population in this country was recovering, and despite the fact that 1.8 million Americans submitted comments opposing the delisting. It should also be noted that the wolves are still "functionally extinct in the vast majority of their former range across the continental United States."

Those in favor of the delisting are preponderantly hunters, farmers, and ranchers. Hunters feared reduction of deer and elk populations. The farmers and ranchers cite their losses of livestock being killed by these predators. But, in the most recent figures provided by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, in 2014, the percentage of sheep killed in Montana, Wyoming, and Idaho combined was .00014, or .014 percent, and the percentage of cattle was .000022, or .002 percent, hardly what one could consider a decimation of the herds. Some have commented that, rather than a motivation to control predators, what's occurring sounds more like revenge.

The last week of February, hunters in Wisconsin killed at least 216 wolves in *less than 60 hours*. "These animals were killed using packs of dogs, snares, and leg-hold traps. It was a race to kill these animals in the most cruel ways," according to Kitty Block of HSUS. The state of Idaho, announced in May, that new legislation signed by Governor Brad Little will "allow professional hunters and trappers to use *helicopters*,

snowmobiles, night vision equipment, snares and other means" to kill roughly 90% of the state's wolves, reducing the population from some 1,500 to 150.

Meanwhile, Vox carried this story, "Late this winter, Greg Gianforte, Montana's recently elected Republican governor, trapped and shot a male wolf just outside the boundary of Yellowstone National Park at a private ranch owned by his pal Robert E. Smith, a director of the conservative Sinclair Broadcasting Group (a former campaign donor).

"Hunting wolves is legal in Montana, and Gianforte later told the Helena Independent Record that he'd been after one for five years. 'I put a lot of time in over many, many years and not every sportsman is fortunate to ultimately harvest a wolf,' said Gianforte, who added that he planned to mount it on his wall.

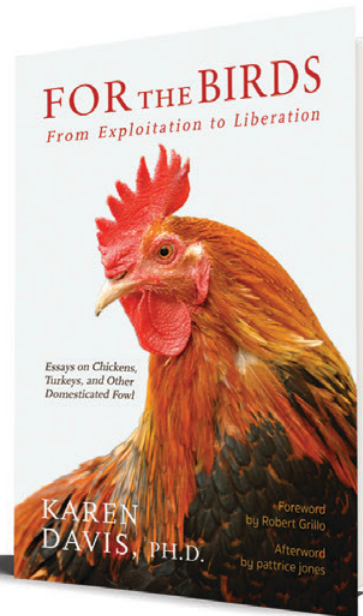
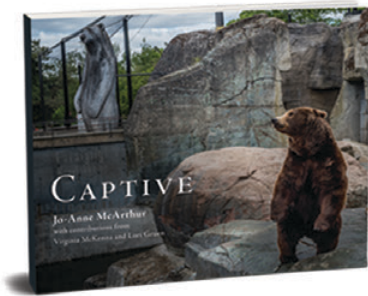
"Not everyone who initially knew about the governor's trophy was impressed, apparently. In the weeks after the hunt, someone tipped off a reporter with the Mountain West News Bureau that not only had the governor killed one of the 94 wolves that frequent Yellowstone, but he'd also failed to comply with a state regulation requiring hunters take a wolf-trapping course before catching an animal."

Wolves are important to the landscape, so much so that the government reintroduced several packs into Yellowstone in 1995, which brought about an encouraging transformation of the ecosystem in the Park. "Sedentary elk populations moved away from the riverside allowing vegetation to regrow and overgrazed aspen to regenerate. Beavers then moved back into healthy streams and waterways while bird populations increased." All this occurred because of the presence of the wolves.

The bottom line is, the scientific data unequivocally shows that the delisting of *canis lupus* from the endangered species list is premature. In 1962, Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* was published, demonstrating the interdependency of the ecosystem, and the importance of the balance of nature. Almost 60 years later, we are decimating the U.S. gray wolf population, and all the science points to the foolhardy nature of our behavior. Do what you can to protect this species.



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