

ARFF news

for the Florida animal advocate

Spring 2009

On March 14, 2009, the Animal Rights Foundation of Florida celebrated its 20th Anniversary. The event featured such celebrities as Bob Barker and Pamela Anderson, and a congratulatory video appearance by Paul McCartney (visit www.arff.org to view the video). At the event, ARFF honored U.S. Congressman Robert Wexler, State Senator Nan Rich, former Hollywood City Commissioner Cathleen Anderson and Nicki E. Grossman, President of the Greater Fort Lauderdale Convention and Visitors Bureau, for their efforts to help animals.

The anniversary gala was an opportunity for ARFF to pause and reflect upon the accomplishments of the last twenty years. It is hard to believe that so much time has passed! ARFF extends its gratitude to all who have contributed to our past accomplishments and who continue to embrace compassion every day.

The Gala was covered by local media such as the Miami Herald and Sun-Sentinel, as well as the national entertainment news television show Extra. Photos from the Gala appeared in newspapers around the world, including England's The Sun and Daily Mirror tabloids, the Swiss daily Blick and German newspaper Bild.

Thank you to everyone who joined us to ring-in our twenty-year anniversary! But there is still so much more work to be done. We look forward to many more years of speaking up on behalf of animals in Florida and throughout the nation.

Nanci Alexander
President



State Sen. Nan Rich



Rep. Robert Wexler



Cathleen Anderson



Nicki E. Grossman

Embrace Compassion

ARFF's 20th Anniversary Gala



ARFF President Nanci Alexander and Humanitarian Award recipient Cathleen Anderson.



Radio personality Don Anthony, Ingrid Newkirk, President of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals and Dr. Neal Barnard, President of Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine.



Bob Barker with Gala co-chair Coleen Darni-Sotiré



ARFF staff Amanda Burk, Nick Atwood, James Wildman and Melissa Gates present a painting by Peter Max, a surprise gift to ARFF President Nanci Alexander.



Recipients of Activist Awards (left to right): Don Anthony, Colleen Ferro, Jim Dunn, Marla Gross, Red Dunn, Janine Fuentes, Shawn Raval, Nan Vollbracht, Bryan Wilson, Alanna Murphy, Brittany Murphy, Jeremy Shock. Award recipients not present: Brad King and Carla Wilson.



Gala co-chair Philip Christodoulou

Promoting respect and compassion for animals in Florida has been the mission of the Animal Rights Foundation of Florida (ARFF) since 1989.

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Animal Protection Legislation in Florida

In 2009 the Florida Legislature is considering several important animal protection issues. Please contact your state senator and state representative and ask that they take the pro-animal positions outlined below for the following bills. Visit www.votesmart.org to find your elected officials (*requires 9-digit ZIP Code*).

HB 273 and S 448 — Protect animals from sexual predation

In recent years, there have been several cases of sexual abuse of animals in Florida. Shockingly, bestiality has not yet been expressly outlawed in Florida. With your help, this disturbing activity will be outlawed in 2009. House Bill 273, introduced by Representative William Snyder, and Senate Bill 448, introduced by Senator Nan Rich, would prohibit sexual contact with animals. Please contact your state senator and state representative and urge them to support this important bill.

HB 189 and S 922 — Dangerous Dogs

Legislation has been introduced to reverse Florida's prohibition on breed-specific regulations. Currently, Florida law bans breed discrimination. Under House Bill 189 and Senate Bill 922, local governments would be allowed to enact regulations to ban the possession of Pit Bulls and any number of other dog breeds. Breed specific regulations do not address the real issues behind so-called "dangerous dogs," and would instead penalize entire breeds of dogs indiscriminately. Please write or call your state legislators and ask them to oppose this ill-conceived legislation.

HB 1437 and S 2594 — Greyhound Racing Permitholders

House Bill 1437 and Senate Bill 2594 would create a "light at the end of the tunnel" for racing greyhounds in Florida. If enacted, the legislation would create a date after which no new greyhound racing permits would be issued. The legislation would also allow current permitholders to operate cardrooms and slot machines without also running greyhounds (current regulations require a minimum number of live races). Several dog track owners are believed to want to end live racing and focus on more-profitable slots. Contact your state senator and state representative and encourage them to support this bill.

HB 1215 and S 2316 — Relating to Pari-mutuel Facilities

Florida's Division of Pari-Mutuel Wagering is supposed to ensure the humane treatment of animals at dog and horse tracks, but under current law the division is unable to conduct inspections of track facilities without the consent of the owners of the racing animals. House Bill 1215 and Senate Bill 2316 would address this problem by granting authority to the division to inspect any area at a facility where racing animals are housed. Contact your state representative and senator and ask them to support this common-sense bill.

ARFF's Humane Education program in 2008

In honor of 20 years of humane education, ARFF has taken time to reflect on its accomplishments in reaching thousands of youths last year. During the summer months, ARFF reached over 3,000 kids. Every weekday from the beginning of June to the middle of August, James Wildman, ARFF's Humane Educator, attended camps throughout South Florida. From Miami to Jupiter, ARFF's humane education presentations reached campers encouraging a sense of personal responsibility toward animals and the planet.

"The discussion made an impact on my life because it showed me how animals are not much different than us."
— student, Hollywood Hills High School

Campers were exposed to many animal-related issues that affect them and their communities. Topics included the responsibilities of caring for a cat or dog, and the benefits of adopting a plant-based diet. Campers were not the only ones affected by the presentations; counselors and staff often approached James after the presentation to inquire for more information and ways in which they could help. Compassion for animals is not limited to a particular generation; it crosses age, gender, race and religion, for compassion is the heart of humanity.

Successes of summer led to the establishment of two youth animal rights clubs! The Boys & Girls Clubs of Hollywood and Davie have each established an Animal Rights Club facilitated by ARFF's humane educator. Meetings are biweekly and the topics include cat and dog overpopulation, spay and neuter, dog training, wildlife conservation, environmental education and veganism. Within the past few months the clubs have created cat beds for the four-legged residents at the Humane Society of Broward County, participated in the "Walk 4 Animals," and designed posters encouraging companion animal adoption that have been displayed throughout the buildings to inspire non-members to make compassionate choices for animals.

If you know of a school or community organization who may be interested in a presentation, or would like more information about ARFF's Humane Education program, please contact James at (954) 727-2733 ext. 205 or james@arff.org.

Seeking Vegans Interested In Volunteer Outreach

Please join ARFF in distributing information about the cruelty of the meat industry, as well as facts about the advantages of a vegan diet. We leaflet with Why Vegans and a plethora of other educational literature, and show the informative video Meet Your Meat, which covers the horror that is factory farming. Meat, dairy & eggs are cruel, unhealthy and are collectively destroying the planet. Come and help us tell some people about it!

Miami

Every Saturday, 7:00pm to 11:00pm

Location: Corner of Lincoln Road and Meridian Avenue (in front of ArtCenter/South Florida), Miami Beach

ARFF needs reliable vegan volunteers to help with this important outreach. Thousands of pedestrians pass our table each Saturday and witness the horrid truth of factory farming. We have a great opportunity to educate people about animals in the food industry through this outreach, and to discuss how the vegan diet helps lessen suffering in the world. Please contact ARFF (954-727-2733, arff@arff.org) to sign-up for one Saturday or a succession of Saturdays on a rolling schedule. We need you!

West Palm Beach

SunFest music festival

Friday, May 1, 2009, beginning at 7:00pm

Location: downtown West Palm Beach

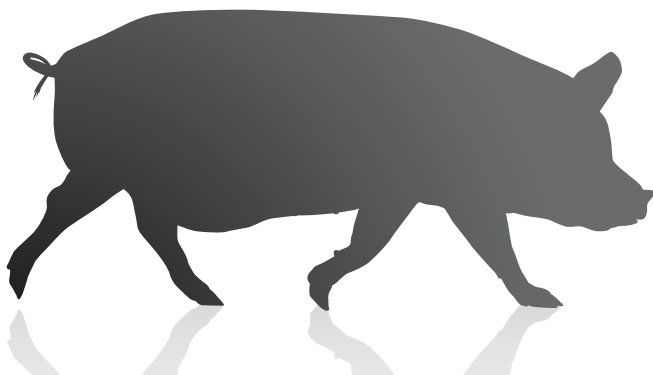
Orlando

Central Florida Earth Day

Saturday, May 2, from 10:00am to 6:00pm

Location: Lake Eola Park, downtown Orlando

ARFF is looking for knowledgeable activists to leaflet at Earth Day and other public events in central Florida throughout the summer months. Contact ARFFCentralFL@arff.org to get involved!



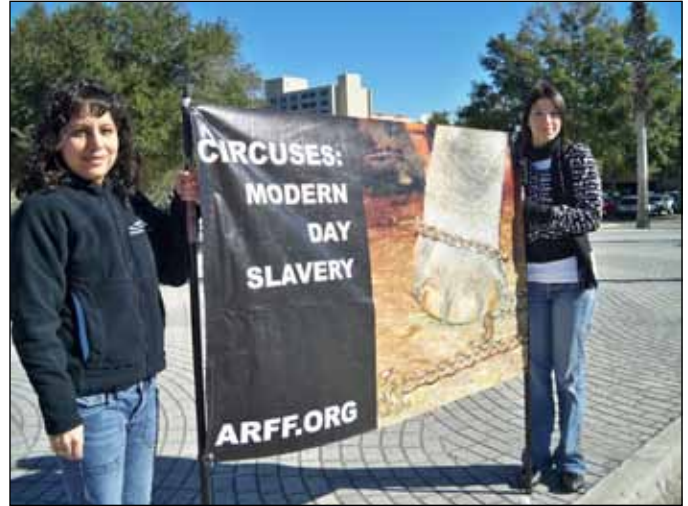
Ringling Bros. Circus: There is Hope for an End

The Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus has three shows that travel Florida throughout the winter months. ARFF activists reached out to thousands of circus attendees across Florida with a plea to boycott the circus, offering informational leaflets for adults and factual activity pages for children. Speaking to people one-on-one regarding Ringling's dire history of animal abuse, including their current trial on charges of elephant abuse, ARFF was able to help many see the sad truth of circus life for the animals trapped in the industry.

ARFF kicked off the Ringling Bros. protests in West Palm Beach. ARFF heard from an inside source that the venue had taken notice of the show's drastically low attendance. Volunteers were able to distribute a leaflet to nearly every patron of the show.

During Ringling's biggest stop in Florida, ARFF activists lined the sidewalk outside of the American Airlines Arena in busy downtown Miami. Circus attendees were encouraged to stop at ARFF's table, featuring video footage of undercover circus training, rampages and other incidents and the miserable conditions circus animals are forced into.

Each year in Orlando, ARFF Coordinators Carla and Bryan Wilson begin demos on opening night with a graveyard scene and a silent vigil in memory of the animals lost to Ringling's heartless antics. This year Carla and Bryan were encouraged by the incredibly positive feedback to their efforts, with many circus attendees approaching them first with questions about Ringling's abuse.



Keeping the Animal Circus Protesting Rolling

Following ARFF's Ringling Bros. protests, ARFF fired off letters to each host venue requesting that they implement cruelty-free alternatives in place of all animal circuses. Having been in contact with several animal-free circuses, ARFF also offered our aid in making this transition as easy and profitable as it should be. Unfortunately, many venues were not receptive to the idea of personal responsibility for their roles as community outlets in providing safe entertainment options.

Shrine Circus: Repeat Offenders

"Ignoring the facts of the matter and continuing to profit from the Shrine Circus on our campus is completely immoral. To do so reflects poorly on the UCF administration and the school as a whole. The time has come to end the circus at UCF. It is no longer fun and games at the circus, and the people are aware of it.

The contract must not be renewed."

– Central Florida Future, April 2008

Despite last year's outcry against the dismal Shrine circus, including the beautifully-worded feature in the Central Florida Future (the University of Central Florida student newspaper), excerpted above, the show is again rearing its ugly head at the UCF Arena in Orlando. Each year the Bahia Shrine lease the Royal Hanneford circus for their temple fundraiser. Royal Hanneford has a long history of animal abuse and neglect, including animal deaths and animal rampages.

ARFF has met with UCF administration regarding the circus on campus, urging them to adopt a cruelty-free campus by prohibiting the Shrine circus. This year we will continue our efforts, but we need your help! Join us as we protest the Shrine's cruel abuse of animals.

Demonstration Dates and Times:

- Saturday, April 25 at 11:30 and 5:30 pm
- Sunday, April 26 at 11:30 and 5:30 pm

Location: University of Central Florida (UCF) arena, Orlando.

We need activists to leaflet to circus goers before and after each show.
To RSVP or for more information, please contact ArffCentralFL@arff.org.

New year off to a bad start for Florida circus

The Liebling Family Circus is a small circus that performs at flea markets around Florida. They travel with one female African elephant named "Nosey," a few horses and two monkeys. In January, the circus appeared at Renningers, a large outdoor antique mall and flea market in Mount Dora (north of Orlando). Local activist Jamey Binneveld visited the market and documented the filthy, rust-covered trailer that is used to transport the elephant and monkeys (see photo). Following her visit, Jamey met with the management of the market and shared with them the fact that the U.S. Department of Agriculture has repeatedly cited the Liebling Family Circus for deficiencies regarding its care of animals. A week later Jamey heard from the market's corporate office: Nosey would no longer be invited to perform at the flea market. Way to go Jamey!

Jamey also learned that Nosey had been used for elephant rides, even though the circus was missing the required permits. (The State of Florida has been concerned about the safety of elephant rides ever since a 1992 incident in Palm City in which an elephant was shot and killed by police after charging out of a circus with a group of children on her back.) Nosey also has a history of dangerous behavior; in 2004, the elephant knocked a worker down during an appearance in Iowa. The worker suffered a head injury that required stitches.

The bad news for the circus continued on March 13, when one of their monkeys escaped from his cage before a circus performance at the North Lake Flea Market in Fruitland Park. "Reggie," a spider monkey, has not been recaptured. On March 20, ARFF joined with PETA for a protest outside the offices of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission in Tallahassee. ARFF is asking the agency to investigate the Liebling Family Circus.



You Can Help. Please contact ARFF if you learn of the Liebling Family Circus, or any circus with elephants or other exotic animals, coming to a town near you.



King the gorilla marks two decades of solitary confinement

2009 will be the 20th year that "King," a 39-year-old western lowland gorilla on display at Miami's Monkey Jungle, will spend without a companion. Of the approximately 350 gorillas in zoos in the United States, King is the only one who lives alone and who has no prospect of ever having a companion.

In March 1989 a female gorilla named "Mitzie" died at Monkey Jungle. Since that day, King has remained alone—despite the efforts of animal advocates. In 1997, ARFF launched a campaign to persuade Monkey Jungle to send King to Zoo Atlanta, where he could be with other gorillas. Zoo Atlanta has had success in rehabilitating previously solitary gorillas and transitioning them into a gorilla family. But despite Zoo Atlanta's invitation and pleas from noted primatologist Jane Goodall, TV personality Bob Barker, and thousands of Florida residents, Monkey Jungle has so far refused.

Instead, after languishing for years in a concrete-and-bars cage, Monkey Jungle built a naturalistic enclosure in 2000 where King is at least able to feel the sun and breathe fresh air. Although the larger enclosure was an improvement, it is unclear how much time King actually spends in the enclosure, and Monkey Jungle continues to ignore the issue that King is alone. Gorillas and other apes are intelligent animals with complex social and emotional lives. Gorillas are best-off when they are in social situations. King needs companions.

You Can Help. On this sad anniversary, please join ARFF as we once again ask Monkey Jungle to transfer King to a respected zoo where he could live out the remainder of his life with companionship and dignity. *Write to:*

Sharon Dumond & Frank Dumond, Jr., Owners
Monkey Jungle
14805 Southwest 216th Street
Miami, FL 33170

ARFF in the media: Winter 2008/09 (not a complete list)

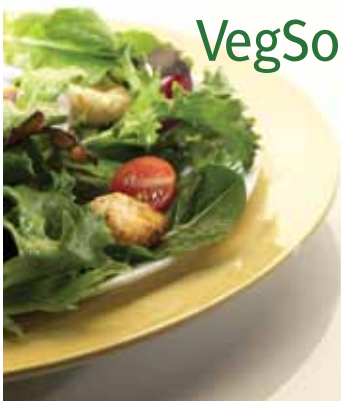
ARFF's campaign against horse-drawn carriages was noted in an article in the Panama City News-Herald — ARFF's Managing Director was quoted in a Tampa Tribune story about the Lowry Park Zoo — An ARFF spokesperson was featured in a WFSU-FM 88.9 (Tallahassee) report about a traveling elephant act — ARFF spokespeople were featured on several radio and TV shows promoting the 20th anniversary gala as well as protection for animals — ARFF's 20th Anniversary Gala was covered by over thirty news entities, including the Miami Herald, the Sun Sentinel, The Sun and Daily Mirror (UK tabloids), Extra, Bild (German newspaper), Blick (Switzerland newspaper), Courier Mail (Brisbane, Australia newspaper) — ARFF was featured in a BBC News report about alligator wrestling — Local television news stations in Jacksonville covered ARFF's demonstration against the Ringling Bros. Circus — ARFF's demonstration against exotic animal acts at Santa's Enchanted Forest was covered by Miami New Times.

visit ARFF online

“News for Florida Animal Advocates”

blog.animalrightsflorida.org

MySpace.com/animalrightsflorida



VegSouthFlorida.com

Your guide to
vegetarian and
vegan dining in
South Florida

memorials

In memory of Fluffy
from Grace & Peter Golling

In memory of Kurt Fish
from his loving daughter, Judith Fish
and his adoring grandpups
who miss their “pop pop” very much,
Snuggles and Chloe.



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Questions? Phone: (954) 727-ARFF E-mail: arff@arff.org

The Animal Rights Foundation of Florida is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

Celebrate Earth Day With ARFF

When: Sunday April 19, 2009, 5-7pm

Where: Sublime Restaurant, 1431 North Federal Highway, Fort Lauderdale

Free!

Learn from two interactive presentations:

Wildlife Conservation (beginning at 5:00pm): Through animated lectures, film clips and discussion, this workshop explores the relationship between humans, animals and their environments, and encourages personal responsibility and compassion. ARFF's Wildlife Conservation presentation provides information about today's important animal-protection issues as well as re-educating people about the facts of wildlife conservation and ecology.

Veganism & the Environment, "A Lifestyle You Can Live With" (beginning at 6:00pm): Interactive slide presentation designed to introduce participants to the many reasons people may choose an alternative to a meat-based diet. It's not a cooking class, but rather a discussion of the health, environmental and ethical reasons why approximately 3% of the American population are vegetarians.

Bring your friends and family to this fun, free experience and enjoy refreshments courtesy of Sublime while meeting like-minded people! Learn more or RSVP by calling (954) 539-9000 by April 17.

Thank you!



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