



MAC Hosts Portland's First Internet Cat Video Festival



On January 23, 2016 MAC hosted Portland's first Internet Cat Video Festival. Two hundred adults and children, many dressed as cats, gather in the auditorium of Portland High School to watch cat videos and celebrate their love for cats.

The video montage was produced by the Walker Art Center of Minneapolis and included 100 cat videos divided into categories such as comedy, drama, animated and musical. To add to the festive air and warm the crowd, the event began with live Caribbean music provided by Sister Steel Pan Band.

In addition to having fun, the audience came to support the Cleo Fund, which MAC selected to receive the profits of the festival. The Cleo Fund began in 1971 to help spay and neuter Maine's dogs and cats. In 2013 after many years of dedicated work by Mary Scott, Betty Moberg and many other volunteers, the Cleo Fund joined forces with the Animal Welfare Society.

In 2016 the Cleo Fund independently issued over 2,700 vouchers to provide spay/neuter assistance to individuals in Maine. With the help of a grant from the Sewall Foundation, the Cleo Fund paid to spay or neuter an additional 800 owned and feral cats in Oxford County. The Cleo Fund also collaborated with the Community Spay/Neuter Clinic in Topsham and PAWS Brave Hearts animal shelter in Calais to spay

or neuter 277 cats at several free and low cost clinics in Washington County.

MAC's Internet Cat Video Festival raised \$500 for the Cleo Fund and received much appreciated publicity. Sharon Secovich, past manager of the Cleo Fund, and MAC's Beth Gallie appeared on Channel 6 TV's evening program 207 and Channel 6 covered the event.

Sharon Secovich said, "A wonderful thing is happening in Maine and the day when there are not homeless cats is within our sight. This new paradigm can be directly attributed to the availability of low-cost spay/neuter in our state. Maine's Help Fix Me program and smaller localized spay/ neuter programs implemented by shelter and rescue groups with the support of local and national grant makers, has laid the groundwork for our incredible and steady progress."

Sharon reports that due to increased spay/neuter assistance, shelter intakes have declined, euthanasia rates have steeply dropped, and cats are being

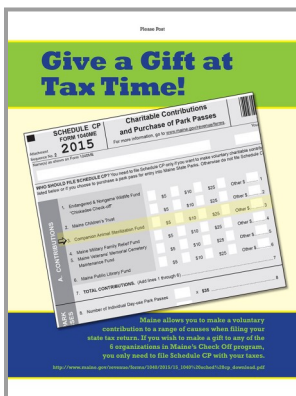


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transported within Maine from shelters with too many cats to shelters with space. Equally significant, shelters are now turning their resources to feral cats. Maine shelters are following the example set by feral cat rescues by hiring trappers and providing low-to-no cost spay/neuter services. In the past 16 months alone at least four animal shelters have added a feral cat trapper to their staff.

MAC Promotes Tax Checkoff



MAC promoted the Companion Animal Sterilization Tax Check Off during the 2016 tax season. In 2012 the state legislature passed a law requiring the minimum contributions to existing checkoff funds to increase gradually until the required minimum contributions reach \$25,000 in 2017.

In 2016 the Companion Animal Sterilization Fund reached a record amount of

\$23,343 and is safe for another year. The collected funds go to Help Fix Me, Maine's state-wide spay/neuter program for cats and dogs owned by low income Mainers.

Kittery Block Party



On June 20th MAC volunteers Suzy Johnson and Beth Gallie tabled at the very popular Kittery Block Party. During the course of four hours they were able to hand out 300

PETA Vegan Starter Kits. Passersby were asked if they wanted some vegan recipes and almost everyone responded affirmatively.

Contact MAC if you would be willing to table at an event in your community.

Rescue Road Book Talk



In April, MAC sponsored a book talk and PowerPoint presentation by author Peter Zheutlin of his *New York Times* Best Seller *Rescue Road*. The event took place in the Portland Public Library's Rines Auditorium with over 60 people attending. The soothing sounds of live music by guitarist Gary Richardson provided the prelude to this fascinating lecture.

Peter took the audience on his true journey with long-haul trucker Greg Mahle who travels from Ohio to the Gulf Coast. From there, Greg brings back as many as 90 dogs at time to be adopted here in the northeast. On the trip Greg encounters many courageous and dedicated people who make it possible for the hapless dogs to have a second chance at a wonderful life.

There were sad stories and also many heartwarming stories told. Perhaps the most endearing account is of Greg pulling his tractor trailer to the pick-up locations. The happiness and joy for the dogs and their new adopting families makes the long trip and grueling hours all worthwhile for Greg and those who helped him.

Letterpress Book Store was present to sell *Rescue Road* for the book signing. Also attending and providing information about their work were the Animal Refuge League of Greater Portland, the Animal Welfare Society of Kennebunk, Tall Tail Beagles Rescue, The Pixel Fund, the Maine Chapter of the HSUS, Almost Home Rescue of Maine and the United Spay Alliance of Brunswick.

Vegan Dog Food Drive



In August MAC held a unique pet food drive. MAC collaborated with V-Dog, Inc. to donate 360 pounds of vegan dog food to Peace Ridge Sanctuary. V-Dog donated 14 slightly damaged bags of dog food and MAC paid shipping costs.

Peace Ridge Sanctuary has recently moved to a 800 acre farm in Brooks in Waldo County. Peace Ridge Sanctuary provides shelter for dogs, but focuses on farm animals.

12th Vegetarian Food Festival Another Success

MAC's 12th Annual Vegetarian Food Festival was another success. On June 3rd approximately 700 people gathered at Portland's East End School to listen to speakers, eat a vegan pizza lunch, explore the vegan wares of local vendors and get caught up on the news of their favorite animal rights groups.

To be more exact, 32 business and nonprofits tabled at the event and three fascinating people spoke. The documentary film *PlantPure Nation* and episodes of cooking show *Vegan Mashup* also were shown.

While some clearly prefer the roar of the crowd in the gym, most Veg Fest goers love the wisdom and enthusiasm of the speakers. This year's speakers did not disappoint.



The first speaker of the day was Avery Yale Kamila, the Portland Press Herald's "Vegetarian Kitchen" columnist. The title of her talk was, "It's a great time to be veg: How vegans and vegetarians are changing the way we eat in Maine and the na-

tion." Avery noted that things have changed since she first became a vegetarian 28 years ago. Today it is much more convenient and it is considered cool to be a vegetarian. Avery also attributes the rise in the popularity of a plant based diet to President Clinton's announcement that he had gone vegan and to the influence of the documentary *Forks Over Knives*.

While the percentage of vegetarians and vegans has remained relatively steady, 5% of the U.S. population, "flexitarians" are now consuming the bulk of the processed vegetarian foods. Vegetarian food companies such as Beyond Meat and Hampton Creek are targeting the mainstream market of meat-eaters and not vegetarians.

Avery noted that the popularity of a plant based diet is particularly prevalent among the young, and institutions are responding. For example, the Portland City Schools offers a daily vegetarian menu item for

elementary school children. Vegan dishes also have increased in restaurants and workplace cafeterias.

Next, Dietitian and animal advocate Ginny Kisch Messina lectured on "Seven Habits of a Healthy Vegan." These habits include eating legumes, choosing healthy fats, taking appropriate supplements (Vitamin D and B), "eating the rainbow", getting adequate calcium, enjoying a variety of vegan foods and celebrating being a compassionate vegan.

Finally, Alex Shopov, a veteran of four Sea Shepard campaigns, vegan businessman and athlete, spoke on "Veganism and the Laws of Ecology."

Alex reminded the audience of Barry Commoner's four laws of ecology. 1. Law of interdependence – everything mankind does has a ripple effect. 2. Everything must go somewhere. (There is no place to safely throw things away.) 3. Nature knows best. Human-kind's improvements are likely to be detrimental to the ecosystem. 4. Everything requires energy. Exploitation of nature will inevitably involve the conversion of resources from useful to useless forms.

Alex explained that a plant based diet is the answer to a lot of the world's problems. A whole foods plant based diet reduces consumer waste, global warming caused by animal agriculture and the depletion pollution of the world's oceans.



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New Laws in Maine in 2016

In 2016 MAC followed approximately 25 bills during the Second Regular Session of the 127th Legislature. The Second Session of the legislature is the shorter session and deals with limited types of bills, such as budgetary matters, bills submitted by the Governor, bills carried over from the first session, citizen initiatives and emergency bills.



Two bills that were passed in 2016 are of particular note: **LD 1593**, an act supported by Maine's hunting lobby, and **LD 1601**, an act to clarify the difference under the Maine Human Rights Act between service dogs and assistance animals.

LD 1593 Act to Make Hunting, Fishing and Trapping the Basis of Managing Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Resources was ultimately passed after hunting advocates failed to pass bills that would establish a Constitutional right to hunt and fish and restrict citizens' initiatives. LD 1593 changed the initial section of the statutes governing the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife by tacking on the end a pro-hunting clause. 12 MRSA §10051 now states, "The Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife is established to preserve, protect and enhance the inland fisheries and wildlife resources of the State; to encourage the wise use of these resources; to ensure coordinated planning for the future use and preservation of these resources; to provide for effective management of these resources; and to use regulated hunting, fishing and trapping as the basis for the management of these resources whenever feasible."

LD 1601 An Act To Implement the Recommendations of the Task Force To Ensure Integrity in the Use of Service Animals further differentiates service dogs and emotional support animals by creating a new category called assistance animals. Service dogs are dogs that are trained to do specific tasks like pulling a wheel chair or guiding the blind. Service dogs are allowed in public accommodations such as stores, restaurants, and hotels. Assistance animals do not need to be dogs and may just provide comfort and support to people with physical or mental disabilities. People with disabilities have a right to an assistance animal in rental housing. The bill also increased the penalties for misrepresentation of a service dog or assistance animal. For more information about these changes, please go to MAC's website.

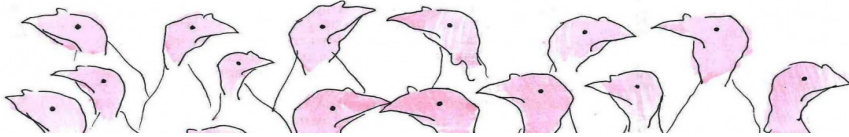
Also of note - in early September the City Council of Portland unanimously passed an ordinance prohibiting the retail sale of cats and dogs in Portland pet stores. (No pet stores were selling cats and dogs at the time of the passage of the ordinance.) Cats and dogs from rescue organizations may still be displayed in pet stores. MAC's president joined other animal advocates and spoke at the City Council meeting in favor of this bill. The state legislature passed a similar bill in 2015, but it was vetoed by Governor LePage.

MAC's president joined 40 animal advocates in late September at an IF&W Department hearing on IF&W's proposal to extend the state's bobcat hunting season and the beaver trapping season by one week. Despite overwhelming opposition to the proposal at the hearing, IF & W extended the seasons.

Save the Date!

MAC's 13th Annual Vegetarian Food Festival will be June 3, 2017 at the East End School in Portland. If you would like to be involved, email us at mac@maineanimalcoalition.org or call 207 773-2215.

46 Million Turkeys Project!



The Girls © 2013 Cheryl L. Miller

For three Saturdays in November MAC hosted at its office artist Cheryl Miller's *46 Million Turkeys Project!* The public was asked to drop by and support the project by drawing turkeys.

The project began in 2013 when Cheryl began creating mini portraits for each of the 46 million turkeys Americans annually eat on Thanksgiving day. Cheryl has made great progress in reaching her goal of 46 million turkey portraits by mechanization. This in turn reminds her of the cruel mass production necessary to raise 46 million turkeys for Thanksgiving. Ultimately, Cheryl hopes to permanently place the *46 Million Turkey Project!* in a museum.



Upgrades! Check them out!

MAC has a new user friendly **website!** The new website is mobile friendly, puts important information clearly in sight of the viewer, and has new features such as a blog.

In the fall MAC issued the 7th edition of its **Maine Animal Resource Guide**. The Guide consists of 32 pages of useful information about wildlife rehabilitators, humane societies, emergency care and laws in Maine.

MAC also published a new color **brochure** about its activities.

MAC Annual Financial Report

1/1/2016—12/31/2016

Income

Individual Contributions	\$ 14,363.61
Events	\$ 4,573.00
Sales	\$ 255.16
Interest	\$.80
Total Income	\$ 19,192.57

Expenses

Program	\$ 17,804.94
Operating	\$ 1,679.80
Total Expenses	\$ 19,484.74

Total Assets

(cash)

January 1, 2016	\$ 3,775.46
December 31, 2016	\$ 3,483.29

Liabilities \$ 0.00

Total Net Assets \$ 3,483.29

Board News in 2016

President Beth Gallie spoke to USM Professor Piers Beirne's *Animal Abuse* class in December.

Treasurer Mike Angelone singlehandedly arranged MAC's talk by *Rescue Road* author Peter Zheutlin and was MAC's tweeter.

Secretary Pat Liddy was the driving force behind MAC's much improved, new website.

Barbara Capasso initiated a successful silent auction at the Veg Fest and helped Greely Middle School's Animal Awareness Club.

Val Giguere, MAC's newest board member, worked on growing MAC.

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Maine Animal Coalition is dedicated to the elimination of animal abuse and exploitation through education, advocacy and example. For more information about MAC and our programs, visit our website at www.maineanimalcoalition.org. Phone (207) 773-2215
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