

# Thin Ice\*

The Newsletter of Responsible Policies for Animals, Inc.

Vol. 6, No. 2 ★ Fall 2008

## Responsible Policies for Animals Advances Animal Rights – Sixth Straight Year!

Again throughout 2008, Responsible Policies for Animals showed progress toward animal rights happens like progress toward human rights – through the written & spoken word. Including the Internet. And a little bit of travel. And generous donations from the world's kindest and most clear-sighted people. Following are highlights – thanks to RPA members in twenty-six states and four countries!

### Scouting Out Leaders

What if heads of **one of the world's most influential organizations** learned what is known about SAD's (the standard American diet's) devastating impacts?

Visited at his home by a young girl and her mom selling Girl Scout Cookies, Responsible Policies for Animals Executive Director David Cantor explained he doesn't purchase or consume anything from animals or containing hydrogenated oils (these should be considered a human-rights violation).

They didn't seem to understand. So in a letter from RPA accompanied by the six-CD audio version of *The China Study: The Most Comprehensive Study of Nutrition Ever Conducted* by preeminent nutrition scientist T. Colin Campbell, Ph.D. (see *Thin Ice*, Spring 2008), Cantor outlined the problems for **Girl Scouts of the USA's CEO**.

RPA received a polite reply saying Girl Scouts is considering reformulating its cookies, and sent a first follow-up letter. Another is going out soon.

➤ **Get out your pen or log on!** Write to Ms. Kathy Cloninger, CEO, Girl Scouts of the USA, 420 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10018-2798. Briefly and politely remind her it's wrong to deny Girl Scouts knowledge of food as explained in *The China Study* and countless other sources or to let them go on believing using animals can be humane. ★

### Teaching Teachers & Students

In April 2008, RPA Executive Director David Cantor spoke with **an advanced-placement history class at a prestigious private school**, explaining basics of how ending animal use and destruction of free-living animals' natural homes – the animal-rights movement's key goals – would serve the public interest. Almost every graduate of the school goes to college and becomes an influential member of society.

Due to RPA's effort to work with the school on a regular basis and opposition in the school community, *Thin Ice* won't publicize the school's name at this time. ★

"[N]early all children have a natural empathy for animals; and, sadly, animal neglect and abuse are on the rise."

Thomas Lickona, *Educating for Character*

### Ag Secretary: Serve the Public!

What if **one of the world's most influential agribusiness officials** acted on what is known about dairy's devastation? It doesn't take much time or resources to start the ball rolling. And letting the world know we're on it is a great educational activity. People are more likely to reconsider their food choices seeing that kind of political activity than being confronted personally.

In response to RPA's first letter to **Pennsylvania Governor Ed Rendell** in the **10,000 Years Is Enough campaign to get Penn State (PSU) and our other land-grant universities** out of the meat industry, RPA received a letter from the office of Pennsylvania Agriculture Secretary Dennis Wolff. **Rendell and Wolff are PSU trustees.**

Wolff runs a large, partly-taxpayer-subsidized farm in Pennsylvania, including **a large dairy operation with national & international ties**. He makes promoting dairy his top official priority, and dairy is Pennsylvania's biggest "agricultural" product. (Using animals isn't really agriculture, which means cultivating fields.)

Emphasizing his obligation to the public interest – including humane treatment of animals, i.e., not using them – RPA wrote urging Wolff to change his business to plants only; use non-toxic ("organic") and veganic methods (no fertilizer from animals); promote plants-only,

\* Responsible Policies for Animals' newsletter, *Thin Ice*, gets its name from the ethical and political "thin ice" inhumane treatment of animals is based on and the actual thin ice threatening polar bears and other beings as inhumane practices warm Earth's climate.

non-toxic & veganic interests; stop promoting dairy, meat, egg & feed-crop interests; and use his influence to get PSU out of the meat industry.

➤ **Get out your pen or log on!** Write to **The Honorable Dennis C. Wolff, Secretary of Agriculture, Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, 2301 North Cameron Street, Harrisburg, PA 17110.** Politely second RPA's requests. Remind him ending animal use is crucial for human wellbeing. Show friends your letter. Don't live in Pennsylvania? Contact Wolff anyway: His influence – and yours – reach far beyond state boundaries!★

## RPA in New York Times Magazine

The November 9, 2008, issue of *The New York Times Magazine* included a **letter-to-the-editor from Responsible Policies for Animals Executive Director David Cantor.** The letter responded to the feature article two weeks before on the campaign for California Proposition 2, which voters passed on Election Day. "Assuaging nonhuman animals' infinite misery under the human boot is good," Cantor wrote. "But a century and a half of successful organized campaigning has produced far more suffering by addressing 'cruelty' rather than the wider compass of inhumane treatment – the entire system of animal use and ownership."

The new law requires farm-animal owners to give animals enough room to stand up, turn around, and stretch their limbs. Such regulations always settle for slightly-less-inhumane treatment; are never a step toward humane treatment, i.e., no animal use; and divert caring people's energy and funds toward "victories for the animals" that are not progress toward the needed change.

*The New York Times Magazine's* publishing Cantor's letter helps because it gives readers worldwide a glimpse of billions of animals' fundamental plight – being used by humans – and misrepresentation of regulation campaigns as being the kind of action the animals need.

"Basic legal and constitutional rights will be the only remedy for other animals, as for the small proportion of humans fortunate enough to have them," the letter continued. "And animal rights will enhance human rights, as few people will accept treating other animals better than humans."★

"Nothing but a newspaper can drop the same thought into a thousand minds at the same moment."

Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*

## Vegetarian Summerfest

June 18-22, 2008, RPA ran a table exhibit at the 34<sup>th</sup> annual Vegetarian Summerfest, giving out literature, accepting donations, signing up new members, adding new friends to the e-mail list, and discussing with many people why basic constitutional & legal rights for all

In addition to its kind & generous members, RPA is ...

### Staff

David Cantor, Executive Director

### Board of Directors

David Cantor, President

Lynn Cummings, Vice President

Rob Teti, Treasurer

David Sauder, Secretary

Harold Brown

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Responsible Policies for Animals, Inc. (RPA), promotes responsible policies for nonhuman animals that are also responsible policies for people and ecosystems: basic constitutional & legal rights for nonhuman animals starting with personal & ecological sovereignty.

RPA is a 501(c)(3) educational nonprofit organization. Monetary and in-kind donations to RPA are tax exempt as allowed by law.

Anyone may become an RPA member by donating \$15.00 or more. RPA considers ill, impoverished, incarcerated, and animal-dedicated people for donation-free honorary memberships on an individual basis.

RPA members receive *Thin Ice* and other updates on RPA's work. New members receive RPA's bumper sticker (see [www.RPAforAll.org](http://www.RPAforAll.org)).

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Donate to RPA at [www.RPAforAll.org](http://www.RPAforAll.org) or by mail.

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RPA's comprehensive statement opposing violence in the name of animal rights is available at [www.RPAforAll.org](http://www.RPAforAll.org) or by mail.

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**Responsible Policies for Animals, Inc.**

**RPA4all@aol.com**

**P.O. Box 891, Glenside, PA 19038, USA**

**[www.RPAforAll.org](http://www.RPAforAll.org)**

**[www.ExpertsOfConscience.org](http://www.ExpertsOfConscience.org)**

**[www.EatForSports.org](http://www.EatForSports.org)**

**215-886-RPA1 (-7721)**

sentient beings is the only likely path to the benefits all people need from plants-only eating.

**RPA Executive Director David Cantor gave three well-received presentations at the conference:** Wrong Thoughts: The Power Behind Meat-Eating; Political Vegetarianism: Our Tax Dollars Support the Production of Flesh, Milk, Eggs & Feed Crops – Finding Political Solutions; and Words, Words, Words – about how the industry-government-media complex and the public-relations industry work to ensure people will avoid serious matters like whether nonhuman animals should have basic rights.

Summerfest is organized each year by the North American Vegetarian Society, at University of Pittsburg Johnstown. Many hundreds of people, of countless

interests and backgrounds, attend. Lots of information:  
[www.vegetariansummerfest.org](http://www.vegetariansummerfest.org) ★

## Veggie Fest

On June 28, 2008, RPA ran a table exhibit at Veggie Fest, the annual plants-only eating & education event organized by CARE, Compassion for Animals - Respect for the Environment, at a public park in West Chester, Pennsylvania.

Hundreds of people come to sample an excellent array of plants-only foods and visit nonprofit exhibits. RPA has taken part all but one year since 2003 – distributing literature, accepting donations, signing up new members and e-mail-list participants, and educating about why we need to get our universities out of the meat industry. ★

## VegNews

If you're one of the many thousands of people who read the popular bimonthly magazine *VegNews*, you probably saw advertisements RPA ran throughout 2008. To keep RPA in view of readers for the entire year but use donations sparingly, we ran display ads in three of the six issues, classified in the other three.

RPA's *VegNews* ads surely contributed to 2008's increase in new members and website visits! ★

## The Compassionate Vegetarian

In addition to organizing Veggie Fest and other events (see [www.care4animals.org](http://www.care4animals.org)), CARE publishes the newsletter *The Compassionate Vegetarian*. The Fall 2008 cover article is "Get Our Universities Out of the Meat Industry," about RPA's 10,000 Years Is Enough campaign, by RPA Executive Director David Cantor.

This gives the jist of the article: "Our [land-grant universities'] meat-industry courses are why meat-eating persists despite its long-known negative impact on human health and the environment – and why it keeps increasing as the population grows and as China, rapidly becoming affluent, follows the horrendous American model." ★

"[W]hat's good for your health is good for the animals is good for the people is good for the world."  
Lisa Wartinger, "Human Starvation: The Meat Connection." *Vegetarian Voice*, North American Vegetarian Society, Vol. 30, No. 1 (October 2008).

## School of Public Health

Imagine how obstacles to animal rights might begin to topple if our public-health schools would tell the whole truth about meat and SAD (the standard American diet)!

On December 5, 2008, RPA Executive Director David Cantor met with epidemiologist (investigates causes and control of disease in human populations) David Michaels, Ph.D., of the George Washington University School of Public Health and Health Services in Washington, D.C.

Michaels runs [www.DefendingScience.org](http://www.DefendingScience.org) offering

unpublished documents revealing deception concerning harm to the human animal from substances routinely sold commercially. He wrote the book *Doubt Is Their Product: How Industry's Assault on Science Threatens Your Health*.

At the meeting, Cantor explained RPA's 10,000 Years Is Enough campaign to get our universities out of the meat industry; epidemiological findings about SAD's harm to human health – especially *The China Study*, which *The New York Times* called "the Grand Prix of epidemiology"; and related matters.

Michaels expressed that he would read RPA literature and other materials Cantor provided and consider whether there might be a way his program could discuss some of it. The two will communicate further in coming months. ★

"At an organizational and economic level ..., the influence of powerful organizational interests, and the role of the media in shaping society also act to perpetuate meat consumption."

Joshua Frank, "Meat as a Bad Habit: A Case for Positive Feedback in Consumption Preferences Leading to Lock-in." *Review of Social Economy*, Vol. LXV, No. 3, September 2007.

## Professors Bulletin

Remember the 10,000 Years Is Enough campaign display advertisement a generous donor enabled RPA to run in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*? (See *Thin Ice*, Fall 2006.) It urged experts in animals, education, nutrition, ecology, and food production to help solve the problem of university meat-industry courses and to visit [www.ExpertsOfConscience.org](http://www.ExpertsOfConscience.org) for details.

This year the same kind member enabled RPA to run the ad in *Academe: The Bulletin of the American Association of University Professors* in two consecutive issues, reaching thousands of professors, administrators, and university retirees for a third of the year!

Visits to [ExpertsOfConscience.org](http://ExpertsOfConscience.org) spiked after the ads ran and stayed high long afterwards. ★

## In Hometown Newspaper

*The Chestnut Hill Local* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania) featured a profile of RPA and RPA Executive Director David Cantor in its October 23, 2008, issue. The article is one of very few to explain animal rights accurately! See <http://chestnuthilllocal.com/issues/2008.10.23/locallife1.html> or get a copy from RPA. ★

## Legislative Rising Star

Otto von Bismarck said, "Politics is the art of the possible, the attainable ... the art of the next best." No one in government will do anything to advance animal rights until the public embraces it. The public is far from knowing what it is or why it is needed.

That doesn't mean we shouldn't educate officials, candidates, and aides. They're what marketers call

*influentials* – the approximately one in ten people who determine what others think about, what they believe & feel, and their personal choices. They associate with networks of other influentials, and many have other careers before and after government.

**Josh Shapiro, RPA's district's state representative**, is a rising star in the Assembly, reelected unopposed in 2008. RPA Executive Director David Cantor met with him

shortly after he was first elected, just after founding RPA. In August 2008, he met with **Shapiro's chief of staff, Matt Vahey**, updating him on RPA's **10,000 Years Is Enough** campaign to get Penn State and our other land-grant universities out of the meat industry and giving the entire staff RPA's factsheet on animal rights & government and other RPA literature. ★

## RPA & Animal Rights: An Investment in the Future

Accountants and brokers say people's retirement accounts do well over the long haul regardless of downturns in any particular month or year. *Keep depositing.*

Animal rights isn't so different. And *animal rights might be a more reliable investment than the markets.* Rather than use your money to make more money, RPA invests it in creating justice. Justice grows in the long term, despite deeply troubling downturns.

Some people look at the horrors human beings perpetrate against each other and other animals and insist people don't even care about their own kind, they'll never stop oppressing other animals, the best we can do is regulate inhumane treatment and save a few lucky individuals from a system that destroys trillions each year.

I see that as *needlessly condemning countless trillions to suffer and die at human hands – caving in to the very injustice we deplore.* The fact that we apply terms like "horror" to what used to be accepted human behavior reflects progressive enlightenment.

*Even the fact that the problems are worsening doesn't mean progress isn't being made.* It's the extreme nature of wrongs that leads to new rights – as shown in Alan Dershowitz's *Rights from Wrongs: A Secular Theory on the Origins of Rights.*

That doesn't mean if we accept the wrongs humans have systematically done to nonhuman animals for millennia rights will magically appear. Funds won't be there at retirement if people don't invest. Likewise, animal rights won't happen if we won't put our money, time, and energy into making it happen.

A vast industry-government-media complex, including prominent animal organizations, convinces people a distant second best is all we should strive for.

I see that as trading what we want for what we want now. Assert our humanity where we can help, sure. Report witnessed cruelty to authorities, rescue the rescue-able, promote veganism. But our kind gestures & practices can't bring needed change as serious, persistent education can. *History and experience show the need for RPA's approach.*

To protect all animals' interests equally, humane treatment must be for other animals what it is for humans: the right of each individual to live according to his or her individual and original-species nature. Since humans are capable of dominating every aspect of nonhumans' lives except their consciousness, humane treatment must include not bringing animals into the world for human purposes – in itself inhumane, no matter how we might wish it weren't so.

It doesn't take Sherlock Holmes to see why *it will take a long time to establish animal rights!*

Yet *it might happen sooner than we're told to believe!* Official animal-rights proposals crop up now and then. In Spain and Ecuador in 2008, for example. They get little attention in the U.S. and are not well understood. Even if they pass, they won't go far without powerful rights-culture nations embracing animal rights. The U.S. in particular.

What about the U.S., then? *Historical forces coincided with ideals to create human rights* – it wasn't a wave of compassion, and there were no video exposés. Powerful forces today likewise favor basic rights for all sentient beings. Species extinctions. Dying oceans and reefs. Human food & water shortages. Widespread chronic disease and soaring medical & insurance costs. Human overpopulation. War and poverty. *All linked to inhumane treatment of animals.*

*That is the political argument for animal rights.* The big human problems are too far advanced to be solved except by establishing basic constitutional & legal rights for all sentient beings starting with personal & ecological sovereignty. *That is what your support helps teach people in our universities, government, and other influential institutions.*

I'm sure you'll agree it's an invaluable investment in a legacy we must leave for all future generations – of all species. *Thank you for all you're doing! Stay with RPA. I look forward to sharing with you all the achievements of coming years.*

– David Cantor

**Responsible Policies for Animals memberships make great gifts any time of year!  
They use less fuel & materials than manufactured items, take up little space,  
don't cause weight gain, and never stop working!**

