

## PROFILES

base and operating budget. To date, there has been moderate growth in both areas; membership is now about a thousand, comprising both groups and individuals, and the organization's budget has grown severalfold, from a paltry \$1,000 the first year to a still precarious \$50,000 in 1986. In an effort to facilitate tax-exempt donations while still preserving much of its lobbying thrust, the Alliance has recently spawned a new independent division, the National Alliance for Animals' Education Fund, created chiefly to carry out national seminars and legislative workshops. (Last June the seminars attracted more than 400 individuals representing all national organizations and over 40 states. This year, another three-day national legislation seminar will begin June 20. The event includes a full day of lobbying on Capitol Hill.)

Both Brinkman and Kathy Sanborn, the Alliance's assistant executive director, are confident that animal rights has turned the corner in terms of legitimacy on the Hill. "Elected officials are recognizing that 'animal people' have something to say," they point out. "They are beginning to understand the depth, complexity and merit of the issues we are bringing to their attention. Legislators are increasingly aware that we are a gaining force—a force that could possibly help them or harm them in the next election."

The Alliance has already scored some notable successes. During the 99th Congress, for example, Congressional pressure forced Secretary of Health and Human Services Margaret Heckler to suspend funding for the head injury research lab at the University of Pennsylvania. The thousands of letters of protest, telegrams and phone calls which poured from animal activists all over the country obviously convinced officials of the seriousness of the issue, but the finishing touch may have been put by the Alliance. Distributing literature door-to-door to every Congressional office, coordinating the lobbying effort of ten national organizations, and showing the film "Unnecessary Fuss" to any representative or staffer who would watch it (more than 200 did so) the Alliance brought the ugly reality of animal research home to the decision-makers. Soon afterward, in an unprecedented move, over 100 members of Congress wrote to NIH questioning the "scientific merit" of the experiments taking place in Dr. Gennarelli's lab. "The name of the game is persistence," says Brinkman, "and a well mobilized constituency back home."

The Alliance may be reached at: P.O. Box 77012, Washington, D.C. 20013; or at (703) 684-0654.

—P. Greanville

## A Wildlife Refuge Grows in New Jersey

On their return to the U.S. in 1954 after five years in Turkey, Hope Sawyer and her husband Cavit Buyukmihci, quickly found themselves surrounded with bulldozers busily tearing up much of the land still untouched by developers and urban sprawl in southern New Jersey. The Buyukmihcis realized that something had to be done to preserve at least some wild land where bluebirds and other wildlife could survive; slowly, the idea of setting up a private refuge took hold.

Finally, in 1961, after a long search, they found 85 acres with an abandoned shack



—The Beaver Defenders

Hope Sawyer Buyukmihci at the refuge pond with beaver kittens.

and a big pond inhabited by beavers. They promptly invested all their savings, took out a mortgage, and bought the land. Through the years, as one small piece of adjoining land after another became available, they kept on adding to the initial tract until this improbable animal haven—aptly christened "The Unexpected Wildlife Refuge"—grew to include 450 acres, with bluebirds nesting in some of the birdhouses sprinkled throughout the property, while chickadees, titmice, crested flycatchers, tree swallows, purple martins and wrens nested in others. (Growing up literally among beavers, otters, deer, foxes, snakes, ducks, geese and many other wild animals indigenous to New Jersey,

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of the group's best remembered performances took place last August as animal rights activists protested the American Psychological Association's annual convention at the Washington Hilton. The skits—featured on all local TV stations and mentioned in the Washington Post—had "Dr. Fulluvit" (Kinsolving) cheerfully applying shocks to a "rabbit" (Lidsky), forcing alcohol down a reluctant "rat's" throat (Macauley), and severing the spinal cord of a monkey impersonated by another activist.

Kinsolving, who hasn't turned 30 yet, is enthusiastic about the medium's possibilities, although seeking both to educate and entertain a street audience in a just a few minutes may prove elusive. "One shouldn't spend large amounts of money buying props and costumes," counsels Kinsolving. "The costumes and props should be colorful and outlandish, and the performers must come across as serious professionals who speak clearly and exaggerate (but don't overdo) movements and gestures. Use lots of physical movement, singing and dialogue to attract attention, and rely on the script's

outline but improvise from there. Of course, whenever possible, inject some humor."

The humor part, however, may be the trickiest. Idealistic intent aside, the big question about street theater for animal rights is whether or not the skits and props can truly evoke the horrors being protested, or will simply trivialize them. Most animal issues—except for Fred the Furrier and his ilk who seem to bask in self-parody—may not lend themselves too easily to a "fast" treatment embroidered with levity. Young attractive women dressed in bunny suits or body stockings, and sporting hurriedly-drawn whiskers, may actually confuse the message; after all, how many passersby—especially males—will see in the antics a serious message instead of a frivolous romp? Because of this, making the skits as topically clear (what is a "vegan cop"?) and realistic as possible will probably strengthen their impact considerably. Kinsolving and her troupe may be reached at Box 3443, Alexandria, VA 22302.

—P. Greanville

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the Buyukmihci children couldn't help adopting their parents' enlightened values. Their son Nedim is today president of the Association of Veterinarians for Animal Rights.)

Last year, in a welcome development, a 127-acre tract of wooded land downstream from the refuge, including a stream and a big beaver pond, was put up for sale on the open market. The elderly couple who owns it, no longer able to live there, moved to the city. The Buyukmihcis have been patrolling and posting this tract for nearly twenty-five years and still have the couple's permission to do so. But the place could be sold to unsympathetic persons—or even a group of trappers and hunters. The property contains beaver lodges along the stream and in the pond; woodcocks in the swamp; grouse in the moist woodland; foxes with dens in the oak woods among the dogwoods, and countless other creatures each in his or her own niche.

After protecting this land from human predation for so long, the Buyukmihcis are understandably determined to make

it a part of the growing refuge. So far, Hope, who at 73 has lost none of her vigor and sense of commitment, has succeeded in raising almost two-thirds of the price, but approximately \$50,000 still needs to be obtained. Readers wishing to help may contact Hope Buyukmihci at: Unexpected Wildlife Refuge, RD1, Newfield, NJ 08344; or at (609) 697-3541.

—P. Greanville

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