IMPORTANT UPDATE ON 2020 TAMPA BAY VEG FEST

Presently because of these uncertain times we are evaluating and waiting to make the decision whether we will be having Tampa Bay Veg Fest this year. Because of this we have not opened our 2020 vendor and sponsor applications on the website yet.

We are very thankful for the enthusiastic community and vital partnerships that have made Tampa Bay Veg Fest so hugely popular over the last 10 years. Our commitment to the health and safety of our participants and volunteers will always be foremost in our minds.

We appreciate your patience and thank you for your understanding. We will update as soon as a decision has been made.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to all of you and please stay safe and well.

Diane Koon

The Connection between the Meat Industry and COVID-19

Many people are reporting that they are eating less animal products these days. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has been reporting for months that data from multiple states show that meat processing workers are at a much higher risk for COVID-19 infections than other industries (except for nursing home workers) and on May 8th, reported at least 20 worker deaths. On May 15th, nurses and dieticians in Delaware held a protest to urge Delaware Governor Carney to shut down meat-processing plants due to the growing evidence that the animal product industry is associated with COVID-19 outbreaks. Dr. Neal Barnard of the Physicians' Committee for Responsible Medicine (PCRM) followed that up with a letter to Governor Carney and all of the Governors in America to shut down their meat-processing plants.

However, Trump has ignored the CDC evidence and declared the meat industry to be “essential” and kept it open. Now as of June 17th, more than 15,000 meat plant workers are infected with COVID-19, and—according to award winning news outlet Democracy Now, as of June 17th, at least 89 have died in the US alone. Further, a CNN report on June 18th reported a new outbreak in a German slaughterhouse (euphemistically, “meat processing plant”) with 650 new infections in meat processing plant workers across Europe. Should people be concerned about eating animal products?

"Plant workers who are asymptomatic may still be viral carriers,” says Dr. Neal Barnard. "Because these workers directly handle meat and poultry products, and because the COVID-19 virus is easily airborne, transmission of the virus to the products they handle is likely, which means transmission of the virus into people's homes is likely."

With workers lined up in close proximity, viruses are easily spread within the slaughterhouse environment. Studies show that infectious viruses easily survive during refrigeration and freezing, and government deregulation ensures that meat companies do not routinely test the extent to which meat products are contaminated with the virus.

PCRM has also cautioned that those who eat the Standard American Diet (SAD) are more likely to contract heart disease, diabetes and other underlying conditions that make exposure to COVID-19 much more dangerous. Now may be a good time to “GO VEGAN!”.

Colette Ann Chin

FVA Protests—Covid-19 Style

On May 9th, FVA board members, Marie, Diane & Suzanne joined Empty the Tanks Worldwide 2020 virtual protest by posting selfies with the hashtag, #SelfiesForCetaceans. Hosted by Empty the Tanks and Dolphin Project who shared photos from around the world to remind everyone that we are still in this fight together! This year the protest was virtual due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
Dear FVA members, friends & readers, once again we share with you our FVA meet-up events! We now have 4,168 signed up as ‘interested’ in our group & activities. As you can see, we continue to have a variety of opportunities for you to become involved. WHERE ARE YOU? Please join our Meet-Up, please sign up for events that interest you, then PLEASE attend the events and help the animals! (If for some reason you find that you are unable to attend, please be kind enough to change your RSVP. This will help us to better know what type of attendance to expect at our events and plan appropriately.)

FVA in the Community/Tableings:
5/23 – Food Not Bombs, FVA presents donation check & vegan hot dogs for the weekly Community Feeding for the Homeless in Downtown Tampa
FVA Quarterly Al Lopez Park Clean Ups, were on hold due to COVID-19 and Park closures, 10am-12, Please check FVA meetup for future dates.

Media & Other Activities:
4/30 – Suncoast Corridor FDOT Webinar on proposed toll roads – Suzanne House contributed comments live and several board members sent in written comments
5/7 – Letter writing campaign initiated via Constant Contact to FVA members encouraging them to write letters to FDOT opposing the 3 proposed toll roads through critical wildlife habitat in Florida.

FVA Demos for the Animals:
5/9 – Empty the Tanks: Selfies for Cetaceans, see photos of FVA Board participants below.

In addition to the events above, monthly activities are held at several local vegan restaurants. These include: New Leaf Café Breakfast buffet, Loving Hut buffet, & Lotus Vegan Buffet. Please check our FVA calendar to join us at these events so we can get to know each other. We hope to see you soon!

Let’s Be Frank!

Jimmy Dunson with Food Not Bombs (FNB) accepting a $100 check and a can of Loma Linda big franks from FVA. Tuesday and Saturday are their normal days to feed but they picked up other days from other groups.

FVA Board at Have-A-Heart Fundraising Dinner & Silent Action held at Solid Rock Community School

FVA’s BOARD OF DIRECTORS
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YES I want to support Florida Voices for Animals, Inc.

Enclosed is my annual membership fee or donation:

☐ $300 Teddy* Lifetime ☐ $100 Patron ☐ $50 Family ☐ $30 Individual ☐ $15 Student ☐ _____ Other

NAME: __________________________________________ PHONE: __________________________ FAX: __________________________

ADDRESS: __________________________________________ CITY: __________________________ ST: ___ ZIP: ___________

E-mail: __________________________________________

I would like to volunteer for:

☐ Phone Tree ☐ Attending Demonstrations ☐ Staffing Outreach Tables ☐ Website ☐ Newsletter
☐ Investigations ☐ Other:

I prefer to receive my Newsletters: ☐ Electronically via email ☐ Regular Mail

* In loving memory of Keith Roghair’s dog, Teddy

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GOOD NEWS

☐ May 2020: Big Cat Rescue was awarded Joe Exotic’s property in lieu of $1 Million judgement. A federal judge in Oklahoma on Monday ruled the 16 acres containing the Greater Wynnewood Exotic Animal Park must be surrendered to Big Cat Rescue Corp. within 120 days.

☐ June 2020: USDA to regulate birds after 16 year delay Due to a lawsuit filed by American Anti-Vivisection Society (AAVS) and the Avian Welfare Coalition (AWC), USDA is now subject to a court order to enact regulations to protect birds who are covered by the Animal Welfare Act (AWA)

FL Proposed Toll Roads

More than 50 Florida environmental groups have joined together to stop the unneeded and unwanted toll roads plan that has been proposed by some Florida legislators. The plan would build more than 300 miles of toll roads through rural areas of Florida, in some of our state’s most remote and environmentally sensitive areas. This reckless proposal would be a “disaster” for the endangered Florida panther as well all the wildlife living in these areas. Despite claims by several legislators, Florida’s Department of Transportation and engineering companies (that stand to make millions on government contracts from the projects), the reality is that there is no data to support a need for these toll roads. Proper environmental impact studies have not even been conducted for these plans. The recent hearings by FDOT were insufficient to allow proper public opinions on this matter. Not all of the rural areas affected want or need these roads, but incentives are being offered to entice the local residents who may oppose them. Once these high speed roads are built, these areas are likely to increase sprawl and our already threatened wildlife will be permanently and adversely impacted. I oppose the building of these toll roads.

The Crested Caracara is a threatened species and if built will cause irreversible harm to it.

Please send a quick email to the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT):

at FDOT.Listens@dot.state.fl.us regarding recently proposed toll roads in Florida. FVA is working on a billboard to oppose the construction of these roads. If you would like to contribute to a billboard fund to help with this or other billboards, please send your check to FVA, with a note that this is "for billboard fund." THANKS!
All events are posted on our Meetup Calendar so if you haven’t signed up for our meetup go to www.meetup.com, search for Florida Voices for Animals then sign up.

Every Tue & Thu at 10:30am WUSF Ch 16.3 Christina Cooks cooking show with Christina Pirello
Every Wed at 10am WMNF 88.5FM Talking Animals radio show with Duncan Strauss
Every Fri at 11am WUSF Ch 16.1 Jazzy Vegetarian cooking show with Laura Theodore

Check out the Vegan Myth Busters radio show hosted by Ellen Jaffe Jones anytime by visiting https://www.facebook.com/groups/1667198786868267/

Zoom Meetup for Vegan Support Group. Check FVA Meetup Calendar for link. FVA is hosting a series of vegan support groups on the first Thursday of each month to help you cope with the challenges of living in a non-vegan world.

1st Sat / month Postponed Loving Hut Vegan Buffet Sat 11am-9pm (Meetup at 6:30pm), 1905 E Fletcher Ave, Tampa FL 33612, 813-977-7888. Loving Hut’s website is http://www.lovinghut.us/tampa_01/ This all-vegan buffet is on the 1st Saturday of the month.

1st Sun / month Postponed New Leaf Cafe Brunch, 9am-12pm 11813 N Armenia Ave, Tampa, FL Enjoy an all-vegan brunch which takes place first Sunday of the month.

3rd Sat / month Postponed Lotus Vegan Meetup Buffet, 11am-9pm (Meetup at 6pm), 6575 Park Blvd, Pinellas Park, FL Enjoy an all-vegan buffet at Lotus Vegan Restaurant. This buffet takes place 3rd Saturday of the month.

Jul 11th (Sat) FVA Park Cleanup, 9am-11am-Al Lopez Park 4810 N Himes Ave, Tampa, FL Volunteers needed to help keep the park clean for our animal friends. Please bring sunscreen, hat and water.