



Press Kit

Mission

Located two hours north of New York City, CAS provides a safe and loving haven for abused horses and farm animals- animals who have never known warm shelter, spacious pastures, good food, or the touch of a kind hand. Since 2001, CAS has provided refuge for over 1,700 such animals, and served as a center to raise awareness of their mistreatment and its impact on all of us.

In short, the mission of CAS is:

- To provide a safe haven for abused, abandoned, and neglected horses and farm animals
- To heighten public awareness of the treatment of these animals and its impact on humans, animals, and the planet we share through innovative on and off-site programming
- To serve as an educational resource to schools and youth organizations by providing innovative on-site and school-based programming

History

Catskill Animal Sanctuary opened in January of 2001, the culmination of many months' research, travel, and internships at successful farm sanctuaries by founders Kathy Stevens and Jesse Moore. Our mission: to provide a safe and loving home for abused and abandoned horses and farm animals, and to raise public awareness of agribusiness and its impact on all of us.

Dino, the survivor of a Brooklyn arson that killed 23 horses, was our first resident on a property whose use was donated by an avid animal lover. Nine years later, CAS has provided a safe haven for 1,700 desperately needy farm animals and has found loving homes for 3/4 of those creatures.

In addition to direct "animal aid," CAS offers a wide variety of workshops and school programs designed to help school children with little exposure to farm animals experience them as the unique individuals they truly are. Other programs raise awareness of the institutionalized suffering of our food animals on factory farms, and of the environmental havoc wrought by agribusiness. Director Kathy Stevens visits over 50 schools, colleges, and community organizations annually, and students from dozens of regional schools spend a memorable day here each spring.

We moved to our permanent home in the Winter of 2003, and from 2003 to 2009, transformed a derelict abandoned property into an 80-acre haven comprised of a 20-stall main barn, six smaller barns, two houses, (including a pre-Revolutionary War era home that will be converted to space for out of town guests), 22 spacious pastures, paddocks and pens, 22 shelters, a large pond that attracts visiting wildlife, and a "Welcome Hut" that welcomes guests each weekend of our visiting season. In early 2010, CAS completed its conversion to solar energy, and may be the only sanctuary in the country to be 100% solar-powered.

Our director's first book, *Where the Blind Horse Sings: Love and Healing at an Animal Sanctuary*, was released in the Summer of 2007 to wide acclaim. It was released in paperback in August 2009. Kathy's second book, *Animal Camp*, will be released in winter 2010 by Skyhorse Publishing.

CAS has a staff of 7 full-time and 4 part-time employees. Over 100 active volunteers assist with everything from animal care, shelter cleaning, landscaping, to event planning. Our four-member board of directors assists with policy, financial management, and fundraising.

Kathy Stevens, Director and Founder

Kathy spent her childhood on a Virginia farm. It was in many ways an idyllic childhood, one that instilled in her a deep love of and respect for all animals. Little did she know how such a childhood would shape her future!

Kathy left the south for graduate school in Boston, MA, where she spent eleven years as a high school English teacher. She received widespread recognition for her novel approaches to education, and in 2000 was asked to head a charter school in Boston. Instead, one year later, she opened Catskill Animal Sanctuary, one of the country's leading havens for farm animals and a center for raising public awareness of their sentience and their suffering.

Kathy's first book, *Where the Blind Horse Sings*, shares the life-changing lessons learned from a blind horse, a sheep, a pig, and a rooster, and received much critical and popular acclaim. It has just been released in paperback after three hardcover printings. Her second book, *Animal Camp*, will be released in late 2010.

Kathy lives behind the barn with her dog Murphy, CAS's Director of Canine Pursuits, and her cats Fat Boy and Mouse. She's an avid reader, loves to hike, swim, and bike, and spends rare quiet time with her partner David and her close friends.

Media Contacts:

All members of the media should contact Michelle Alvarez, Director of Outreach and Communications, at michelle@casanctuary.org or (917) 414-9428. If you have general questions or comments about our programs and services, please visit our [Contact page](#), so we can effectively field your inquiries.)

Tours

We promise one thing: "tours" at Catskill Animal Sanctuary are unlike any you've ever experienced. For reasons that we'll explain when you arrive, many of our animals free range. Rather than living in enclosed pastures, they're free to go wherever they please throughout the work day. So when you drive into our parking lot, be prepared to have a chicken hop in your car, a sheep walk right up to say hello, or a pig saunter by in his relentless quest for food. If you're lucky, Casey the horse might suggest where you park.

On your tour, you'll learn the history and mission of CAS, our exciting plans for growth, and some of the lessons we've learned from our extraordinary animal friends. Information on agribusiness and its devastating consequences for animals, humans and the planet is shared honestly but with sensitivity to the ages of those on your tour (most of us are teachers). The pace is leisurely, with plenty of time for questions or enjoying quiet, one-on-one time with the critters.

CAS is open for tours every Saturday and Sunday, April 3 through October 31. Tours begin promptly at 11, 12, 1 and 2.

We--the humans, the horses, the cows, the pigs, and the rest of the CAS family--look forward to welcoming you.

Speaking Engagements

Our director, Kathy Stevens, speaks throughout the Northeast at conferences, schools and universities, and community organizations. Her inspirational talks, designed to meet the needs and interests of your group, address a variety of issues related to farm animals:

- animal intelligence and emotions
- the impact of agribusiness on animals, human health, and the planet
- running a successful sanctuary
- animals as teachers

Locally, Kathy has spoken at Bard College, SUNY New Paltz, Ulster County Community College, Fordham University, Pace University, chambers of commerce, vegetarian festivals and societies, many churches and temples, and virtually every elementary and middle school in Ulster County. She can sometimes be accompanied by an animal friend.

Kathy's speaking fee varies depending on travel time, amount of preparation required for the presentation, and your budget.

Camp Kindness

CAS looks forward to piloting Camp Kindness in the Summer of 2010, with the expectation that both a day and a sleep-away camp will be fully operational by Summer 2012.

At Camp Kindness, children aged 6 to 12 will create kindness contracts, help with barn chores, work in the garden, cook their own vegan lunches with our chef, and, of course, spend time with our animal friends! Important lessons about kindness will be interspersed with activity. Once fully operational, Camp Kindness will offer both sleep-away and daytime programs, as well as scholarships for children who would otherwise be unable to attend due to financial hardship.

Director Kathy Stevens is currently meeting with the Ulster County Board of Health to ensure we meet all requirements prior to opening in July. There will be four pilot sessions: two for children aged 6 to 8, and two for children aged 9 to 12.

Compassionate Cuisine

Food does more than keep us alive. It's a central part of our identity: it's part of our history, our traditions, indeed, our identity. No matter how different our diets are - carnivore, omnivore, vegetarian, or vegan - what unites us all is the importance of food in our lives, and our common desire for that which nourishes us to taste good!

Announcing Compassionate Cuisine!

Launching in April 2010 with chef extraordinaire Kevin Archer at the helm, Compassionate Cuisine will tickle your taste buds, but will also give you the skills, knowledge and confidence to create healthy, delicious, cruelty and cholesterol-free meals. We'll be offering afternoon workshops, extended courses, a "how-to" blog, and ultimately, a takeout service! Kevin will also be available to active CAS members within a 90-minute radius of CAS for cooking parties and instruction in your home!