



In 2012, GMAD rescued 18 adult and baby goats destined for slaughter and placed them in loving homes.

GREEN MOUNTAIN ANIMAL DEFENDERS

BURLINGTON, VT.

Tangible Progress

In the 1980s, the organization launched the state's first low-cost spay/neuter clinic, which has sterilized more than 74,000 cats and now runs independently. Goldfish and other small animals are no longer given as prizes at county fairs, and several fairs have canceled exotic animal acts. The fur stores in Burlington have all shut down. The organization has also helped strengthen state animal protection laws, including one that established a spay/neuter assistance program for low-income pet owners.

Smart Labor Practices

How does a volunteer-based organization accomplish so much? By enlisting students from area colleges to do much of the work. Since 2003, students have shared graphic design, computer, event planning, or other skills in exchange for college credits—and a robust education in animal protection.

Great Collaborators

GMAD is widely respected as a friend to the friends of animals. "We're actually invited to most humane society functions," says president Sharon MacNair. "They all know that if they're in a pinch, we'll come to their aid." Says Anne Ward, director of operations for the Central Vermont Humane Society: "Without GMAD, we would be stretched more than our resources can stretch."

GRASSROOTS' GUARDIANS

VERMONT GROUP TACKLES CRUELTY FROM ALL ANGLES

// BY JULIE FALCONER

SHARON MACNAIR was in line at her local hardware store in South Burlington, Vt., when a woman approached the cashier to complain. At the back of the store were baby chicks for sale. One chick was bleeding and being pecked by the others, and the woman's two children were upset.

An employee promised to take care of it, but when MacNair asked how, "he just snapped his hands like he was breaking a handful of spaghetti in half. So he was going to break her neck."

But by applying the calm tenacity she's known for, MacNair was soon on her way, toting a box with a bloody chick inside and a cup of feed. And Green Mountain Animal Defenders' chick rescue program—which has saved nearly 50 baby chickens, turkeys, and ducklings from hardware and feed stores—was born.

"Our tagline is working to protect all animals," says MacNair, the group's current president and a volunteer since it was founded in 1983. "It's a huge task. But we've not really ever turned down a campaign. ... We try our best, no matter what the need is, to do what's feasible."

GMAD has a reputation for

making things happen, says HSUS northeastern regional director Joanne Bourbeau. "Whenever there's a cruelty case, they'll find volunteers to help out. Whenever legislation needs a push, GMAD is the first group that contacts me and asks how they can help."

Volunteers set up tables in downtown Burlington to raise awareness of factory farming, pet overpopulation, animals in research, and more. They rescue animals in crisis, intervening to stop lethal trapping of beavers, transporting rescued goats to a new home, or saving pigeons caught in netting in parking garages. They also coordinate a cat spay/neuter program, pet food drives, a wildlife response network, and more.

Several wildlife rehabilitators in Vermont are saving lives because GMAD funded their training or provided cages and medical supplies. Now, the rehabbers are happy to repay the favor, says MacNair, by treating the twisted legs or broken wings of baby birds from the chick rescue program. "We've done so much for the wildlife rehabbers they can't help us enough."



A unique program saves chicks like this one.