By Aaron Yarmel

Last year, Jim Burns was asked about Ridglan Farms, a research beagle breeding facility located just under 30 miles west of downtown Madison, WI. Burns, the facility’s president and co-owner, responded with surprising candor. One thing he said was, “You don’t love doing it,... but that’s the business.” Another thing he said was, “[W]hat we do isn’t accepted by the general public as a positive thing.”

I commend Burns for simply admitting that his business is objectionable to himself (he doesn’t love what he does) and to society at large rather than equivocating or attempting to manage his company’s public image. Nevertheless, there remains something deeply problematic about his response.

Rapper Ice T, in his 1999 track, “Don’t Hate the Playa,” describes a scene where murderers, drug traffickers, and gamblers compete for fame and wealth. The competition is vicious and deadly. Some succeed, but most end up incarcerated or dead. His advice to those who fail is simply, “Don’t hate the player, hate the game.” To the extent that this game only affects those who have elected to play it, Ice T has a point: instead of criticizing those who meet the requirements that you yourself are trying to meet, you should criticize the game for demanding that those requirements be met in the first place.

Nevertheless, the effects of the game extend beyond those who voluntarily play it; innocent bystanders are harmed every day in the scene described by Ice T. If I am harmed in the course of your playing a game that I have not agreed to play, I need not restrict the scope of my criticisms to the game. I criticize both the game and those who harm me while playing it. When innocent bystanders are harmed, applying Ice T’s advice would be to overextend it beyond the context in which it is relevant.

It is clear now that Burns’ defense (you don’t love doing it, but that’s the business) is nothing more than Ice T’s recommendation: don’t hate the player, hate the game. And it rings just as hollow in the case of Ridglan Farms as it does in Ice T’s scene.

The rotten game that Ridglan Farms is engaged in is the business of betraying some of the most trusting, vulnerable, and innocent members of our community: beagles. Behind closed doors, beagles are deliberately bred with genetic abnormalities that will lead to (often
Ridglan Farms (Continued)

Alliance for Animals Kids

Alliance for Animals Kids is the latest branch of the Alliance, started by our youth ambassador, Miles Beining.

The group’s goals are to help kids learn ways to see the beauty in nature, speak out against injustice and educate them on speciesism and the social justice movement of our time: The Animal Liberation Movement.

Miles wants to create a better world by bringing together the next generation of adults to fight against the suffering of animals. He believes that when we work together, we can accomplish anything.

For more information email Miles at miles@allanimals.org

Wolves in the Great Lake Region

By Melissa Smith

It’s not so much that wolves should remain on the Endangered Species List for biological reasons, although that argument is valid for some, but certainly they should remain on the list until democracy and transparency exist in both state and federal wildlife and agricultural agencies. Those howling for delisting of the wolf in the Western Great Lakes would be better served by joining efforts to support democracy in wildlife management so that reasonable compromise could be met when making decisions about wolves. Currently there are no prime habitat protection zones and no tribal authority. There are no cultural considerations of the Ojibwe people written into the Western Great Lakes state’s wolf hunt laws and no place for the voices of wolf advocates.

The crisis we see now with environmental protection scalebacks and attacks on the Endangered Species Act make reform of state and federal wildlife management a priority. There appears to be widespread recognition of financial crisis within state agencies nationwide. The crisis is one of legitimacy, best available science, and representation. Wildlife advocates could most readily find common ground with agency personnel and leaders on restructuring the ways that these agencies are funded and by promoting revision of the North American Model so as to be more inclusive of non-
Dr. Will Tuttle Visits Wisconsin

By Marina Drake

Dr. Will Tuttle, author of the #1 Amazon best-selling book, The World Peace Diet: Eating for Spiritual Health and Social Harmony, and more recently, editor of Circles of Compassion: Essays Connecting Issues of Justice visited Wisconsin in September to give a number of talks and workshops. Dr. Tuttle, a former Zen monk with a PhD in Education from UC-Berkeley, as well as an accomplished musician and composer, now spends most of his time spreading the vegan message of compassion for all life in communities throughout the world, travelling with his wife, the artist Madelleine Tuttle.

During their visit, where Dr. Tuttle spoke at the First Unitarian Society, an event sponsored by the Madison chapter of Dharma Voices for Animals, Alliance Board member Marina Drake spoke with him about the ideas of The World Peace Diet.

In answer to the question, “Is veganism an all or nothing proposition? Put another way, can we be vegetarian or vegan, and do good, either way?” Dr. Tuttle said:

“I think essentially the difference between vegetarianism and veganism is that veganism has that ethical foundation. Donald Watson, when he coined the word vegan, said that it’s a philosophy and way of life that seeks to exclude, as far as possible and practica-
Two activists from Animal Equality, an international farmed animal advocacy organization, visited Wisconsin universities in September. They brought with them a new tool developed to reach students and encourage them to make compassionate choices.

Animal Equality has utilized virtual reality technology to launch their iAnimal project featuring a short "movie" about the lives of farmed pigs. They are currently developing two more movies; one on chickens and one on dairy cows.

Unlike traditional videos, iAnimal is an immersive experience in which the viewer wears virtual reality goggles. One is able to experience the world from the perspective of the animals themselves, with the ability to look in around their environment in every direction. Instead of watching what goes on inside a concentrated animal unit or slaughter house the viewer is virtually put inside of one. Everything shown in the video is common farming practice and legal.

Although iAnimal contains intense content most students watched most or all of the film, and many pledged to reduce their animal product consumption. Animal Equality is willing to share their technology with the Alliance so we encourage you to show your support by helping us purchase two units this spring. For more information about this revolutionary project visit www.ianimal360.com/.

A cookbook that Denise Deserio, a former Alliance Executive Director, edited last fall has just been released. The Master Plants Cookbook covers not just the HOW, but also the WHY of choosing a plant-based diet for optimum health. Over 100 dishes as artful and stunning visually as they are delicious.