

ANIMAL RESCUE LEAGUE of BOSTON



NEWS RELEASE

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ARL President Mary Nee Announces Retirement

Nee second female president in ARL's 120-year history

Today, **Mary Nee**, President of the Animal Rescue League of Boston (ARL), is announcing her retirement after nearly 43-years leading nonprofit and government agencies in the City of Boston. Nee's last official day at ARL will be May 1.

Mary became just the second female President of ARL when she began her tenure in 2012, the first being the organization's founder, Anna Harris Smith (1901-1922).

During her seven years of leadership, Mary aimed to strengthen the organization as a whole, and implement innovative programs to broaden ARL's reach. Mary led the analysis and adoption of a [strategic vision](#) for the future that positioned ARL to focus on animals and people "most in need", bringing services directly into neighborhoods and communities across Eastern Massachusetts.

Today this vision is realized through the [Wellness Waggin'](#) that delivers low-cost veterinary services each week to residents in the Dorchester, Roxbury and Mattapan neighborhoods, and, the expansion of the mobile [Spay Waggin'](#) which brings low cost spay and neuter services to Southeastern MA including communities such as Brockton, New Bedford and Fall River. Also launched was, the [Community Cat Initiative](#) that serves feral cats with great success in trapping, treating and ultimately adopting out a majority of the cats to forever homes.

Under her watch, ARL aggressively investigated cases of animal abuse and neglect including, the investigation and conviction related to the abuse suffered by the young dog known as "Puppy Doe", the 1,400 animals found suffering on a Westport, MA farm, and dozens of cases, involving thousands of animals, who suffered due to animal hoarding.

The lessons learned from these law enforcement investigations guided public policy and legislative advocacy. Mary established the first Advocacy office at ARL and served on the Animal Cruelty and Protection Task Force, which led to the drafting and passage of several pieces of legislation to strengthen protection for animals in Massachusetts.

To support the protection of all animals, Mary collaborated with Animal Folks (MN) and the Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine at Tufts University to produce *Reporting Animal Cruelty Manual* for veterinary professionals. This comprehensive manual supports veterinarians in their legal responsibilities to report animal cruelty and is now available to all practitioners in MA, with ARL offering trainings for veterinarians, law enforcement, and animal welfare colleagues on the law and procedures for animal cruelty reporting.

Looking to the future, under Mary's leadership, numerous capital projects were launched including, rebuilding the Dedham Animal Care and Adoption Center and developing masterplans and designs for new facilities on the Dedham and Boston campuses.

"While my decision to retire is personal, it is also made with a sense that ARL is in a very good place," Nee stated. "Having established a strategic vision focused on serving animals and people most in need, we are seeing the benefits of this direction through increasing impact to the most vulnerable of our community. For me being a part of ARL, its compassionate work and tireless efforts of staff, volunteer and donors alike who have responded to nearly 125,000 animals over the past 7-plus years, is enormously rewarding and I will cherish having been part of this amazing organization for the rest of my life."

"During her tenure, Mary enhanced areas of strength and implemented the changes necessary to keep the organization relevant and in sync with the needs of animal welfare today," said **Walter Kenyon, ARL's Chairman of the Board of Directors**. "I am grateful Mary chose to make ARL the capstone to her long and meritorious career and I wish her much happiness in this next chapter of her life."

Previous to ARL, Mary served as Boston's first Director of Capital Planning and later was head of the city's Public Facilities Department. Mary later went on to the United Way of Massachusetts, hopeFound (formerly Friends of the Shattuck Shelter, which she merged with Pine Street Inn) and, spearheaded efforts to plan and build a permanent facility for the Neighborhood Charter School in Dorchester.

ARL's Board of Directors has been closely involved in planning for Mary's retirement and in the coming weeks they intend to communicate their thoughts on future leadership.

ABOUT THE ANIMAL RESCUE LEAGUE OF BOSTON:

The Animal Rescue League of Boston (ARL) is an unwavering champion for animals in need, committed to keeping them safe and healthy in habitats and homes. Founded in 1899, ARL provides high quality veterinary care, adoption, and rescue services; while also confronting the root causes of animal cruelty and neglect through innovative community programs, police investigations, and public advocacy. In 2018, ARL served 17,000 animals throughout Massachusetts. ARL is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization. We receive no government grants or public funding and rely solely on the generosity of individuals to support programs and services that help animals in need. For more information please visit us online at www.arlboston.org; and be sure to follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).