

History

RedRover (formerly United Animal Nations) is a 501 (c)(3) not-for-profit organization that was founded in 1987 by animal rights pioneer Belton P. Mouras. Based in Sacramento, California, Mr. Mouras led a small group of humane movement workers on a mission to protect animals globally and unify people for animals' sake.

In the beginning, United Animal Nations (UAN) responded to a wide range of animal issues, including: elephant poaching in Africa, pet overpopulation, horse slaughter, whaling, inhumane treatment of primates in research, animals left behind during natural disasters and a variety of other animal cruelty and abuse situations.

From the late 80s through the 90s, it supported a ban for the use of carriage horses, humane treatment for animals in the entertainment industry, Fur Free Friday, Earth Day, dolphin-safe tuna, saving horses from the inhumane Premarin production industry, animal anti-cruelty rewards and much more.

Through the mid-2000s, advocacy efforts continued for the elimination of animal abuse and reduction of suffering of animals used in entertainment, animals used in research, farm animals, wildlife and exotics.

With new leadership came refined focus. Nicole Forsyth was hired as President and CEO in 2006, and she brought the vision of preventing animal abuse by building and fostering empathy and compassion in children toward animals. Although helping animals in immediate crisis, such as natural disasters, has been a mainstay of the organization and this continues today, The Zig Zag Memorial Reward Fund for cruelty cases, the Premarin Awareness Campaign, The My Dog is Cool Campaign and the Hogwash Award designed to bring awareness to abuse were discontinued over the years and proactive efforts to create lasting positive change expanded.

As the animal welfare movement matured and the organization grew, the geographic reach was narrowed to the United States and Canada. United Animal Nations focused on the programs where it could be most effective and most needed; therefore, rescue efforts and aid moved away from exotics and farm animals and focused more on companion animals.

Each year rescue efforts continued to expand as our volunteer corps grew. UAN participated in many high-profile disasters, such as the Exxon Valdez oil spill in Alaska (1989), the Yellowstone wildfire (1988), Hurricanes Andrew (1992), Hugo (1989) and Katrina (2005), the Northridge earthquake (1994), Kobe, the Japan earthquake (1995), the 9/11 terrorist attack (2001), Northern California floods (1997) and many more.

From its inception, a quarterly magazine (Journal of the United Animal Nations) was the primary education tool delivered to members. This magazine was later named Companion to represent the new focus on empathy and the human-animal bond.

In 2011, Ms. Forsyth led the charge to change the name from United Animal Nations to RedRover to better reflect their work. Red was an already important and active color in the organization, representing strength, determination and passion, and the name RedRover captured the energy, dedication and tireless work of the organization, volunteers, supporters and donors.

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During this time, the wide array of programs were streamlined to the three that are now the primary focus: RedRover Responders, RedRover Relief and RedRover Readers. RedRover's mission also became more well defined - to bring animals out of crisis and strengthen the bond between people and animals through emergency sheltering, disaster relief services, financial assistance and education.

RedRover Responders (formerly Emergency Animal Rescue Service) works in cooperation with law enforcement, local agencies and animal organizations to provide lifesaving care and sheltering for animals displaced by natural disasters, cruelty and neglect. The RedRover Responders volunteers corps are committed to helping animals in need and are the backbone of these efforts. This program is often described as the "Red Cross for animals." Since 1987, RedRover Responders have:

- Dispatched to more than 220 deployments, 95 of which have been natural disasters
- Been to 39 states/provinces total, as well as Japan and Poland
- Held more than 380 volunteer training workshops
- Trained more than 9,000 volunteers

RedRover Relief (formerly LifeLine Grant Program) has helped thousands of animals through financial assistance, resources and emotional support. Historically grants were also provided to animal rescue organizations, but evolved to where needed most: helping pet owners care for companion animals in life-threatening situations. Through this program, resources are also available to help victims of domestic violence escape abusive environments with their beloved pets.

RedRover Readers (formerly Humane Education Ambassador Readers) helps elementary school children understand the emotional states of others, develop the skills needed for empathy and explore the bond between people and animals through select stories and discussion. To date, the RedRover Readers program has reached more than 100,000 children, read with 638 different classrooms or groups in 356 different schools/locations nationwide and in Canada. More than 2,020 teachers, humane educators, and volunteers have been trained to implement the program. In the spring of 2017, Kind News™ magazine was adopted from the Humane Society of the United States and serves as another valuable tool to bring humane education to more classrooms across the United States.

In 2017, RedRover celebrated its 30th year helping animals and is committed to many more. Its five-year goals are focused on increasing RedRover Responders volunteer corps, reaching 40,000 more children through the RedRover Readers program and ensuring that there are pet-friendly domestic violence shelters in every state through the RedRover Relief program.

Leadership 1987- Present

Belton P. Mouras

Jeanine Westin

Mercedes Chatfield Taylor

Jennifer Fearing

Nicole Forsyth