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REPORT

Spring 1983

HSUS Rescues Abandoned Zoo Animals

For eight years two lions and two Himalayan bears lived in a cramped tractor trailer cage as part of the traveling "African Safari Zoo." While passing through Harlingen, Texas, the owner decided to leave the trailer behind for repairs. The four animals were also left behind with only a small supply of food.

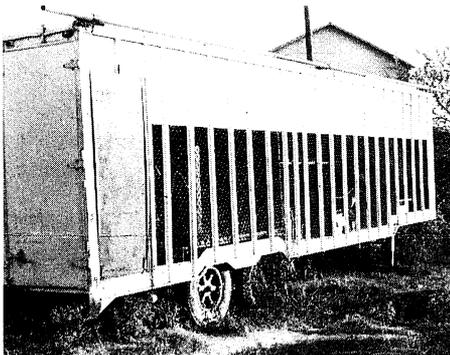
The repair work amounted to over \$2000 and the owner apparently decided to just abandon the truck and animals rather than pay the bill. For the next five months the truck sat idle. No one

locally knew where to turn for help. Fortunately, the garage owner had enough compassion to feed and water the animals during that time.

As soon as the abandonment was brought to the attention of The HSUS Gulf States Office, good things began to happen. HSUS field investigator, Bernie Weller, traveled to the scene, organized the legal seizure of the four animals, and assisted in charges being placed against the owner.

At the court hearing, it was determined

the owner was guilty of abandonment, and the animals were auctioned off as required by law. The HSUS placed a bid and was awarded the animals. Investigator Weller located a drive-thru zoo in Gentry, Arkansas, that could furnish the animals a good home. Proper cages and a large truck were obtained by The HSUS for the journey. After a long, two-day trip, the bears and lions arrived at their new natural-habitat zoo.



This trailer was converted to a cage for the lions and bears. The so-called zoo traveled around the country with the animals continually in their small prisons. After the trailer broke down, they were abandoned. HSUS opposes this type of traveling-animal exhibit.



After rescue and transport by The HSUS, the bears are unloaded at the drive-thru zoo in Gentry, Arkansas. The animals now have large outdoor compounds with trees and room to exercise. This zoo provides a more significant educational experience for the public.





Director's Comment

By Bill Meade

Animal shelters have always been thought of as a place that is supposed to do the best thing possible for lost or unwanted animals. For many animals this means being reunited with their owners,

or placed in responsible new homes. In other cases, it means the animal must be euthanized without pain or fear. Never was it envisioned that an animal shelter would become a stockpiling place for dogs and cats to be sold or given away for animal experimentation. Yet, in many cities within our region, this is exactly what is happening.

Each of us needs to check and be sure our local shelters do not supply animals for experimentation. If you find your city does, contact me and we will help you end this misuse of animals at your local shelter.

New Training for Shelter Personnel

The new Texas Animal Shelter Standards Law requires the state to "prescribe standards and charge reasonable fees for the training of animal shelter personnel as to animal health and disease control, humane care and treatment, control of animals in an animal shelter, and the transportation of animals."

This law was enacted through the efforts of the Texas Humane Information Network, the Texas Department of Health, and The HSUS. During 1982, the Texas Department of Health initiated this Basic Animal Control Officer Certification training program. Additionally, an Advanced Program and Administrative Training Program are being planned for 1983 and 1984.

Many problems of abuse to animals and a lack of professionalism among animal-control employees prompted the law. There have been reports of shooting being used as a routine euthanasia method; animals not being fed; animals' quarters not cleaned regularly, and no protection from weather extremes being furnished.

The law provides this training for all animal shelter personnel, whether it is a private humane society or a government animal-control shelter.

Initial programs have been a tremendous success. For additional information, contact Texas Department of Health, 1100 W. 49th Street, Austin, Texas 78756.

Oklahoma Fights Pound Seizure

Local humane societies and The HSUS fought a hot battle recently to stop the University of Oklahoma from seizing shelter animals for use in experiments.

Oklahoma is one of only seven states that requires release of shelter animals, on demand, for research purposes. University officials informed Oklahoma City authorities they would start taking animals from the city's animal shelter. Legally, the city had no choice but to allow the action.

The HSUS contacted the University's officials and tried to convince them "pound seizure" was unfair to citizens who expect their shelter to be a safe holding place while owners look for lost pets. The University refused to change its position and pushed ahead with plans to start seizing animals.

It has been shown in national surveys that people will not trust shelters once they know animals are turned over to research. The result is that many lost animals will be left to roam as strays rather than be turned in to the shelter.

During this effort to stop pound seizure, all Oklahoma humane societies united solidly on behalf of the animals. Even though the university was not stopped, the joint effort has resulted in great public interest in the issue of pound seizure.

Representative Steve Sill has recently agreed to introduce a bill



Lost pets should be safe from laboratory experimental use. However, Oklahoma law allows these animals to be "seized" for research.

in the state legislature to end pound seizure. The bill would make illegal the release of dogs or cats from shelters for experiments or research.

This is a tremendously important bill for Oklahoma and should be supported by all concerned people. Letters of support may be sent to your own state representatives and state senators at the Oklahoma State Capitol Building, Oklahoma City, OK 73105.

February 1983

Brutality Found in Livestock Auctions

"These animals are going to the slaughterhouse anyway, so it really doesn't matter how rough they are handled." This seems to be what many auction-barn operators around the Gulf States region are saying.

Citizens' complaints of torment and brutality at livestock auctions prompted your regional office to investigate these operations in recent months. Sale barns in Navasota, Edinburg, Rio Grande City, Hebbronville, Beeville, Alice, and Victoria (Texas) were visited by HSUS field investigator, Bernie Weller.

What was found at many of these auctions was more fitting for a torture movie than for an industry with a vested interest in animals. The usual animal-handling tools of the auction personnel were clubs, whips, and hot shots. The intention seemed to be to move the animals from truck to pen to sales ring as fast as possible, regardless of how much whipping and hitting was involved.

Cattle and calves were relentlessly jabbed and shocked with the hot shot. In one case, a calf was trampled and killed by frightened cattle being unloaded. In this instance, we asked the county attorney to invoke the state anti-cruelty statute to prevent any re-occurrence. The auction barn owner has been put on notice by the county attorney that employees must not handle animals in a cruel manner.

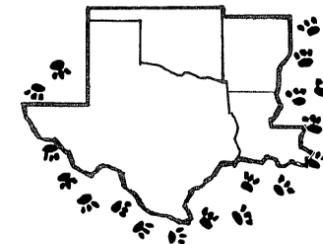
Our investigations show this problem of animal mistreatment in auction barns is the rule rather than the exception. Significant improvement could come about if local citizens and humane societies would investigate auctions in their



Cattle in most auction barns were found by The HSUS to be constantly exposed to overcrowding, rough handling, and sometimes blatant cruelty, through beating and clubbing. HSUS is acting to stop this suffering.

area and expose any cruelty they found, using news media, and the courts if necessary.

The HSUS Gulf States Office is sending a formal letter of warning to every auction barn in our region urging self-policing. If this does not substantially alleviate the problem, legal action will be recommended to alleviate conditions for animals going through these establishments.



Around The Region

- *Okmulgee, OK.* The Humane Society is well on its way with plans to build a new shelter to replace the city's current inadequate one. HSUS was brought in to help them plan a first-rate facility for the animals.
- *New Orleans, LA.* Forty roosters were taken into custody by the Louisiana SPCA following a police raid of a cockfighting operation. Unfortunately, because cockfighting is legal in Louisiana, the birds had to be returned to the owner.
- *Amarillo, TX.* The Amarillo-Panhandle Humane Society recently donated new cages for the city's animal-control trucks. The new cages will give animals the protection they need from weather extremes.
- *Little Rock, AR.* City Animal Control continues their highly successful pet therapy program for senior citizens. This program brings pets to nursing-home residents for companionship and a lift of spirits.
- *Oklahoma City, OK.* A new organization named the Oklahoma Humane Association has been formed to promote humane education, wildlife protection, and state legislation. Humane concerns are growing rapidly throughout Oklahoma.

HSUS ANNUAL CONFERENCE HEADS TO FORT WORTH, TEXAS

The HSUS Gulf States Office will be host to the 1983 Annual HSUS Conference from October 12 to October 15, 1983. The conference will be held in Fort Worth, Texas. Norman Cousins will be the keynote speaker in a program packed with informative presentations and workshops by animal welfare leaders.

Why not mark your calendar and plan to join members, friends, and nationally known animal-welfare experts for an inspiring week in the friendly city of Fort Worth?

Remember Animals In Your Will

There's only one way to make sure you can help animals after you are gone...make a Will and provide for them in it. HSUS will send you an informative booklet without obligation about how to make the best of your animal welfare bequest.

Write in complete confidence to:
Murdaugh Stuart Madden
Vice President/General Counsel
The Humane Society of the United States
2100 L Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20037

HSUS Recommends:

Giving "Tickets" to Stop Stray Dogs

One of the biggest problems of animal shelters and animal-control agencies is how to capture stray animals. Part of the answer is that not all strays need to be taken to the shelter.

The "ticket" or citation system permits animal-control officers to cite a pet owner for a violation instead of impounding the animal. The animal-control citation is similar to the traffic ticket system used by police departments.

With the citation system, an officer observing an animal running at large may pursue it toward its home and attempt to identify the owner by questioning area residents. If the owner can be identified, then he or she is issued a citation.

This system eliminates the need for an animal to be taken into the custody of the shelter. Thus, pets are spared the stress of impoundment and contact with other animals carrying infectious diseases.

Also, the system can account for a substantial reduction in the cost of animal-control operations. The number of im-

poundments is reduced which, in turn, eliminates the problems of overcrowding.

Although pet owners and the animal shelter benefit, the greatest value of the citation system is as a deterrent to irresponsible pet ownership. Often, the most negligent pet owners are too apathetic to retrieve an impounded animal, and they escape legal penalties they should suffer for failing to restrain their animals.

Phyllis Wright, HSUS Vice President, believes shelters may actually be subsidizing irresponsible pet ownership by eliminating the animal that has outgrown its cuteness. Wright feels many irresponsible pet owners replace impounded animals with cuddly puppies and kittens, thereby perpetuating the community's animal control problems.

The citation system holds pet owners accountable for their conduct even in instances where the animal is unwanted and not reclaimed. It should be noted, however, that the system is workable only when there is a vigorous, ongoing licensing program.



The Gulf States Regional Report is a publication of:

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