



Awaiting Release

HSUS-backed bill would end use of chimps in laboratories

The last time Samantha Elaine Struthers saw her friend Lennie, he was hunched over, alone in a cage at an Alamogordo, N.M., research lab then known as the Coulston Foundation. The once warm, animated chimpanzee, whom Struthers had groomed and been groomed by many times, stared listlessly down through the bars, studying the bare concrete floor.

Because he had been infected with HIV, Struthers had to approach him wearing a white protective suit, gloves, goggles, a surgical cap, and a mask. Not until she spoke did he recognize her and show glimpses of the old Lennie—stomping his feet, banging on the cage, making buzzing noises. But, clearly desperate to escape his isolation, he also made uncharacteristic submissive gestures, grinning repeatedly and whimpering. Plaintively, he reached through the bars.

“It was really heartbreaking,” says Struthers, who on that day 14 years ago was director of behavioral sciences at the Coulston Foundation but now believes the animals’ social and psychological needs

cannot be met in labs. “He’d be like my age, like around 50 now. ... I never saw him on those lists that they said went to sanctuaries.”

Lennie never found his freedom; unbeknownst to Struthers, he died of a heart attack in 2002. But in January, nearly 190 chimpanzees still at the Alamogordo facility got a reprieve with the help of former New Mexico governor Bill Richardson and others: The National Institutes of Health said the chimps will not be made available for invasive tests while an independent review of chimpanzee research is conducted. Elsewhere in the U.S., about 800 other chimpanzees continue to languish in laboratories, even though they have proved poor models for research on human diseases and demand for them as test subjects has dwindled.

Struthers is among several hundred scientists and former lab workers who support efforts to end biomedical research on all chimpanzees, ban breeding to provide more chimps for labs, and retire the 500

federally owned animals to sanctuaries—where they would receive more humane care at lower cost to the government. Seeking to codify these changes, The HSUS is working to get the federal Great Ape Protection Act reintroduced this year. In the previous session of Congress, the bill had broad bipartisan support. Many cosponsors were won over by a 2009 HSUS investigation that documented more than 300 alleged Animal Welfare Act violations at the New Iberia Research Center in Louisiana. The HSUS also recently released records showing that the center was violating an NIH ban on breeding federally owned chimps—and that 14 infant chimps have been mauled to death since 2000, says Kathleen Conlee, HSUS director of program management for animal research issues. The HSUS is asking the government to investigate and immediately end taxpayer-supported breeding there.

Conditions at New Iberia remind Rachel Weiss, president of the Laboratory Primate Advocacy Group, of her mid-1990s experiences taking care of chimpanzees at the Yerkes National Primate Research Center in Atlanta. Ask Weiss why people should support the bill, and she tells the story of a chimp named Arctica, a veteran of vaccine and HIV research who had grown old and mean within Yerkes’ windowless confines, pacing about in her cage.

“She had steel gray hair,” says Weiss. “... She would grab you and try to scratch you through your gloves. She would spit in your face.”

Six years ago Weiss learned that the surviving chimpanzees from Arctica’s group had been released to Chimp Haven sanctuary in Louisiana. Weiss went to visit them, and there was Arctica, transformed: “She got up on the fence and she put her belly up to the fence. And she screamed, and she cried. ... She was a whole different person. ... She was dark. And she didn’t look mean anymore. She was happy.”

The Great Ape Protection Act would release hundreds more chimpanzees to finally enjoy a decent life. — **Karen E. Lange**

➤ **SHOW YOUR SUPPORT** for the Great Ape Protection Act at humansociety.org/chimps.



Creature Comforts Coats for Cubs gives fur back to the animals

The two fox kits were just a few weeks old when their mom was hit by a car, orphaning them by the roadside. When a passerby stopped to help, tragedy struck again: His dog jumped out of the car and killed one of the youngsters.

At the Alpine Meadows Wildlife Rehab facility in Floyd, N.M., the surviving kit (shown above, top left) arrived scared and angry, with an injured toe, says wildlife rehabilitator Angela Burch. Snappy “had a chip on his shoulder, and I just let him keep it.”

Fortunately, Burch had something on hand to soothe the traumatized animal: fur bedding from The HSUS’s Coats for Cubs program.

Last year, the program distributed more than 4,300 donated fur garments to 200 licensed wildlife rehabilitators across the nation. Secondhand clothing retailer Buffalo Exchange has been a key partner in

this effort since 2006, setting up collection bins in its 40 locations and two franchise stores from November through April. Some garments are ripped or soiled, so people are happy to get rid of them, says company president Kerstin Block. But many are in mint condition, donated by people who “feel that this is really the righteous thing to do—to give the fur back to the animals.”

This message is also spread by young animal lovers who set up Coats for Cubs drives at their schools or churches. “It’s such a great opportunity to educate people in an upbeat way about the fur issue,” says Heidi O’Brien, HSUS student outreach director. “The public seems to be thrilled that they can use fur they’re embarrassed to own in such a positive way.”

While saddened by the cruelty of the fur industry, Burch calls the garments a “godsend” for the orphaned rabbits, squir-

rels, foxes, deer, and other animals in her care. For animals who are terrified and won’t nurse, “you wrap them up in the fur coat and they’ll start looking for a nipple.” Burch pokes a hole in the garment, slips in a bottle, and watches as a previously shell-shocked orphan enjoys a meal.

In August, four months after she took him in, Burch released Snappy along with three other rehabbed foxes on her 640-acre property. Some nights, she catches glimpses of these survivors—living reminders of her hard work, made easier through a program that returns fur to its most rightful owners.

For a tiny gray fox named for his snappish attitude, Burch says, “that fur coat made all the difference.” — *Julie Falconer*

▶ **FOR MORE** on the Coats for Cubs program, or instructions for donating fur garments, visit humansociety.org/coatsforcubs.

Full Disclosure



Real or fake? Until now, people who wanted to avoid buying fur products had few ways to discern the difference. But thanks to a new federal law, humane-minded consumers can make more informed choices. Since 1951, companies haven't been required to label the species and country of origin on clothing with a certain amount of fur, defined today as \$150 or less. As a result, thousands of garments may have been sold each year with no indication of what they're made of: pelts of animals trapped inhumane in the wild or raised in small cages and killed in gruesome ways.

While the ever-increasing sophistication of faux fur has been an exciting development for conscientious fashionistas, the phenomenon has had a flip side. Through microscopy, mass spectrometry, and other detection methods, HSUS staff

have discovered rampant marketplace misinformation: fur garments promoted as faux or with incorrect species information—or not labeled at all. Armed with these findings, The HSUS secured support for a bill to close the labeling loophole from consumer protection groups and companies such as Gucci, Burberry, and Overstock.com. Major retailers like Saks Fifth Avenue, Bloomingdale's, and Macy's also signed on when settling consumer deception lawsuits filed by The HSUS.

Signed into law in December, the Truth in Fur Labeling Act takes effect this month. As to whether companies will comply, they have only to look to the example of the 300-plus retailers, designers, and brands that have joined The HSUS's fur-free list. "It's not the fur consumers want," says Andrew Page, senior director of the Fur-Free Campaign. "It's the look—without skinning animals alive." — *Karen E. Lange*



Victory for Sharks

On a longline fishing boat off the Galapagos Islands, a concerned biologist working undercover as a cook films a horrifying scene.

As the camera rolls, a blue shark is dragged up from the water, a sharp hook piercing out through the side of his face. As the shark tries to wiggle free, a shirtless man enters the picture.

Soon, he's using a knife to cut into the large pectoral fin on the shark's left side. Another man steps on the right fin, pinning

it down as the animal swings his tail in desperation, blood streaming across the deck. A second fin is cut off, then a third and a fourth.

Finally, the men kick the shark back into the water, where the animal tries to swim off, half-spinning, half-slithering away—another victim of the cruel practice known as shark finning, which kills tens of millions of animals per year to supply the market for shark fin soup, a status symbol in Chinese culture.

"It's like cutting off your limbs and leaving you to bleed to death," says Rebecca Regnery, deputy director of wildlife at Humane Society International, noting that sharks can die of suffocation, blood loss, starvation, or predation by other fish. Dumping the bodies back into the water and leaving the fins to dry on deck frees up freezer space, which fishermen can save for more lucrative meats like swordfish and tuna. The high killing rates can wreak havoc on ecosystems where sharks reign atop the food chain.

But while it's too late to save that ill-fated shark in the Galapagos, sharks in U.S. waters will now be better protected thanks to congressional passage of the Shark Conservation Act, which President Obama signed into law in early January.

The measure requires fishermen to bring sharks back to port with their fins still naturally attached, closing loopholes in a previous finning ban. Just as importantly, it gives HSI staff a stronger hand in negotiating increased protections with the European Union and nations such as Australia, Mexico, Argentina, Chile, Japan, and Indonesia. As Regnery says: "It's hard to convince other countries to clean up their act when you have problems in your own country." — *Michael Sharp*



No More Business As Usual

In a city famous for heavy hitters like Henry Ford, Joe Louis, and the Detroit Tigers, the name Pam Sordyl may not get instant recognition. But among animal advocates, she's known for delivering knockouts to a formidable opponent: puppy mills.

▶ **WHY WE LOVE HER:** The indefatigable Michigan native has singlehandedly built a volunteer corps that hits the abusive industry where it hurts most—its wallet. Come rain, snow, or shine, the group spends Saturdays conducting “Adopt, Don’t Shop” demonstrations outside pet stores that do business with puppy mills, which subject animals to desperate lives of confinement and neglect. Sordyl is racking up the wins: Since 2008, five of the puppy-selling pet stores she’s targeted have closed.

▶ **THE BACK STORY:** Laid off from her job as a General Motors financial analyst, Sordyl makes full use of her business savvy. Inspired after attending The HSUS’s Taking Action for Animals conference in 2007, she founded the Southeast Michigan Puppy Mill Awareness Meetup to protest a boutique pet store in Northville.

▶ **POLICE PRESENCE:** Concerned that sign-carrying protesters might alienate residents of the upscale community, Sordyl decided to hold a parade instead, even staging a rehearsal to gauge reactions. The store owner called the police, who told Sordyl to leave. She complied but was surprised when the officer, after talking with the owner, followed her and apologized. “[He] said ‘I actually saw this on TV. ... [My wife and I] know about puppy mills, and I don’t think [the owner] is on the up-and-up.’ He told us to come back.” About 60 people turned out for the parade, accompanied by rescued dogs wearing “Priceless” price tags. So, too, did the police, who declined to intervene. Now in frequent contact with law enforcement, Sordyl even receives thank-you e-mails from a sergeant in one town where she’s been protesting.

▶ **“DUE DILIGENCE”:** “I love this phrase,” says Sordyl. “This was one thing I learned on the job.” She pores over shipping records and USDA inspection reports and even travels out of state to document conditions at breeding facilities. One store owner insisted the dogs at his breeder had grass and shade trees. “But I know different,” says Sordyl. She has the horrible inspection report and photographs of feces-laden wire cages to prove it.

▶ **HURRICANE WITH A HEART:** With the area’s economy hit hard, Sordyl doesn’t want to put people out of business. “I grew up in Flint, and definitely boycotting is the last resort,” she says. A negotiator, she writes letters, meets with store owners, and offers to help replace puppy sales with in-store adoption events. But she doesn’t hesitate to take action when necessary. Following a fruitless meeting with one store owner, Sordyl informed mall managers of her intent to protest. Ten days after she issued an action alert, the store liquidated.

▶ **EYES ON THE PRIZE:** Working from a database of licensed dog breeders, Sordyl has compiled a list of Michigan puppy mills, a handy tool when she and HSUS Michigan state director Jill Fritz conduct lobbying workshops. Her group supports legislation to tackle the problem, while her persuasiveness is helping The HSUS reach a new milestone: As of January, with the help of advocates like her, more than 1,000 stores nationwide had signed its puppy-friendly pet store pledge.

— **Arna Cohen**

▶ **LEARN MORE** about The HSUS’s Taking Action for Animals conference in July at humanesociety.org/tafa.



THIS PAGE, FROM TOP: PAT PORTELLI; THE HSUS. OPPOSITE PAGE: MARCUS GYGER/HSI

Quoted: Strong Words for Pigs

If you’re not already anti-factory-farming, this will do it: The Humane Society just released an undercover investigation ... into the obscene abuses of female breeding pigs and piglets by Smithfield Foods, the world’s largest (and probably most profitable) producer of pork. The video leaves me pretty much speechless.

I’m usually not one to cry “boycott,” but if you, like Paula Deen, are a Smithfield supporter—in fact, if you’re still eating industrially raised pork (or chicken or beef or fish for that matter)—get real. Any industry (and Smithfield is hardly alone, though it does seem to be performing most egregiously) that operates with such infuriating disregard for the welfare of their animals deserves all the trouble we can muster.

— Food writer and *New York Times* columnist Mark Bittman, in his blog on The HSUS’s recent investigation of abuses at a Virginia factory farm owned by a Smithfield Foods subsidiary



Blood Money

Canada's seal hunt is a waste of life—and tax dollars

Why does Canada persist in its annual commercial seal hunt—the largest mass slaughter of marine mammals in the world? It's not about the economy: Sealing revenues are a small fraction of the subsidies that prop up this gruesome industry. And it's not about jobs: Sealing provides little more than off-season pickup money for just 5,000 to 6,000 fishermen.

72%
Canadians who think the seal hunt is a waste of tax dollars*

Nevertheless, the Canadian Coast Guard spends millions of tax dollars each year on monitoring the hunt, breaking up ice for sealing vessels, and providing search and rescue services to the crews. This comes on top of government funding for market research and development, grants and loans to seal processing plants, and lobbying efforts before foreign governments.

In the wake of The HSUS's campaign to end the inhumane slaughter, the costs-benefits equation has become even more lopsided. Pelt prices have dropped by half, while a global boycott of Canadian seafood has taken a sizeable chomp out of the nation's fishery exports. The hunt also dampens tourism and deters investment in more sustainable and lucrative alternatives for Atlantic coastal communities, such as wildlife-watching businesses.

Though few Canadians support the hunt, politicians who fear losing votes in sealing regions remain staunch defenders. Since many government handouts to sealing interests go unreported, it's impossible to know exactly how much Canada's taxpayers are shelling out for the controversial hunt. Even so, the 2009–2010 numbers presented at right make it clear that every spring, when the killings begin, Canadians are losing much more than the world's good opinion.

— Julie Falconer

* Environics Research Group, 2008 poll.

** Numbers don't include government funds for staffing Marine Security Operation Centres, sums paid to a commercial airline for aerial surveillance, and other unreported or unquantifiable expenses.

*** Estimate based on The Economics of Ending Canada's Commercial Harp Seal Hunt by John Livernois, 2009.

WHAT IT BRINGS IN



\$2,168,097
Total market value of the Newfoundland commercial seal hunt in 2009 and 2010

WHAT IT COSTS



\$9,284,253
Canadian government's reported expenditures**



Priceless
141,582 seal lives from 2009 to 2010

WHERE THE MONEY GOES

\$200,000
Subsidy for public relations campaign to promote sealing industry

\$89,000
Lobbying against the European ban on seal product trade

\$325,253
Marketing grants for overseas promotion of seal products

\$8,600,000
Coast Guard icebreaker support for the hunt***

\$20,000
Grant to sealers' association to develop a business plan

\$50,000
Grant to sealers' cooperative to develop "value-added" seal products

