DIVISION REPORT

ADOPT-A-TEACHER
The National Association for Humane and Environmental Education (NAHeE), The HSUS’s youth-education division, extends appreciation to the thousands of individuals and organizations that participated in the Adopt-A-Teacher program in 1992. Special thanks go to the donors listed here, who each adopted 80 or more teachers and enabled 2,500 or more children to receive KIND News every month during the school year.

1992’s Special Donors
Allen SPCA; John W. Anderson Foundation; Animal Protection and Education Association; Animal Protection League (Alabama); Animal Protection League (California); Animal Protective Society; Animal Rescue League of Southern Rhode Island; The Arizona Humane Society; Atlantic County SPCA; Rita Roe Bartlett; Boulder County Humane Society; Brazos Animal Shelter; Caldwell Humane Society; The Canyon Hills Women’s Juniors; Capital Humane Society; Central California SPCA; Cincinnati Humane Education Network; Citizens for Animal Protection; Contra Costa County Animal Services; Patricia Connolly Foundation; Cornucopia Natural Foods, Inc.; Denton Humane Society; Ebull Club of Canyon Hill; Fort Wayne Animal Control; General Federation of Women’s Clubs; Haywood Animal Welfare Association; The Humane Campaign, Inc.; Humane Education Committee; Humane Society of Angelina County; Humane Society of Bay County; Humane Society of Hancock County; Humane Society of Jefferson County; Humane Society of Lewisville; Humane Society of North Texas; Humane Society of Palatki County; Humane Society of Santa Clara Valley; Humane Society of Sarasota County; Humane Society and SPCA of Seattle/King County; Humane Society of Tascorn; Jackson County Kind Committee; Jacksonville Humane Society; Kalanazoo Humane Society; Loser Valley Humane Society; Marin Humane Society; Miami County Humane Society; Myriad Real Estate; The North County Humane Society; Oregon Humane Society and SPCA; People for Animals; Pets Are Worth Saving; Pomona Valley Humane Society and SPCA; Porter County Humane Society; Protective Animal Welfare Society; Putnam County Humane Society, Inc.; The Summitreek Foundation; Tennessee Humane Association; Tennessee Network for Animals; Veterinary Medical Association of Tennessee; Volunteers for Animal Welfare; Washington Humane Society; West Hawaii Humane Society; Women’s City Club of Laredo.

NAHeE

Reflect for a moment... how can I help animals even when I no longer share their world...?

Through your support for animal protection to The Humane Society of the United States, you can provide for animals after you’re gone.

Naming The HSUS demonstrates your lasting commitment to animal protection and strengthens the society for this task. We will be happy to send information about our animal programs and material that will assist in planning a will.

Please send: Will information
Name
Address
City State Zip
Mail in confidence to: Murdalah S. Maddon, Vice President, Senior Counsel, The Humane Society of the United States, 2100 L. St., NW, Washington, DC 20037.

UP FRONT

Jay F. Kirkpatrick administers an injection of immunocontraceptive vaccine to a wild horse in Nevada as part of an innovative attempt at effective, safe wildlife-fertility control. The HSUS sponsored the development of the promising new vaccine.

WILDLIFE

New Day for Wild Horses
Immunocontraception project begins in Nevada

On a shimmering cold day last December, The HSUS and the federal Bureau of Land Management (BLM) opened a new chapter in the management of the fabled wild horses of the American West. In a remarkable collaboration between researchers, the BLM, the University of Nevada at Reno, and The HSUS, 130 wild mares were rounded up, treated with an immunocontraceptive vaccine, and returned to their home ranges in the high desert of northeastern Nevada.

The immunocontraceptive vaccine, which promises effective and safe wildlife-fertility control, was developed under the sponsorship of The HSUS by the research team of Jay F. Kirkpatrick, Ph.D., John W. Turner, Ph.D., and Erwin K. M. Liu, DVM. (See the Fall 1991 HSUS News.) For six years free-ranging horses on Assateague Island, Maryland, have been darted with the vaccine; only twice has a treated mare produced a foal (the same mare both times). None of the mares treated with the vaccine has shown health problems or changes in behavior.

The Nevada wild-horse contraception project will test three versions of the immunocontraceptive vaccine. One group of mares was given a two-shot treatment, administered in a three-to-four-week period. This treatment, used for the first five years of the Assateague research, virtually assures successful contraception for this group of mares. However, because the treated mares must be held for the interval between shots, which is both costly and potentially stressful to the horses, the other two groups were vaccinated with one-shot preparations.

Perhaps even more important than the potential scientific gain is the shift in attitudes toward wild-horse management symbolized by the Nevada project. For decades The HSUS and others have battled the BLM and livestock interests to assure humane treatment of western wild horses and to secure the horses’ fair share of the public lands’ natural resources. In our view the BLM has often initiated wild-horse-population reductions based on political pressure from livestock interests rather than on sound scientific data on horse populations and range conditions. “Surplus” horses removed from the wild have been put up for adoption or sent to ill-conceived “sanctuaries” or have languished for months in temporary holding facilities. All parties have agreed that none of these solutions has proven completely satisfactory.

The turning point came in June 1991 at a hearing of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, when testimonial
ny by Dr. Kirkpatrick and HSUS Vice President, Wildlife and Habitat Protection, John W. Grandy, Ph.D., brought immunocontraception to the attention of Sen. Harry Reid of Nevada. Senator Reid immediately recognized the potential application of the immunocontraception study to increase BLM sensitivity to other HSUS concerns about wild-horse management. The HSUS will continue to press for public-land-management policies that are scientifically sound and even-handed and allow the wild horses to stay in the wild—Allen T. Burg, Ph.D., HSUS senior scientist, Wildlife and Habitat Protection.

We hope that the cooperative spirit shown in the design and execution of the immunocontraception study will increase BLM sensitivity to other HSUS concerns about wild-horse management. The HSUS will continue to press for public-land-management policies that are scientifically sound and even-handed and allow the wild horses to stay in the wild—Allen T. Burg, Ph.D., HSUS senior scientist, Wildlife and Habitat Protection.
HSUS Position Statement on Elementary Education Materials Distributed by the Department of Health and Human Services

The elementary education materials titled "Let's Visit a Research Laboratory" (poster and lesson plans), "Animals and Science" (student brochure), and "Animals and Science" (teacher's guide) were produced by the Department of Health and Human Services under the auspices of the former Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Administration. They are currently being distributed by the Department of Health and Human Services'. National Institute of Mental Health. These materials primarily target young children who do not possess the cognitive ability to make meaningful decisions regarding the highly controversial and complex issue of the use of animals in biomedical research. By targeting a vulnerable audience, these materials fail to meet even the most basic criteria for objectivity. This discredits the use of the materials as objective educational tools. Moreover, the contents of the materials are highly selective and at times misleading, revealing a biased and prejudiced point of view, not a balanced treatment of the subject. The materials fail to provide an accurate representation of animal experimentation and its limits. They dismiss the mainstream concept of "alternatives" to animal experimentation in favor of the belittling and misleading term "adjuvants." These and other shortcomings of the materials are totally inconsistent with the level of integrity and fairness that should be observed in government-sponsored educational materials. We find these materials to be both biased and juvenile in as much as they:
1. Fail to address the inherently controversial nature of the subject.
2. Exploit children's natural love of animals and attempt to persuade children that laboratories are places in which research animals engage in playful and enjoyable activities;
3. Fail to provide a balanced discussion of the ethical considerations relating to the potential suffering of animals used in research;
4. Attempt to polarize the issue of the use of animals in research by characterizing people concerned about animal suffering as "extremists";
5. Seek to relegate sentient creatures to the same level of importance as the inanimate objects used by scientists in their research;
6. Reject the mainstream concept of "alternatives" to the use of animals in research and education;
7. Fail to mention animal-welfare and animal-protection groups in listings of possible resource agencies and materials;
8. Inadequately advise teachers regarding the care and maintenance of animals used in classroom studies.

Because the subject of the use of animals in biomedical research is highly controversial and complex and therefore inappropriate for young children, and because of the blatant bias and propaganda evident in these materials, we strongly oppose the use of public funds for the future production, distribution, and promotion of these materials by the United States government and its agencies.

LABORATORY ANIMALS

Wanted: Better USDA Reporting

HSUS seeks more information on lab-animal use

Public concern over the use of animals in research has led many western nations to regulate and monitor animal experimentation. As part of their oversight, governments of Great Britain, Germany, the Netherlands, Australia, and other countries issue annual reports to provide the public and other interested parties with profiles of laboratory-animal use nationwide. Such reports provide a wealth of information about current and historical trends in animal use.

In the United States, corresponding reports are issued by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), which enforces the Animal Welfare Act. The USDA's Animal Welfare Enforcement reports are the only annual profiles of animal use available in this country. Unfortunately, they pale in comparison to the comprehensive profiles of laboratory-animal use issued by many other countries.

The USDA reports don't provide the total number of animals used in research because the agency keeps no figures on the species that make up the vast majority of the animals used. Animal-protection groups are the only sources for what the USDA calls "alternative" use of animals.

The USDA also fails to mention animal-welfare and animal-protection groups in listings of possible resource agencies and materials. The agency, in turn, will have to process these additional data. We recognize that our recommendations would increase the administrative burden on laboratories and the USDA, noted Martin L. Stephens, Ph.D., HSUS vice president, Laboratory Animals. This is a small price to pay for the privilege of continuing to use animals in research, a privilege that society is at least currently willing to grant to experimenters.

The USDA has an opportunity to demonstrate that it takes seriously the public's concern about the use of animals in experiments. The public should not be kept in the dark about a practice financed largely by public funds, ostensibly conducted for the public welfare, and undertaken mainly at public institutions. Public disclosure is all the more imperative given the controversial nature of animal experimentation.

This issue goes beyond the public's right to know. Humane reform of animal experimentation depends on open and informed discussion of all dimensions of the issue. Without accurate profiles of the status quo, how can policymakers—regulatory agencies, legislators, industry, academia—and everyone else chart progress in reducing the suffering and use of animals in experimentation?

At press time the petition remained under review by the USDA.

In Room 7, the poster's testing lab, a happy monkey presses buttons on a computer panel as a smiling researcher watches the monkey in action.

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