INTERVENTIONS

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
- Aiken SPCA; John W. Anderson Foundation; Animal Protection and Education Association; Animal Protection League (Alabama); Animal Protection League (California); Animal Rescue League of Southern Rhode Island; The Arizona Humane Society; Atlantic County SPCA; Rita Rea Barlett; Boulder County Human Society; Brazen Animal Shelter; Caldwell Human Society.
- The Canyon Hills Women's Juniors; Central California SPCA; Cincinnati Humane Education Network; Citizens for Animal Protection; Contra Costa County Animal Services; Pacific Companion Foundation; Cornucopia Natural Foods, Inc.; Denton Human Society; Ebhol 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.
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- The Summerrlee 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.

DIVISION REPORT

ADOPT-A-TEACHER

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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.

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UP FRONT

Jay F. Kirkpatrick administers an injection of immunocorticosteroidal 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

Immunocorticosterone 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 immunocorticosteroidal vaccine, and returned to their home ranges in the high desert of northeastern Nevada.

The immunocorticosteroidal 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 Irwin K. M. Liu, DVM, (see the Fall 1991 HSUS News). For six years free-ranging horses on Assateague Island, Maryland, have been darts 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 immunocorticosteroidal 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 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 testimo-
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 research to western wild horses, the majority of whom live in her home state. With his support Congress provided funds to the BLM targeted specifically for a wild-horse immunocontraception project. In September 1992 the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the BLM, The HSUS, the research team, and the University of Nevada at Reno marked the formal beginning of the project. The Nevada BLM organized and executed a large-scale wild-horse roundup, complete with a tent city, elaborate corrals, and a small army of personnel. As BLM and contract personnel sent horses through the maze of corrals, researchers Kirkpatrick, Turner, and Liu injected each adult mare with either the immunocontraceptive vaccine or a placebo. The horses were painlessly freeze-branded to allow later re-identification in the field.

The researchers must wait until autumn to determine whether the vaccines successfully prevented pregnancies in treated mares during the summer breeding season. Prospects for success are bright: preliminary evidence from the mares held for the second shot of the two-shot protocol suggests that they were responding well to the vaccine.

Wild horses, who are strangers to confinement and alarmed by the close presence of humans, are severely stressed by roundups. We hope that the fertility-control technology being tested in this project will reduce the need for such roundups in the future. We also hope that the prudent application of fertility control will reduce the number of wild horses entering the adoption program. Scaling down the adoption program should allow more careful screening of adoption applicants and improve the quality of the horses' adoptive homes.

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 remain wild—Allen T. Burgberg, Ph.D., HSUS senior scientist, Wildlife and Habitat Protection

HUMANE EDUCATION

What's Wrong with This Picture?
Government lab-animal poster concerns HSUS

When I first saw it, says first-grade teacher Sheila Schwartz, Ed.D., "I thought it was laughable. All those happy, smiling monkeys in cages. Then I said to myself, 'This poster is printed with government money!' That really bothered me because it's completely biased and the subject is not age-appropriate at all." Dr. Schwartz, who has taught grades one through five in her twenty-seven-year teaching career, was looking at a poster produced by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) entitled "Let's Visit a Research Laboratory" (see accompanying illustrations).

The full-color, cartoon-style poster shows a building with thirteen different rooms and features people, animals, and equipment. The building purported to be a research laboratory, but certainly no invasive research is taking place there. The animals and people are all smiling. In Room 1, the testing lab, a happy monkey presses buttons on a computer panel. The lucky mice of Room 10, the rodent housing, are graced with names such as Jimmy, Freddie, and Lizzy, just like family pets. Room 13, the monkey housing, is not a collection of grim cages, but a delightful jungle-gym affair in which many children would no doubt enjoy playing.

The poster is accompanied by a presentation folder that includes suggested classroom activities. The stated target audience for both the poster and the activities is children in grades two through five. Also published by the HHS is a student brochure entitled "Animals and Science" (printed in large type the kind generally reserved for young readers), and a teacher's guide with the same title. Patty Finch, executive director of The HSUS's National Association for Humane and Environmental Education (NAHEE) and a former classroom teacher, was deeply concerned when she saw the poster and accompanying materials. "Teachers often receive biased materials in the classroom," she observes. "But we don't expect our government to be the source of blatantly biased materials."

The poster's cartoon art is not in keeping with the seriousness of the controversial and emotionally charged issue of animal experimentation. It is, however, very much in keeping with the preferences of an audience of young children. Why might cartoon art have been selected? "Because a more realistic portrayal would frighten children and be unacceptable to teachers," says Ms. Finch. "When we cannot be truthful about an issue without scaring young children, then the issue itself is inappropriate for that age group who have not been trained as educators. We may think that you can teach any subject to young children so long as you simplify the language. In fact, learn-
LABORATORY ANIMALS

Wanted: Better USDA Reporting
HSUS seeks more information on lab-animal use

P ublic concern over the use of animals in research has led many western nations to regulate and monitor animal experimentation. As part of their oversight, the 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. The reports do not distinguish among the broad categories of research, testing, and education. Teachers are very sensitive, and rightly so, to biased and inappropriate materials that laboratories are places in which research and education is 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 elsewhere—chart progress in reducing the suffering and use of animals in experimentation? At press time the petition remained un­der review by the USDA.

The USDA reports now provide no information on controversial procedures such as the Draize Eye-Irritation Test, in which chemicals are tested in the eyes of rabbits.