

Rhino specialist Dr. Will Fowlds helped save Thandi after her horn was hacked off by poachers in South Africa.



THE NEXT CHAPTER

NEW HSI CAMPAIGN AIMS TO PROTECT RHINOS

// BY CATHERINE VINCENTI

DOES A CHILDREN'S BOOK hold the key to saving rhinos from extinction?

Teresa Telecky hopes it's a first step.

"By stopping demand for rhino horn, we will save rhinos," explains Telecky, wildlife director for Humane Society International, which wrote, produced, and distributed 5,000 copies of *I'm a Little Rhino* to schoolchildren in Vietnam. The book is designed to educate children and in turn their families, asking them to pledge never to use or buy rhino horn.

The project is part of a three-year campaign recently launched by HSI and the government of Vietnam to reduce poaching of endangered rhinos, who are dying at the rate of two per day. Authorities there turned to HSI for help after being identified as the world's largest consumer of rhino horn.

The horn has long been used as a traditional medicine in Asia based on the cultural belief that it improves overall health. In 2007, a rumor spread throughout Vietnam that rhino horn also cured cancer, significantly driving up demand. A recent public opinion survey suggests that only a small percent of the Vietnamese population buys or uses the illegal product, but even 2 percent of a population of 92 million means 1.8 million people.

"If you added up all the living rhinos [from all five species] today, you would probably come up with a figure of about 25,000," says Telecky. "Twenty-five thousand is never going to be enough to satisfy the demand from millions of people. So that's why this work that we are doing in Vietnam is so important."

The campaign will also look to key stakeholders—the 13 million members of the Vietnam Women's Union, plus Vietnamese business leaders, university students, and medical practitioners—to help spread the message that there is no scientific evidence that consuming rhino horn benefits health. In fact, just the opposite may be true; some wildlife managers in South Africa are infusing the horns with chemicals that make people very ill if ingested.

In 2012, Dr. Will Fowlds treated two South African rhinos who were left to die after having their horns brutally hacked off. Themba drowned in a water hole 24 days later, too weak to climb out. But Thandi ultimately survived, and one evening Fowlds unexpectedly came face-to-face with the untroubled rhino while out checking on her whereabouts.

With every reason to consider a human her enemy, Thandi merely snorted and huffed before walking off into the bush. "She touched my heart," Fowlds says, "and caused me to wonder how much more we still have to learn from these animals."

SUCH GREAT HEIGHTS

PETS FOR LIFE MESSAGE CONTINUES TO SPREAD

// BY MICHAEL SHARP

CHRISTIE ROGERO was walking home one day years ago in San Francisco, where she was studying theater at the time, when she saw the small crowd gathered outside a row house. They were all staring up at a cat stranded on a roof.

“I’ll do it,” she told the crowd, and up she went—her fear of heights and all. Scaling a thin metal ladder, she clung to the third-story roof with one hand and safely corralled the cat with the other. Later she’d think, with a laugh: “What the hell was I doing?”

It wouldn’t be the last time she set aside her fears to help an animal.

In late summer 2012, the Animal Welfare Association in New Jersey—where Rogero works as the targeted spay/neuter manager—received one of 10 PetSmart Charities grants to implement The HSUS’s Pets for Life program in a targeted neighborhood of Camden.

Program staff help animals in underserved communities by first building rela-

tionships with their owners, door by door. Inspired by a presentation at The HSUS’s Animal Care Expo, and with her executive director’s support, Rogero had pushed hard to win the \$35,000 grant.

As she got ready to start, though, the constant warnings about Camden, and its reputation as one of America’s most dangerous cities, began to weigh heavily. “I was really, really nervous the first time I went in.”

But then she watched Ashley Mutch—manager of the Philadelphia Pets for Life program—walk up to a group of guys standing on a corner. She watched Mutch introduce herself and the program. She watched everyone’s body language soften. “It was this amazing moment. Just like, ‘Oh wow, it’s this easy.’”

And off she went. The Animal Welfare Association proceeded to arrange 555 spay/neuter surgeries over its first year. In 2014, Camden will be one of 18 cities receiving grants and mentorships, in addition to



The 10 Pets for Life grant winners—including Christie Rogero (above) and the Animal Welfare Association in New Jersey—helped 8,000-plus animals their first year. Below, a young girl holds her cat at a Chicago event.

HSUS-staffed programs in Philadelphia, Atlanta, Chicago, and Los Angeles.

“It’s exciting, of course, just to see the philosophy grow,” says Amanda Arrington, Pets for Life director, noting the many strides that can occur now on a single day, from 500 people standing in line for a free vaccination in St. Louis, to a new client signing up to spay his dogs in Des Moines. “When you get to, in one given moment, see it happening in all these communities across the country, it really blows you away.”

Like the night in Camden when a man named Carlos approached Rogero as she returned pets from their spay/neuter surgeries. He acknowledged he’d been nervous earlier that day, watching her drive off with the animals, but was more trusting now that he saw her bringing them back.

Carlos needed help with his pets—five cats, three dogs, and a colony of outdoor cats—so she followed him home. To this day, he’s one of the program’s biggest advocates, spreading the word, even translating voicemails from Spanish-speaking clients.

The key, Rogero says, is “building those relationships.” The initial unease, she’s realized, extended both ways. A person, anywhere, is much more likely to entrust their pet, or even just open their door, to a friend.

“It’s completely changed my life,” she says. “... I’m not afraid of Camden; I’m comfortable. I feel like I have friends and family in Camden, and it’s not something that I ever would have pictured a year ago.”

ON THE iPad: Watch a video about the Pets for Life grant winners.





Elissa Lane

INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMACY

HSI PUSHES FOR FARM ANIMAL WELFARE REFORMS IN LATIN AMERICA // BY KAREN E. LANGE

LAST SPRING, when Elissa Lane of Humane Society International attended the corporate shareholder meeting for Arcos Dorados (“Golden Arches”), the world’s biggest McDonald’s franchisee, she found herself the sole outsider present at the company’s Lima, Peru, offices.

Unlike shareholder gatherings in the U.S., which often attract hundreds of people, Lane found herself sitting in a modest-sized room with the company’s CEO, two executives, and members of the auditing team. When Lane urged them to stop buying pork from farms that confine sows in gestation crates—so small the animals can’t turn around—she had their full attention.

“They were very receptive; they asked questions; they wanted to learn more,” says Lane, deputy director for HSI’s Farm Animals department. “The CEO expressed that he definitely wanted to do it in Latin America.”

With many U.S. companies—including McDonald’s, Wendy’s, and Burger King—already committed to switching to more humane pork supplies, HSI is working to persuade companies in Latin America to do the same.

“Dozens of multinational companies have already adopted crate-free policies, but only in the United States,” explains Lane, whose work regularly takes her to Latin America, where tens of millions of chickens and sows are intensively confined. “Most of these corporate animal welfare policies do not apply to Latin America. It requires outside organizations such as HSI working with them.”

HSI has farm animal campaigns in Costa Rica, where its Latin American office is located, and in Mexico and Brazil, the region’s two largest egg producers. In 2014, the organization plans to open another office in Mexico—the world’s largest per capita consumer of eggs and a major center of industrialized pork production.

Before HSI’s farm animal campaign arrived in the region in 2010, animal welfare organizations there were focused primarily on spaying and neutering cats and dogs and stopping the wildlife trade, Lane says. Now they are also paying attention to pigs and chickens, while more and more consumers are expressing opposition to extreme confinement. “Consumers really do care in these countries. Corporations care. They need to know how they can move forward.”

HSI

BY THE NUMBERS

358 churches, from 42 states, Canada, and Puerto Rico, ordered The HSUS’s St. Francis Day in a Box kit last year. Faith Outreach staff provide the kits—including DVDs and information about The HSUS’s Fill the Bowl and Humane Backyard initiatives—to churches participating in St. Francis Day each October. “We blessed our animals on Sunday and all the children were very excited to participate in the program,” says Marisa Thompson, assistant rector of The Episcopal Church of the Holy Comforter in Burlington, N.C. “We would like to use the St. Francis Day in a Box material to teach our children to celebrate God’s creatures throughout the year.”

SIGN OF THE TIMES

NAVAJO NATION president Ben Shelly no longer supports horse slaughter, telling *The New York Times* in October: “I am interested in long-term humane solutions to manage our horse populations.” Shelly has since suspended wild horse roundups on the reservation, which covers parts of Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah. “Our land is precious to the Navajo people as are all the horses on the Navajo Nation,” Shelly told the *Times*. “Horses are sacred animals to us.” Bill Richardson, former governor of New Mexico, helped reach an agreement with Shelly under which alternative policies for managing wild horse populations will be evaluated, including adoptions and contraceptives.

QUOTED

“BASED ON THESE CONCERNS REGARDING PROTECTION OF MISSISSIPPI CONSUMERS AND BUSINESSES, AND PRESERVATION OF OUR OWN STATE LAWS, I RESPECTFULLY URGE YOU TO REJECT THE KING AMENDMENT;” wrote Mississippi Attorney General Jim Hood in a letter to the state’s congressional delegation. Citing “the provision’s vagueness and overly broad language,” Hood joined the growing opposition to the federal farm bill amendment—sponsored by Rep. Steve King, R-Iowa—that would override dozens of critical state laws against shark finning, puppy mills, intensive confinement of farm animals, and more.



ON THE CASE

HSUS TRAINING HELPS OFFICERS ENFORCE ANIMAL PROTECTION LAWS // BY KAREN E. LANGE

HOMESTEAD ANIMAL CONTROL officer Edgar Santiago is eager to bust animal fighters in his South Florida city. But until last October, he didn't always know what to look for.

Now, after receiving seven hours of training from The HSUS, Santiago says he will be searching for the signs. They're things that might otherwise get overlooked in an alley or a basement by officers responding to non-animal-related crimes:

- ◆ Hanging scales used to check whether dogs are at fighting weight;
- ◆ "Rape stands" to secure female dogs during breeding;
- ◆ Backpacks stuffed with "crash kits" of bandages, gauze, syringes, and intravenous fluids for treating animals after a fight;
- ◆ Piles of rugs and boards from makeshift arenas;
- ◆ Rubber "sparring gloves" that fit over a rooster's spurs;
- ◆ Caches of curved blades, which can be affixed to a rooster's leg.

"Definitely, in my city, if I see anything like that," says Santiago, "I'm coming down on them."

The new HSUS training program aims to teach law enforcement officials like Santiago skills such as writing search warrants and gathering evidence specifically for animal fighting, cruelty, and hoarding cases, which often involves documenting conditions of seized animals. It's hoped the officers also learn to call on The

HSUS for help, says Adam Parascandola, director of animal cruelty response.

"It's letting police know that there are resources out there, that we are here—that they're not alone."

The HSUS's Animal Cruelty and Fighting Campaign will oversee the new training to not only instruct but strengthen relationships with law enforcement agencies. The hope: These stronger relationships will lead to more support from officials for tougher new laws, plus better enforcement of existing ones.

In 2013, The HSUS provided free training to more than 1,000 police, animal control officers, and prosecutors in communities nationwide. This coming year, The HSUS plans to hold additional sessions across the country, with a special emphasis in states such as Tennessee, Mississippi, Alabama, and South Carolina—all of them places where the organization is working toward legislation to increase penalties for animal fighting.

"We're being strategic about it," says Ann Chynoweth, senior director of The HSUS's Animal Cruelty and Fighting Campaign. "We want to really impress upon them that this is a serious crime, a crime that deserves their attention."

In Miami, for example, the 70 people from 19 agencies who attended the October training with Santiago learned about a recent change in Florida law that added animal fighting and baiting to the list of racketeering offenses.

"So many law enforcement officers do want to get the animal fighters," says Kate McFall, HSUS Florida state director. "This sends a message to the criminals that we're not messing around."

The HSUS's Adam Parascandola shows Miami law enforcement officers how to recognize signs of animal fighting.