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NCRO Fall 1988

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Hundreds Gather to Protest Trapping

When the National Trappers Association met in Peoria, Ill., in August, the trappers weren’t the only ones who showed up. An estimated two to three hundred animal activists were also there for a rally and silent march to mark the National Day of Unity to Ban the Leghold Trap. The event was organized by Elsa Wild Animal Appeal of Illinois and supported by more than a dozen organizations, including The HSUS.

Frantz Dantzler, HSUS North Central Regional Director, was one of the featured speakers. In his remarks to the crowd, Dantzler said, “Trapping is an anachronism in this day and age. It is a practice that cannot be justified technically, ecologically, morally, or in any other way.”

Demonstrators came from a number of states and many, including Robin Weirauch of The HSUS’s Great Lakes Regional Office, drove in from Ohio for the rally. After a number of speeches and statements of support from celebrities such as Mary Tyler Moore and Loretta Swit, the demonstrators marched a few blocks to the site of the trappers’ convention. The line of marchers, stretching for nearly three blocks, continued on page 2.

A silent line of sign-carrying marchers stretched for nearly three blocks on the way to the trappers’ convention site.

INSIDE:
- HSUS Documents Trapping Incidents
- Update on Wild Horse Cruelty Case
- NCRO Assists with Deer Problems
- Promoting Humane Education

Legislative News Is Both Good and Bad

State legislatures have adjourned for 1988, and that has given us time to reflect on legislative action in the states of the North Central region during the past year. There were some successes, but there were also a few unfortunate examples that show us just how far we have to go to protect animals.

First, the good news. In Minnesota, there are two new laws that protect animals. One makes it illegal to leave an animal in a vehicle in such a manner that the animal is unsafe. This helps immeasurably to protect animals from being locked in parked cars, particularly during hot weather, without a legal way to remove the animal. Minnesota was also one of five states that was able to get a bill through the legislature that should help address the many problems associated with vicious dogs.

Now, the bad news. In Wisconsin, legislation was passed that legalizes horse and dog racing. There is still some maneuvering going on in individual communities continued on page 3.
the open-air display area. Keep silent as they passed by stacks of pelts. Not confrontation with the trappers, and the march remained peaceful. But many of the participants had been followed by the media, with television crews, newspaper reporters, and photographers at both events. We hope that means the public got our message.

But, as one of the day’s speakers pointed out, we can’t demonstrate on one day each year and expect to make progress in the fight against trapping.

The HSUS has been working hard on this issue and will continue to do so, with your support. We hope you’ll take a few moments to read the other articles in this report for ideas on how you can help.

Trapping Protest continues from page 1

blocks, carried signs and silently circled the open-air display area. The purpose of the demonstration was not confrontation with the trappers, and the march remained peaceful.

But many of the marchers undoubtedly found it difficult to keep silent as they passed by stacks of pelts from slaughtered fur-bearing animals and racks of traps.

The rally and march were well covered by the media, with television crews, newspaper reporters, and photographers at both events. We hope that means the public got our message.

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HSUS Trapping Case Reports: Document Incidents

An estimated 22 million animals are killed each year by traps. Most of these unfortunate creatures are slaughtered for the fur trade. That is odious in itself. But many people aren’t aware that more than 5 million of the animals that are needlessly killed are “nontarget” animals. That is, they aren’t even wanted for their fur. Nontarget animals can include birds, endangered species, and even pet dogs and cats. The HSUS has documented at least ten cases of human injuries caused by traps.

We believe information about specific incidents of injury and death due to trapping can be used to make powerful arguments for banning these barbaric devices. To gather such information, The HSUS has developed a Trapping Case Report form. It asks such questions as whether the trap was set on public or private property, the type of trap involved, the type of animal trapped, the type and extent of the injury, the result of the incident, and whether any action was taken, particularly in the case of pets that have been injured or killed.

We have sent these forms to veterinarians and humane organizations around the country. They are also available to the public. If you live in an area where there is recreational or commercial trapping, you may want to have some on hand. You can obtain them by contacting Pat Ragan, The HSUS.

National Anti-Fur Campaign

The HSUS is about to launch a major national campaign in opposition to the buying and wearing of fur, hoping to convince consumers to shun fur. We don’t want to tip our hand before the campaign begins, so we are not able to give you much detail here. But please pay close attention to the fall HSUS Close-Up Report for information about the campaign and what you can do to extend the message into your community.

Age is no barrier to taking a stand on the horrors of trapping.

In Instruments of death: traps such as these kill millions of animals each year.

Update on Wild Horse Cruelty Case in North Dakota

In the spring issue of the NCRO Report we told you about an appalling case of cruelty in North Dakota that resulted in the deaths of nearly one hundred wild horses. They were a herd of four hundred horses that had been “adopted” through the Bureau of Land Management’s wild horse adoption program. The case and others like it have drawn attention to the many problems associated with the BLM’s program. But some good has come out of a terrible situation.

There may finally be some long overdue changes made in the BLM’s wild horse program. One of the aspects of the program that made it possible for this tragedy to occur was the “fee-waiver” provision. That allowed “adopters” to get possession of large numbers of horses without paying the usual adoption fee. Those kinds of adoptions virtually always opened the door to abuse. The BLM has now suspended all fee-waived, large herd adoptions. The HSUS is urging that this provision be permanently scrapped.

The two men allegedly responsible for the deaths of the horses in North Dakota have been indicted by a federal grand jury on six counts, including charges of inhumane treatment of the four hundred horses, fraud, and making false statements. Ironically, the fraud-related charges are felonies. The cruelty charges, reflecting the suffering and death of hundreds of horses, are merely misdemeanors. The case is now pending.

The HSUS will continue to push for reforms as long as wild horses are in jeopardy.

How You Can Help

There are a couple of immediate needs.

An effort to repeal Minnesota’s law that makes pounds seizure mandatory failed at the last minute during the last session. But the effort will begin again. Minnesota residents interested in helping should contact the group that is leading the fight: P.A.L., P.O. Box 11557, St. Paul, MN 5511l.

In the next newsletter, we told you about a referendum in South Dakota that would restrict factory farming in that state. It will be on the ballot in November. If you live in South Dakota, please vote against the people who are fighting to protect animals. If you live outside of South Dakota, please contact the group that is leading the fight.

In the fall, and the people you elect can have a tremendous positive or negative effect on animal protection issues in your community.

Now is the time to become politically aware and active in your area. Get to know the candidates and where they stand on animal issues before you cast your vote.

After the November elections, contact the newly elected officials to let them know of your concerns about various animal protection issues. You want to get to them before they begin to make commitments to positions that work against animals and against the people who are fighting to protect them.

Finally, you can help the animals, and us, by being aware of legislative issues in your area and taking action. Here are some things that we should support, or work to defeat, please contact the NCRO or Ann Church, HSUS coordinator for state legislation, in our Washington, D.C., office.

Legislative News continued from page 1

about whether tracks will be allowed in specific areas. We urge activists to work in Wisconsin to keep tracks, particularly in the north and northeast counties.

Even though it’s hard to see a “plus” side to a law legalizing racing, we can report that at least Wisconsin Governor Thompson has appointed a representative from the humane community to state racing board. This was a provision urged by NCRO Director Frantz Dantzler during his testimony on the issue last year.

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NCRO Called In to Assist With Deer Problems in Illinois

In Minnesota, a law was also enacted this year that makes it a misdemeanor to free a “fee-waivered, large herd adoption. The

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DIRECTOR’S COMMENT

by Frantz Dantzler

During the last school year, I discovered something very disturbing while helping my seven-year-old son with his homework. His reading assignment, which was to run for several weeks, consisted of numerous Aesop’s fables. Until I read them again with my son, I had forgotten how insensitive, in fact appalling, these fables are in terms of their treatment of animals.

They include stories such as “The Fox and the Goat,” in which the fox abandons the goat in a well to die. There is also “The Wolf and the Kids,” a story about a wolf that is trying to eat the kids. And these are not necessarily the worst examples.

Some educators say that the value of these fables is in their tradition and in their moral messages. But I think a seven-year-old is unlikely to grasp the concept or value of such tradition. And the “moral message” he is likely to come away with is that it is acceptable to kill or beat animals that are “undesirable,” animals that are somehow “bad” simply because of their birthright and natural behavior.

I wrote to the publisher and will follow up with the school system to point out that attitudes, values, social behavior, and morals have changed dramatically in the 2,400 years or so since Aesop wrote his fables. It’s time for a change. There are certainly other materials that reflect reverence and appreciation for life.

It is important for children to learn that all animals have intrinsic value, and that they are not to be feared, hated, or abused for their natural behavior, or because of ancient folk tales. As our children go back to school, we should all become aware of the lessons they are learning. Get involved, write letters, and make telephone calls to the school, school board, and publishers of offensive materials.

Let them know what you think about the materials your child is using, and also let them know that there are viable, and better, alternatives.

Promote Humane Education In Your Child’s School

In this report, NCRO Director Frantz Dantzler talks about the importance of knowing what your child is being taught in school that directly, or indirectly, affects his or her view of animals and their place in our world.

It is important to let educators know when you disapprove...and there is certainly much of which to disapprove. For example, according to the National Association for the Advancement of Humane Education (NAAHE), the National Shooting Sports Foundation has more than forty thousand programs in place in schools nationwide. Project WILD, a subtly pro-hunting and pro-trapping environmental curriculum, has been distributed free of charge to about 130,000 teachers, reaching an estimated 10 million students. In several states, money designated for nongame and endangered wildlife projects has been targeted to fund Project WILD teacher-training workshops. And the “Animal Care Forum” is producing a booklet for distribution to students designed to make the case for modern livestock technologies, i.e. factory farming. These are just some of the obvious anti-animal programs.

But, as important as it is to monitor the negative material, it is also vital to propose alternative learning programs and to spark ideas for humane education in the classroom. One easy way you can help is through NAAHE’s “Adopt-A-Teacher” program. For just $17.95 you can “adopt” any teacher in any school. The teacher you select will receive four issues of Children & Animals magazine, filled with teaching ideas and activities, five issues of Kind News, and more. With the recent push by pro-hunting groups to get their message into the schools, it is now critically important that teachers have access to materials that teach humanness.

To find out more about the Adopt-A-Teacher program or other NAAHE materials, contact NAAHE, PO. Box 362, East Haddam, CT 06423.

Join the AAA Team

The HSUS’s Animal Activist Alert (AAA) can give you the help that you need to speak out effectively for animals. AAA is distributed free of charge to HSUS members who wish to play an active role in eliminating animal abuse. If you’re not already on the AAA team, you can join by writing AAA, The HSUS, 2100 L Street, NW, Washington, DC 20037.

Reflect for a moment....

HOW CAN I HELP ANIMALS EVEN WHEN I NO LONGER SHARE THEIR WORLD?

By your request for animal protection to The Humane Society of the United States, your will can provide for animals after you’re gone. Naming The HSUS demonstrates your lasting commitment to animal welfare 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 to:

Name __________________________
Address _________________________
City _________ State ________
Zip code ______________________

Mail in confidence to Murdaugh S. Madden, Vice President/General Counsel, The Humane Society of the United States, 2100 L Street, NW, Washington, DC 20037.