THE JOY OF CHRISTMAS
CAN BECOME YOUR LOVE AND KINDNESS FOR OTHERS ALL YEAR LONG
Wild Horse Annie accepting The Joseph Wood Krutch Medal. Applauding Annie are: (left) Coleman Burke, Chairman of the Board of Directors of The Humane Society, and, (right) noted author-naturalist Roger Caras.

WILD HORSE ANNIE - THE MUSTANGS' CHAMPION

A timid, soft-spoken woman, Velma Johnston speaks of her career as a sacred purpose. She isn't referring to her 9 to 5 job as a legal secretary. She means, instead, her one-woman campaign to save America's remaining wild horses. Wild Horse Annie, as those of us who so admire her prefer to call her, speaks with the quiet fervor of a person who has discovered her purpose in life and who has made the commitment to her cause that means total dedication. Of special meaning to her, and her dedication, is the fact that her own father's life was saved when, as a baby he was nourished by the milk of a mustang mare, when no other milk was available.

Anyone who says one timid woman can't change the course of human history has yet to understand the reserve of strength, the will to succeed, the courage and determination to overcome all odds, that Wild Horse Annie represents. Single-handedly over the years Annie has campaigned for the protection of wild mustangs.

During the last year Congress established two refuges where the wild horses will be protected. Wild horses are no respecters of boundaries, however, so federal protection must still be obtained for them outside these refuges. The recent action by Congress is a good indication this victory can be achieved.

The Humane Society's highest recognition was bestowed on Annie this year, for her untiring efforts to save the wild horses. Annie accepted the Joseph Wood Krutch Medal on behalf of the youth of America who had rallied to her side and given her the greatest encouragement of any throughout her long campaign. Annie is counting on young people to help her complete her cause. Watch for announcements in future issues, suggesting how you, too, can help our modern day pioneer to obtain total protection for the remaining wild horses of our American heritage.

Mustangs, descendants of horses who escaped from owners back in America's frontier past, have lived free in the west. Recently, entire herds were in danger as exploiters captured mustangs to use as a cheap source of dog food.
The Dachshund, literally badger (Dachs) dog (Hund), was bred especially for the purpose of digging out badger and other small animals that destroyed the farmers' crops. He still remains long-bodied, short-legged, muscular, and, usually, aggressive toward small wild animals.

It is not known for sure whether the Dachshund's ancestors came from the French Basset Hounds, or from the long-bodied, short-legged 'Turnspit dogs' from European kitchens, where they ran on treadmills to power the spit turning over the fire.

Dachshund owners must be on the constant alert to prevent their dogs from becoming overweight. Sensitive, affectionate, and loyal, Dachshunds are great beggars for tidbits, and it is difficult to refuse those large brown pleading eyes. Refuse you must, however, since even a few pounds too much weight can strain that unusually long spinal column, and those short legs.

While a Dachshund should have plenty of exercise to keep him fit and trim, certain activities, such as climbing stairs, could be harmful, particularly on a dog that has had difficulties with his spinal column. A Dachshund should never be picked up when it can be avoided, since both ends should be properly supported, and that is rather difficult to do.

A popular house pet, a Dachshund has a voice that sounds as if it belongs to a much bigger dog. His bark is therefore a good deterrent to anyone who might have thoughts of robbing your home while you are away.

The most common Dachshunds are smooth-coated, but there are long-coated Dachshunds as well. Both are either black or red. The lesser known wire-haired Dachshund is usually grey.

WORK IN A NATIONAL PARK OR FOREST

High School graduates and college students may now apply for work next summer in a national park or forest, under professional supervision. This may be a tremendous opportunity to live and work with nature for a summer, with some subsistence paid. For more information, write: Student Conservation Association, Olympic View Drive, Route 1, Box 573A, Vashon, Washington 98070.
SUGGESTIONS FOR RELEASING AN OPOSSUM

KIND members were asked in last month's newsletter to send in their ideas on the best way for Jeanne De Felice to release her pet opossum, Shakesphere. Here are some of the suggestions we received:

Dee-dee Mattingly, Gaithersburg, Md., suggests keeping dry kibble dog food out at all times. When she found two wild young opossums in a kibble container, she kept them captive for two days, until she realized they preferred to live free. She thinks Shakesphere would find a nest where she wouldn't freeze, and thinks dogs wouldn't present a hazard to her, because opossums can climb trees.

Shari Papier, Adelphi, Md., thinks Jeanne made a wise decision in keeping Shakesphere until spring. She suggests she keep food out from the time she releases her until late fall, and even suggests she take the opossum in again during next winter, completing her return to the wild during the following summer.

Editor's note: Scientists report that the ability of a wild animal, raised around people, to return again to the wild, follows closely that animal's rating in the order of animal intelligence. Opossums, low on this rating, depend more on instinct than many other animals, and don't really relate as fully to human benefactors. With proper precautions for her safety, therefore, Shakesphere should have a better chance of adapting to a free life than, for instance, a wolf, or a fox. We know of one case where an opossum, kept as a family pet for three full years, was successfully released to live free.

TIME TO RENEW

Renewal date for your membership is January 1973. It's not so far away, and you can renew your membership anytime during the last quarter of 1972. Send your $2 dues in now for next year.

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CHRISTMAS CAUTIONS: For Your Pet Cat

Nothing intrigues a cat more than a decorated Christmas tree, with all its shiny ornaments to bat and swing, tinsel to chew, blinking lights to pounce at. Tinsel can cause intestinal blockage. Artificial snow is poisonous. Keep your cat out of the room the tree is in.

Keep him in another room while presents are being opened. He will love the crackling sound of tissue paper, but cellophane, when swallowed, has hard, cutting edges that can cut his stomach. A swallowed ribbon or string could block the intestine. Keep all small objects out of his reach.

Holly berries, philodendron, rhododendron, and ivy are all poisonous to cats in some degree. Most poisonous of all is mistletoe. For your cat's sake, keep him away from the hazards of Christmas. Don't chance a turkey bone either but plan a special canned cat food treat for his Christmas dinner.

CHRISTMAS FOR THE BIRDS

Choose a living Christmas tree this year if you can. With proper care it will still be alive and can be planted in the spring, where birds can enjoy it for many years to come. Your living tree replaces one that would otherwise be chopped down for your Christmas. Planted, it will provide oxygen, cooling shade, and shelter for the birds.

If you buy a chopped down tree, make it last long after Christmas by setting it up in your yard for the birds. Attach raisins, popcorn, and suet to it. The birds will decorate it long after you have removed the artificial decorations. Holly wreaths can also be hung from tree limbs, holding goodies birds love.

One acre of trees removes 5 to 6 tons of carbon dioxide and returns 4 tons of oxygen each year. One acre of trees has the same cooling effect in summer as an air conditioner big enough to cool a 10 room house if it operated night and day.
PET PEEVES

My tough little All-American pup is lots of fun. But I do need my shoes, and he chews them ragged. I know a pup has to chew, so I've bought him toys and given him sticks and large bones. But he'd sooner have shoes. Have you any suggestions?

Pete London
Lock the shoes away for pup's sake! Get him leather or rawhide toys to teethe on. Forget bones and sticks. In treating the seat of your trouble you will save the sole of your shoes.

CHRISTMAS CUSTOMS

Leftovers from the holiday feast in Poland are shared with the animals, because, according to legend, animals all 'regain' their speech on Christmas Eve, so they must be treated as equals.

WHAT IS KINDNESS?

Kindness is saying, "Hi", to everyone in your town.
Kindness is watering flowers to help them live.
Kindness is helping your mother and father and friends.
Kindness is loving God's animals.
And Kindness is loving God and the nice work He has done for mankind.

Donald Solowey, Bordentown, N.J.