Care4Iowa Promotes Humane Agriculture

The issues of animal welfare, environmental protection, economic justice for farmers, safe and high quality food for consumers, and the future of rural communities are all converging because of the consequences from industrial animal production,” said Chris Bedford, Care4Iowa campaign coordinator. Care4Iowa is a project of The HSUS’s farm animal and sustainable agriculture section. Unveiled in Des Moines, it involves representatives from a number of Iowa organizations.

Initially an outgrowth of The HSUS’s Halt Hog Factories campaign, Care4Iowa focuses on Iowa’s industrial hog confinements. Factory farming methods consist of confining breeding sows in crates barely larger than their bodies. They can’t turn around or lie down comfortably, and they are kept indoors where they get no fresh air or sunshine. Their piglets are removed when only a few weeks old. These huge operations create tons of waste that pose serious environmental hazards.

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Care4Iowa reaches out to the state’s 150 farmers’ markets with its message of humane, sustainable agriculture.

Tornado Rips Through Missouri Town, HSUS Responds

Tornadoes ripped through Kansas, Missouri, Tennessee, and Arkansas on May 4th, killing 44 people, countless animals, and leaving an entire town in ruins. Many residents were just finishing supper when the tornado hit Pierce City, Missouri. The funnel cloud was a half mile wide and stayed on the ground for more than 30 minutes. Not a home or business in the town of 1,400 was left untouched.

Volunteers from the Wayside Waifs shelter in Kansas City and the Carthage (MO) Humane Society joined MWRO as part of the HSUS National Disaster Animal Response Team (DART). We set up just outside town at the Monett Airport and quickly became a vital part of the town’s recovery process.

Team members spent three days searching what was left of the homes and businesses, keeping a log of where we had been, what we had found, who needed support, and which of the found animals had known owners or needed veterinary care. We worked side by side with community members, and got to know them personally. We shared in the pain of mourners, lining six blocks of Walnut Street, who gathered to pay their respects as a funeral procession of 65 cars passed on its way to the cemetery with one of the tornado’s victims.

When people have lost so much, the joy of reuniting them with a beloved pet is tremendous. “Our pets enrich our lives in more ways than we can count, and knowing that we made a difference for the devastated Pierce City community and their pets fills me with great joy,” says MWRO Director Diane Webber. “But the greatest joy comes from knowing that Dave Sanders has been reunited with three of his cats, thanks to our team’s rescue efforts.”

Dave’s pelvis was shattered when his downtown business and apartment building fell in on him. “My heart just broke when hospital employees told us that he reached out in his sleep for his cats who always nestle near him at night. I knew we had to do something,” said Webber. “Those cats were his whole family—they were all he had left in the world.” With the approval of emergency management engineers, members of the HSUS DART set traps in the unstable building and were able to retrieve his cats. Thrilled upon hearing the good news, Dave said, “They’re like little friends, you know.” He and his cats are now recuperating with relatives.

In all, MWRO provided temporary housing or support for 44 animals, and local veterinarians reported treating an additional 87 pets, 56 farm animals, and 40 wild animals at their clinics. All have been reunited with their owners or adopted into continued on page 2
Prepare Yourself and Your Pets for Disaster

H urricanes, floods, wildfires, hazardous material spills—disasters can strike anytime, anywhere. It is imperative that you make preparations to evacuate your family and your pets. In the event of a disaster, proper preparation will pay off by helping to ensure the safety of your family and pets.

If You Evacuate, Take Your Pets

The single most important thing you can do to protect your pets if you evacuate is to take them with you. If it’s not safe for you to stay in the disaster area, it’s not safe for your pets. Animals left behind in a disaster can easily be injured, lost, or killed. Animals left inside your home can escape through storm-damaged areas, such as broken windows. Animals turned loose to feed for themselves are likely to become victims of exposure, starvation, predators, contaminated food or water, or accidents. Leaving dogs tied or chained outside in a disaster is a death sentence.

Disaster Supply Checklist for Pets

Every member of your family should be ready to evacuate in an emergency. That includes your pets. Keep the following items accessible, stored in sturdy containers (duffel bags, covered trash containers, etc.). I can that be carried easily.

- Medications and medical and vaccination records stored in a waterproof container and a first aid kit.
- Sturdy leashes, harnesses, and carriers to transport pets safely and to ensure that your pets can’t escape. Carriers should be large enough for the animal to stand comfortably, turn around, and, and lie down. Your pet may have to stay in the carrier for hours at a time while you take shelter away from home. Be sure to have a secure cage with no loose objects inside it to accommodate smaller pets. These may require blankets or towels for bedding and warmth.
- Current photos and descriptions of your pets to help others identify them in case you become separated from your pets.
- Food and water for at least three days for each pet, bowls, cat litter and litter box, and a manual can opener.
- Information on feeding schedules, medical conditions, behavior problems, and the name and number of your veterinarian in case you have to board your pets or place them in foster care.
- Pet beds and toys, if you can easily take them, to reduce stress.
- Other useful items include newspapers, paper towels, plastic trash bags, grainy items, and household bleach.
- Your local humane organization or local emergency management agency may be able to provide information about your community’s disaster response plans. For more information about disaster preparedness, visit www.hsus.org/disaster.

Animal Care Expo

When: March 10-13, 2004
Where: Hyatt Regency Reunion, Dallas, Texas

T he HSUS has developed a dynamic education conference designed for anyone and everyone who works or volunteers to help animals. Animal Care Expo is a world-class educational conference combined with a full-scale international trade show, the goal of which is to help those in animal sheltering, care, control, and rescue do the best and most efficient jobs possible. Go to www.hsus2.org/sheltering/general/expo_information.html to learn more.

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Care4Iowa organizers are conducting on-the-ground outreach to consumers and farmers through Iowa’s 150 farmers’ markets. They also seek to educate and work with elected representatives of Iowa’s 99 county governments, farmers, and farm owners, and the more than 35,000 HSUS constituents in Iowa. The campaign has published a special newspaper for broad distribution to Iowa residents and consumers of Iowa’s agricultural products that links the issues of animal welfare and development of a sustainable economy. Full-page Care4Iowa ads have appeared in Iowa farm publications including Iowa Farmer Today and Farm News.

“The Humane Society of the United States acknowledges that meat is part of many people’s diets,” said Robert Hadad, HSUS director of farm systems. “We want consumers to understand where their meat is coming from, how it is raised, and how their choices at the market can affect the welfare of farm animals and the farmers who raise them.”

The 2003 portion of the campaign will culminate with the first Care4Iowa Congress that will be held on January 3, 2004, at the Temple for the Performing Arts in Des Moines. For more information about the campaign or how you can be involved, contact Chris Bedford at 515-283-0777.

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New homes.

In addition to aiding the animal victims of the tornado, HSUS staff and volunteers established relationships that will last a lifetime. “We can’t thank you enough for all you’ve done,” said Dave Compton, emergency management coordinator for Lawrence and Barry counties. “We didn’t even know you people (HSUS DARF Team) existed until this week. Thank you.” You’ve taken a huge load off our minds.

MWRO Rewards Aim to Root Out Abusers

S ince the relocation of the Midwest Regional Office from Kansas City, Missouri, to Des Moines, Iowa, in June 2000, MWRO has been able to offer rewards in 11 different animal cruelty cases. Unfortunately, no one has come forward with any information that could lead to any arrests or convictions.

Tragically, violence in our society can affect all relationships and all members of the family. Pets are part of the family in more than half of American households, and they are frequently drawn into the dynamics of family violence, often as the first victims. MWRO is endeavoring to make police, prosecutors, social workers, and teachers in our five-state region aware of the potential dangers to humans following cruel attacks on animals by providing First Strike campaign information each time we are made aware of acts of violence and animal cruelty such as those listed here. If you or your community professionals would like more information about planning a First Strike workshop for your community, or having a speaker from The HSUS present at a conference to raise this awareness, please contact our office at 515-283-1393 or mwro@hsus.org.

HSUS is offering rewards in these cases:

- A lone pit bull who was found nearly dead in an Omaha, Nebraska, backyard. He had been stabbed in the head several times and his neck slashed. Due to the extent of his injuries, the dog was euthanized. This case was instrumental in passing L.B. 273, a full making the mistreatment of animals a class IV felony on the first offense.
- A puppy who was tortured and severely mutilated in Topton, Missouri.
- Five cows due to give birth in Adel, Iowa, who were shot in the field where they were grazing. Three died instantly, two made people’s lives better for many people’s lives before perishing.
- A dog who had been doused with a chemical and severely burned in Springfield, Missouri.
- An eight-year-old quarter horse named Frosty who was mutilated in Jackson, Nebraska.
- A Doberman pinscher in Polk City, Iowa, who was found tied to a gate and shot twice in the head near Big Creek Lake.
- Two dogs who were killed and then stuffed into a refrigerator in Keokuk, Iowa.
- A Hastings, Nebraska, cat who was taped to a street sign. The animal was found nearly frozen to death and had to be euthanized.
- A cat in Orleans, Nebraska, who was shot with a bow and arrow. It took three days to catch the injured cat. The animal survived surgery to remove the arrow, which had not snuck any vital organs.
- The torture of a pig in Jefferson City, Missouri, who was forced to drink alcohol.

The HSUS offers many standing rewards. Visit www.hsus.org and enter the search term “reward” to learn more about them. MWRO reminders readers to report all acts of cruelty and violence to the proper authorities, and contact MWRO at 515-283-1393 for more about how you can help.

I want to learn how I can help our animal friends and The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS).

Please send me information about

- Making a memorial donation to honor the life of a pet, friend, or relative.
- Providing for my pets in my will and in case of emergency.
- Planning my estate and will to help animals and The HSUS.
- Using charitable gift annuities and trusts to support The HSUS.
- Giving The HSUS a gift of stock.

Promoting the protection of all animals

Nora miraculously surviving being shot by an arrow. Her attackers have yet to be found.
Director’s Report

By Diane Webber
Director of the Midwest Regional Office

Better Laws Make for Better Life, Especially for Animals

There’s a scene in the movie “Changing Lanes” in which a character played by Ben Affleck is interviewing a young attorney for a position in his law firm. Why does he want to be a lawyer, he asks. Without blinking, he answers, in part, that “laws provide a framework for proper human behavior. Without the law there would be more incivility and more violence in society.”

Courtesy, tolerance, and humanity should be the by-products of proper legislation. Our legislators have a moral and ethical obligation to draft laws that will induce proper human behavior, and it is our civil obligation to encourage them to do just that.

The 2003 legislative session saw numerous bills involving animal issues—some good, some not so good. In the Midwest, bills requiring MWRO’s attention ran the gamut from turtle racing to felony animal cruelty. Many of these issues will surface again during the 2004 session. Proposed dangerous dog legislation in Iowa was of particular concern to me because of its serious potential ramifications. Although the breed specific aspects of this bill were removed, S.F. 446 was so poorly written that it labeled all unleashed, unattended, or unmuzzled dogs in unincorporated Iowa as “dangerous,” and provided that they could be seized or destroyed without liability—putting all stray dogs in Iowa in jeopardy. In essence, this bill created an open season on dogs. Certainly there was no consideration here for drafting a law that would “provide a framework for proper human behavior.”

Although the bill died, the legislator who introduced it vows to bring it up again next session—this time with more vigor. You can be sure we’ll be there to counter any such attempt. And you can help.

Anyone who wants our political and legal systems to become more animal-friendly can make a valuable contribution. It can be as simple as writing or calling your elected officials to ask them to vote a certain way, or you can choose to become more actively involved by becoming a citizen lobbyist. It is not too early to let your voice be heard now, before the 2004 session begins. Whether your concern is turtle racing, dove hunting, animal fighting, exotic pets, or dangerous dog laws, you need to contact your legislators now and speak for the animals. Tell them of your concerns and encourage them to do the right thing.

The HSUS has created the Humane Activist Network—a national grassroots group of people who work to pass animal protection legislation. You can help make the Network a success. Contact MWRO at mwro@hsus.org for more information about how you can join.

Legislative Victories in Nebraska

Thanks to the help of many dedicated HSUS members and other animal advocates, Nebraska passed several bills that will improve animals’ lives. L.B. 274 requires the licensing of pet shops and requires dealers, pet shops, shelters, and breeders to provide purchasers with spay/neuter information. It also requires that all dogs and cats released from shelters or animal control facilities be spayed or neutered, and sets standards of care (including socialization) of dogs and cats for commercial breeders. L.B. 273 makes the mistreatment of animals a class IV felony on the first offense, requires reporting of suspected animal abandonment, cruelty, neglect, or mistreatment, and makes animal abandonment and cruel neglect a class I misdemeanor on first offense. It also increases the penalty for animal fighting from a class I misdemeanor to a class IV felony on the first offense.

Contacting HSUS

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Promoting the protection of all animals