Idaho “Collector” Case Successfully Resolved

For 13 months the NRRO worked to improve conditions for animals at the Rupert, Idaho, residence of an animal collector. The elderly woman has accepted and cared for stray dogs and cats, exotics, and wildlife for several decades.

When we first visited her property in June 1992, we found 60 animals living there, mostly in substandard conditions. Although the woman may have intended to help the animals, her physical and financial resources were inadequate to deal with such a large number. The NRRO supported the city’s claims that the animals’ living conditions violated state statutes and that the property posed a potential public-health risk. We agreed, however, that prosecution would do little to solve the problem.

Instead we proposed some possible solutions. We offered our assistance in cleaning up the property and placing most of the animals, provided that the collector agreed to release them and not accept any other animals.

After lengthy legal negotiations regarding the number of animals she might keep, the case was resolved. The collector may have no more than five cats and five dogs. The court appointed the NRRO as the “impartial inspector” responsible for ensuring that the collector complies with all of the

Abandoned Dogs Helped By Teamwork

When Sheriff Dave Christman of Sheridan County, Mont., impounded 41 abandoned dogs from a puppy mill, he didn’t realize that he was undertaking a lengthy and expensive project. Under Montana law the dogs had to be held as evidence while efforts were made to locate their owner. For the next three months, the dogs were boarded at two private veterinary facilities.

When the county finally received authorization to dispose of the “evidence,” it had to comply with Montana law mandating that the dogs be sold, to the highest bidder, at a sheriff’s sale. Concerned about the dogs’ welfare, Christman readily accepted our suggestions for making the sale as humane as possible. He agreed to impose a purchase limit of two dogs per person; announce that all unsold dogs would be given to The HSUS for distribution to Montana shelters and societies; notify any non-residents that they would need a health certificate to transport any dogs to nearby North Dakota or Canada; require picture identification from buyers; and provide The HSUS continued on page 3
In 1992 NRRO volunteers and Bureau of Land Management employees completed a pilot project of removing barbed-wire fencing in Montana’s Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range. Near a natural spring, we removed fencing that had caused the accidental death of a wild horse. Although temperatures were in the high 90s, a small group of volunteers removed three sections of fencing around the spring. We also successfully tested necessary stake-pulling equipment. The day’s highlight was a visit by a band of wild horses, curious to see what we were doing.

### Teamwork continued from page 1

with the names and addresses of successful bidders for follow-up. The NRRO contacted each dog purchaser to offer a spay/neuter coupon and encourage its use. People have been quick to respond and nearly all of the dogs have been spayed or neutered. The NRRO and PAS jointly nominated Brandi for the Stillman Award for canine vocal hero, given by the American Humane Association. We’re pleased to announce that she won. The NRRO contributed to the cost of Brandi’s veterinary treatment. She is expected to recover fully.

At the Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range, HSUS volunteer Bruce Mone (left) and BLM employee Tom Voss remove fencing that caused the death of a wild horse.

### Vocal Hero: Adopted Puppy Saves Life

In July 1992 Hank and Linda Brooks adopted a four-month-old labrador-mix puppy from the Panhandle Animal Shelter (PAS) in Sandpoint, Idaho. Just 42 days later, the dog repaid the Brookses by saving the life of their 21-year-old son, John.

As a fire was engulfing the family’s home, “Brandi” barked and scratched outside John’s bedroom door. After both John and Brandi escaped, the house burned to the ground. Brandi required extensive medical treatment.

The community responded to the needs of the Brooks family. The Panhandle Animal Shelter, John Moody, D.V.M., of the Bonner Animal Hospital; and the NRRO worked to meet Brandi’s needs.

The NRRO and PAS jointly nominated Brandi for the Stillman Award for canine heroes, given by the American Humane Association. We’re pleased to announce that she won.

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Veterinarian John Moody examines Brandi for the Stillman Award for canine heroes, given by the American Humane Association. We’re pleased to announce that she won.

### The Focus Is on Felines: 1993 Is “The Year of the Cat”

The country’s four largest animal-protection organizations have declared 1993 the “Year of the Cat.” The American Humane Association, the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and The HSUS have set a goal for 1993: “to improve the care, protection, welfare, and status of cats.”

Within our region, a number of events will celebrate cats. For example, Ranger Paul Krzyuk will be organizing a “Feline Festival” at Hells Gate State Park in Lewiston, Idaho. The event is scheduled for June 12, “Outdoor Idaho Day,” when the park charges no admission fee. Krzyuk said he hadn’t expected “the great amount of enthusiasm” the project has generated. The feline festival will feature cat adoptions, free on-site veterinary check-ups for adoptees, and speakers on a wide variety of cat-related topics.

If you would like to do something in your community to elevate the status of cats, consider the seven suggestions in the sidebar. For more information or additional ideas, contact the NRRO or write to “Year of the Cat,” 330 S. Huntington Ave., Boston, MA 02130.

### Seven Ways You Can Celebrate Cats

- Ask your city or town to draft a resolution encouraging responsibility toward cats.
- If your community does not budget for responding to calls about abused and neglected cats, work on changing that policy. To demonstrate the need for this service, ask your city or town to count the calls about cats it receives.
- Ask your local library to display a “Year of the Cat” poster and to feature books and publications on cats during a particular month.
- Set up a cat-information display at your city or town hall, local library, bank, shopping mall, or other public place.
- Arrange for cat ID tags to be supplied to those who adopt cats.
- Work with local veterinarians and health officials to set up a rabies clinic specifically for cats.

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Because the NRRO is relatively new, I receive inquiries, almost daily, about The HSUS and the functions of the regional office. In my explanations, I attempt to convey the wide variety of animal-protection projects we undertake.

I may often give questioners more information than they actually desire. Still, most listen to my full description before commenting “Really?” or “Wow!” Usually, I start with a simple statement, such as “Our office is here to help and protect animals” or “We are the HSUS animal-protection office that serves Montana, Wyoming, and Idaho.” If someone asks follow-up questions, such as “How do you help the animals?” I eagerly elaborate.

I love what I’m doing. Throughout my career, I have sought to work with domestic animals and wildlife. I enjoy facing the challenge of important, often difficult, issues and joining forces with people from all walks of life. Most importantly, I value my job because it gives me the chance to make a difference in the lives of the animals and people I meet. My job can sometimes be depressing, but it is always challenging. I wouldn’t trade it for anything.

These pugs were found in pens that had not been cleaned in four to five years. No hot water was available on the site, which had other sanitation problems as well. On average, the NRRO investigates 10 cruelty cases each month in the three-state region.

Montana Cruelty Case Involves Hundreds of Animals

On average, the NRRO investigates 10 cases of cruelty to animals each month. Complaints may involve a single animal or 900. Sometimes a complaint involving one animal develops into a major case.

A current Montana case is one example. Following complaints about the condition of a sheep, the NRRO and Montana's Yellowstone County Animal Control joined forces to investigate. On the owner's property we found a starving horse and approximately 300 other animals—including sheep, goats, rabbits, hamsters, pigs, cows, chickens, geese, cats, and 90 dogs.

The NRRO hired two veterinarians to assess the animals' condition. The veterinarians found health problems and signs of inadequate care in all species involved except the geese (who had been flying to neighboring properties to eat).

The NRRO submitted veterinary summaries, photographic evidence, and recommendations to the county prosecutor’s office. The property owner has denied the charges of cruelty to animals and requested a non-jury trial. Meanwhile, we have worked with the owner, and with law-enforcement officials, to remove most animals from the property.

I hope that through our newsletters you will share our enthusiasm for improving the lives of all animals. Without your support we could accomplish little.

Reflect for a moment . . .

How can I help animals even when I no longer share their world?

By your bequest 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/Senior Counsel, The Humane Society of the United States, 2100 L St., NW, Washington, DC 20037.