HSUS Helps in Katrina’s Wake

As the National Guard entered New Orleans to quell civil disorder coming in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, members of the HSUS National Disaster Animal Response Team (DART) worked their way into the nearly obliterated regions of southern Mississippi and Louisiana. The situation could not have been more urgent in both areas, with reports of animals locked in homes, kennels, veterinary clinics, and other locations. It was a race against time for our first responders on the ground.

HSUS personnel in Gulfport, Mississippi, rescued more than 125 animals trapped in a flooded animal shelter, where some had desperately swum in their cages for hours before being saved. Tragically, not all survived. Those who did were rushed to nearby Jackson, where an HSUS team arranged to place them with humane organizations beyond the endangered area.

Meanwhile, The HSUS, in concert with animal protection groups throughout the continued on page 3

Red Lobster Protest in Times Square

Nearly 50 enthusiastic protesters, led by MARO Program Coordinator Barbara Dyer, left their “negative” regards to Red Lobster in Times Square in the middle of a heat wave. Protests were also held at 94 Red Lobsters in 28 states and three Canadian provinces.

Members of The HSUS, as well as Caring Activists Against Fur, and individual protestors held signs reading: “Don’t buy while they die!” which referenced the yearly spring seal hunt in Newfoundland that kills more than 300,000 defenseless pups who are just days or weeks old for their pelts.

“Canada’s commercial seal hunt has become the largest, most brutal slaughter of marine mammals on earth,” states Dyer.

Educational information was distributed to passing New Yorkers and tourists from around the world, so that people could understand how an international boycott of Canadian seafood could help stop the seal hunt.

Canada exports two-thirds of its seafood to the United States, which brings $3 billion annually into the Canadian economy. Red Lobster is the largest seafood chain in the U.S. and has the power to stop the Newfoundland seal hunts. Canada’s Department of Fisheries and Oceans has declared that it would only stop the hunt if the fishing industry asked for it to be stopped. “So we are giving them an economic incentive to stop the hunt,” adds Dyer.

What can you do? Please ask Red Lobster managers to stop serving Canadian seafood. Ask restaurant servers which seafood items on the menu are from Canada, and don’t order them. Write to the company’s corporate leaders and ask them to oppose the commercial seal slaughter and join The HSUS’s boycott of Canadian seafood: Red Lobster/Darden Group; Joe E. Lee, Chair, and Clarence Otis Jr., CEO; 5900 Lake Ellenor Drive; Orlando, FL 32809; 407-245-4000; 1-800-LOBSTER (1-800-562-7837); e-mail from the corporate Web page at www.redlobster.com/contactus.asp.

For further information about how to protect seals, visit www.protectseals.org. If you are interested in participating in protests, please e-mail maro@hsus.org.
NY License Plate Reduces Pet Overpopulation

A growing number of states have followed the lead of New Jersey legislators who passed a law in 1993 allowing for the production of animal-friendly license plates. Three states—a Delaware, New York, and Pennsylvania—have laws very close to that state’s model. In 2005, New York introduced its animal-friendly license plate, which was designed to fund a program to provide, on a national scale, that has helped to alter more than 170,000 dogs and cats since its inception in 1984. The APCF and New York’s animal-friendly license plate, which was designed to fund the program, is by national and state model.

New York’s Animal Population Control Fund license plates, originally authorized by the 1986 law. State government representatives asked a number of animal protection groups for recommendations on the plates’ motto. The one selected was “Our Best Friends.” Sandra Woodbine, New York State Humane Association’s (NYSHA) administrator, said, “Although NYSHA had hoped to see a spay/neuter message on the license plate, we are pleased that many of our ‘best friends’ will benefit from the funds its sales will generate for the Animal Population Control Fund, and we encourage everyone to New York State animal protection to purchase one.” Each plate sold adds $20 to New York’s Animal Population Control Fund.

The plates are available at any office of the Department of Motor Vehicles. To order them, call 518-402-4580, or visit www.nysdmv.com.

NYJ Program Honored

Friends of New Jersey’s Annual Animal Population Control Fund (APCF) received a boost this past May, as members of New Jersey’s General Assembly took time out from their busy schedules to recognize the award-winning program with a resolution sponsored by Assemblyman Reed Gusciora. The resolution, which also paid tribute to the work of the state’s Domestic Companion Animal Council (DCAC), honored the innovative program, which has helped to alter more than 170,000 dogs and cats since its inception in 1984. The APCF and New Jersey’s animal-friendly license plate, which was designed to fund the program, is by national and state model.

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On the set of “The Pet Stop” are host Brian Vesnick, actress and New Jersey APCF spokesperson Kelly Bishop, MARO Director Nina Austenberg, and Dr. Arthur Baeder with the Domestic Companion Animal Council.

Paws Up for PAWS!

Let’s hear applause for PAWS, the Pet Animal Welfare Statue that will, if enacted, strengthen the ability of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to oversee large commercial dog and cat breeding facilities.

Introduced in May 2005 by Sens. Rick Santorum (R-PA) and Richard Durbin (D-IL) and Reps. Jim Gerlach (R-PA) and Sam Farr (D-IL), PAWS is designed to help ensure the humane treatment of animals bred and sold by “puppy mills” and “kitten mills,” many of which are operating under the radar of the USDA because they sell directly to the public instead of through another business such as a pet store. The bill also offers consumers a means to learn the source of the animals available for purchase, including those imported from abroad.

Although the HSUS recommends animal shelters and responsible rescue organizations as the best resources for obtaining companion animals, we understand that people still want to adopt and own companion animals. The HSUS supports efforts to help them find healthy, happy, loving homes.

Everyone attending the fair was given a “planet Earth passport” outlining the ways people could help animals and the environment by making small changes in their homes and communities. Students and their parents seemed delighted to learn about the many ways they could help animals and the environment by making small changes in their homes and communities.

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WV Animals Win!

West Virginia’s animals and people have good cause to celebrate. Gov. Joe Manchin (left) recently signed into law bills requiring dogs and cats adopted from shelters to be spayed or neutered, increasing penalties for animal cruelty code and implementing an animal cruelty early intervention program, and outlawing remote Internet hunting. Thanks to Gov. Manchin and the dedicated West Virginia activists, the 2005 session was a great success.
Barbara Dyer of The HSUS, both opponents of a bear hunt, wait to speak at the state Fish and Game Council meeting.

Eleanor Hoffman of Rockaway, left, and Barbara Dyer of The HSUS, both opponents of a bear hunt, wait to speak at the state Fish and Game Council meeting.

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

Send a Message to Trader Joe’s

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likewise its competitors in the natural foods market, such as Whole Foods and Wild Oats. Trader Joe’s still sells eggs from hens confined in “battery” cages—so small they can’t even spread their wings. These eggs are so intensively confined that they never engage in many important behaviors, including nesting, perching, and dust bathing. Their lives are filled with immense suffering. In the past, Trader Joe’s has been responsive to customer concern for animal welfare, but the chain is refusing to stop selling eggs from caged hens.

The HSUS needs you to ask Trader Joe’s to can the cages and sell only cage-free eggs.

 njBear Hunt May Be Back

L

ast year New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner Bradley Campbell went to court to stop a bear hunt. This year he has stated that he is open to a hunt. The New Jersey Supreme Court ordered a Management Plan for black bears to be written by the New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife, and approved by the Commissioner. The plan was submitted to the Commissioner in March. At the 2005–2006 Game Code hearing, attendees were told that they could not bring up the bear hunt because the Commissioner had not yet approved the Management Plan, so opposition was effectively silenced. However, a hearing will have to be held on the plan, if it is approved by Campbell. Gov. Codey says he will defer the question of a bear hunt to Campbell.

A hunt in 2006 may occur on the watch of New Jersey’s next governor, either Sen. Jon Corzine or Doug Forrester.

There is still time to stop the bear hunt this year. And your vote on November 8 may determine the future fate of New Jersey’s bears. Please contact the following people:

Commissioner Bradley Campbell
Department of Environmental Protection
PO Box 402
Trenton, NJ 08625-0402
609-292-2885 (phone)
609-292-2769 (fax)
www.state.nj.us/dep

Acting Gov. Richard J. Codey
Office of the Governor
PO Box 001
Trenton, NJ 08625-0001
www.state.nj.us/governor/govmail.html
609-292-6000 (phone)
609-292-2885 (phone)

Gubernatorial Candidates:
Sen. Jon Corzine
One Gateway Center, 11th Floor
Newark, NJ 07102
http://corzine.senate.gov/contact.cfm
617-645-0502 (fax)
617-645-3030 (phone)

Doug Forrester
29 Emmons Drive C-10
Princeton, NJ 08540
973-645-0001
www.state.nj.us/governor/govmail.html
609-452-0008 (fax)
609-452-0131 (phone)

Please send us your Trader Joe’s receipts. We’ll send them to the company to show that their consumers care about the welfare of laying hens. Send receipts to: The Humane Society of the United States, Factory Farming Campaign, 2120 L Street, NW, Washington, DC 20037.

An Overwhelming Task

On their first foray into the embattled city of New Orleans on September 4, members of the HSUS DART, together with animal control staff from the Louisiana SPCA, targeted animals stranded at the Superdome as their priority. There, they rescued dozens of animals relinquished or abandoned by evacuees who fled the city to escape Katrina’s rage.

Once the base of operations was established in the city, animal rescue workers faced a massive and urgent challenge. Throughout the weekend, reports of animals in urgent need of rescue continued to pour into the HSUS call center and into other organizations mobilized in the region. “It’s just overwhelming,” Laura Maloney, executive director of the Louisiana SPCA, told a Knight-Ridder journalist. “There are countless thousands of abandoned pets in the city. And hundreds and hundreds are stuck inside their homes.”

During the evacuation of New Orleans, rescue workers barred pets from buses, trains, and other facilities. And Red Cross does not permit animals in its shelters. The harsh and depressing fact remains: In most disaster scenarios, people and their pets are often forced to go their separate ways.

The Louisiana SPCA, whose shelter was located in New Orleans, had been able—well before the infamous levee gave way—to evacuate all of the nearly 1,400 animals in its facility to the Houston SPCA, some 250 miles to the west, thanks to the generosity of well-coordinated efforts of that shelter, whose executive director, Patty Mercer, continued to offer the invaluable assistance of her staff and volunteers to the Louisiana SPCA and The HSUS during the protracted rescue efforts. Many other shelters throughout the country accepted considerable numbers of evacuated animals in response to the need to make more space available at the Gonzales facility, which quickly reached its capacity of approximately 1,400 animals.

The Ongoing Mission

“Since it is going to require a massive, long-term effort to help the animals and the people impacted by Hurricane Katrina,” said HSUS’s Laura Bevan, “But the HSUS is committed to doing all it can to support The HSUS’s animal protection efforts, go to www.hsus.org/petnet.”

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, quickly reaches... Protecting 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’s gift of stock.

Promoting the protection of all animals
Are We Winning the Battles But Losing the War?

It is really encouraging to see that many new groups have joined the fight against sport hunting in the mid-Atlantic region. In the early 1970s, the HSUS—joined by Friends of Animals, the Fund for Animals, and DEER Inc.—began protesting the barbaric deer hunt in the Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge, located less than an hour's drive from New York City. Our office led the protests for more than 25 years, until it became nearly impossible to draw participants or media attention. The lack of interest in the Great Swamp seems unbelievable at a time when practically every new area opened to sport hunting spawns another activist group and demonstration. Perhaps it was this splintering of the humane movement that caused the Great Swamp Protest to lose momentum. It's entirely possible that we are all fighting on too many fronts—trying to extinguish tiny sparks, instead of concentrating on the slow-burning embers that continue to start new fires everywhere.

When the Great Swamp Protest began, we were objecting to six days of sport hunting in the Refuge, which is managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Meanwhile, the annual number of hunting days elsewhere in the state continued to grow—from 19 days in 1950 to more than 100 days in 2005. Slogans such as “This is a Refuge!” and “Save the Deer”—commonly heard in the early days of the Great Swamp hunt—gave way to shouts of “Who’s to Blame? Fish and Game!”—as the humane community began to recognize that the situation outside the Great Swamp was growing considerably worse.

New Jersey's deer population continued to explode despite the increase in sport hunting activity and horrendous methods used to kill deer. Eventually we revealed that the “management strategies” used by New Jersey's Division of Fish and Wildlife to maximize sport hunting opportunities and revenue were in fact the cause of this population increase. Most of our members are aware that wildlife populations are “managed” by such means as habitat and sex-ratio manipulation. Any high school biology text will tell you that a limited number of males can easily repopulate an area if the number of surviving females in that hunted population remains relatively high. This is the goal of sport hunting managers—to ensure enough “targets” to sell the next season's hunting licenses. This gruesome priority will not change in our state—or any other state—as long as the percentage of sportsmen on the policy-making Fish and Game Council continues to vastly over-represent the fraction of state residents who hunt.

To that end, The HSUS recently launched a litigation division to expand on a number of humane initiatives, including the wildlife litigation begun more than three decades ago when The HSUS filed its first lawsuit against the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. Our focus must be on restructuring these management agencies, forcing them to represent the gardeners, homeowners, farmers, and ordinary citizens of our state. As long as this management imbalance exists, all the individual protests in the world will not make sport hunting a thing of the past.