

**The Humane Society Institute for Science and Policy**  
**Animal Studies Repository**

Fall 1988

# GSRO Fall 1988

Follow this and additional works at: <http://animalstudiesrepository.org/gulstarn>

---

## Recommended Citation

"GSRO Fall 1988" (1988). *Gulf States Regional Office*. 6.  
<http://animalstudiesrepository.org/gulstarn/6>

This Report is brought to you for free and open access by the Humane Society Institute for Science and Policy. It has been accepted for inclusion by an authorized administrator of the Animal Studies Repository. For more information, please contact [eyahner@humanesociety.org](mailto:eyahner@humanesociety.org).



# REPORT

THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES • FALL 1988

## HSUS Investigates Shelter Starvations

Just outside of Corpus Christi, Tex., a small, out-of-the-way animal shelter, operated for Nueces County residents, has become a living nightmare for the animals. Several years ago, The HSUS advised the county government to comply with minimum standards required by state law, and, at first, the county agreed, even though a technicality exempted it from the law. Then, as the years passed, less and less attention was paid to the shelter operation.

In late July 1988, the entire system collapsed. The shelter attendant called in sick and did not come in for several days. Since the county supervisor had no one else assigned to the shelter operation, he simply let the animals go unfed and unwatered. As a result, several dogs died agonizing deaths from deprivation. Other dogs turned to

cannibalism in a desperate bid for survival.

The tragedy hit the news media the following morning, and a number of volunteers set about caring for the remaining dogs. Our field investigator worked with the officials to establish where the fault lay.

Unfortunately, we met with the typical response of government agencies that attempt to cover up their wrongdoing. The county attorney stated he would hold no county supervisor responsible because care of the animals "wasn't their job."

The HSUS is maintaining its position that local governments are responsible for the care of animals in their custody, regardless of whether or not employees show up for work. At press time, we were still pushing for prosecution of the responsible parties in the case. ■



Two of the survivors at the Nueces County (Tex.) Animal Shelter, where the animals were left for days without food or water this summer.

### INSIDE:

- Cockfight Scene of Rape
- Auction Barn Abuse
- University of Texas Fined
- Education Association Formed
- Rodeo Cruelty Opposed

## Arkansans For Animals Organized

Arkansas has a newly formed, statewide group to work for animals. Arkansans for Animals (AFA) is an organization with a unique blend of lawyers, animal-control officers, and concerned citizens from around the state. It has as its goal the "prevention and eventual elimination of all forms of animal abuse and exploitation." In particular, AFA organized for the purpose of promoting passage of humane legislation and to disseminate humane education information. The president, Craig Lambert, has already prepared letters asking each state senator and representative to consider introduction of three bills in the next legislative session. These bills will:

- 1) make dogfighting and cockfighting felonies in Arkansas;
- 2) prevent surgical alteration of animals for entertainment purposes; and
- 3) give animal-control and humane-society officers authority to seize animals during emergency situations.

AFA plans to hold quarterly meetings in various places around Arkansas. For more information, write to Arkansans for Animals, Inc., Suite 1700, First Commercial Building, Little Rock, AR 72201, (501) 375-5848. ■

## Violence Begets Violence— Cockfight Scene of Gang Rape

San Diego, Tex., was a sleepy little town where everybody knew or was related to everyone else. However, late one Saturday night in March, a nineteen-year-old woman was reportedly abducted a half-block from her home and allegedly gang-raped by as many as twenty men. The rapes occurred at the scene of a large cockfight. Most of the estimated thirty men and boys attending the cockfight knew the assault was occurring in a parked car near the cockpit. No one tried to stop the assault, even though the victim cried out for help.

Charges were filed against eleven men. Seven of the men were charged with sexual assault, three were charged with sex-

ual assault and kidnapping, and one was charged with kidnapping, according to Justice of the Peace Amado Gardia, Jr.

Reportedly, approximately one-quarter of the five thousand San Diego residents participate in cockfighting. Children are often among the spectators. By participating in this activity, cockfighters are teaching their children that violence and breaking the law are acceptable.

The HSUS stated in the press that if society tolerates this type of violent bloodsport, we will never overcome violent social crimes such as rape. And the bottom line cannot be ignored. As this incident clearly indicates, violence begets violence. ■

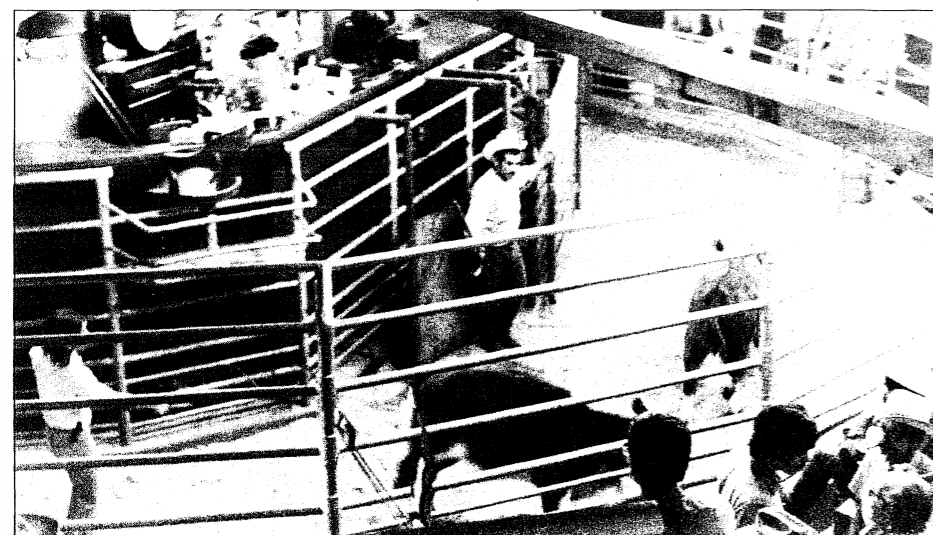
## Livestock Abuse Continues In Texas Auction Barns

The HSUS Gulf States Regional Office has received a number of complaints from cattle ranchers regarding the rough abuse suffered by their cattle at Texas livestock-sale barns. Upon examination, Bernie Weller, our field investigator, found pony whips slashed across the faces of calves and oak canes slammed across hips and spines to hurry the animals through chutes. He also found live electrical current being used to shock cattle into moving.

Our investigator informed the sale-barn

owners of possible cruelty violations and discussed the corrections needed to comply with the law. Mr. Weller was assured that corrections would be made, and it was not their intent to abuse animals.

Returning to one of the sale barns a few weeks later, our investigator found much less abusive handling of the livestock. This is, of course, just one sale barn, and there are hundreds in our region where animals are handled roughly. We will continue to work to stop mistreatment of livestock. ■



*This brutal roping of a calf is an example of the abuse rodeo animals often endure.*

## HSUS Speaks Out Against Rodeo Events

Recently, Regional Director Bill Meade took part in a Houston, Tex., radio talk show that invited the public to call in comments. The topic for the day was: "Do you believe rodeos cause cruelty to animals?"

The HSUS presented the facts, which showed clearly that animals are injured, tormented, and sometimes killed in rodeo performances. Further, rodeo producers rationalize the injuries or deaths by saying they are just "accidental," and rodeo cowboys really "love" their animals.

Then the public began to call in their comments. Surprisingly, out of approximately ten callers, seven were opposed to rodeo. Perhaps we are making more progress than we sometimes realize!

Of the other three callers, two supported rodeo and gave the usual timeworn argument that participating animals are expensive and certainly wouldn't be mistreated.

The final caller, however, was truly frightening. He said he believed that rodeos were cruel and did cause suffering to animals. But, he said, he intended to continue supporting rodeos because "God made animals for only one reason, to be used and to suffer for any activity that pleases man!" ■

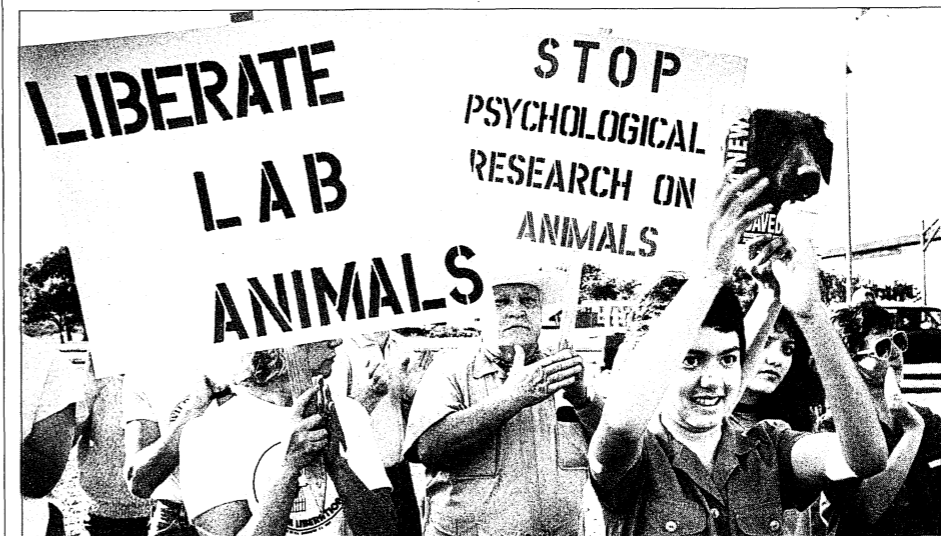
## University of Texas Violates Care Standards for Animals

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has announced that the University of Texas Health Science Center in San Antonio, Tex., paid a \$15,000 penalty in connection with charges of violating the federal Animal Welfare Act. The university operates a research facility that ranks as one of the largest users of animals for experiments in which no anesthesia is used to relieve pain.

According to the USDA, the University of Texas, for a number of years, filed false annual reports. Allegedly, the Health Science Center stated there was a program of veterinary care and anesthetics were

used to relieve pain when, in fact, no attending veterinarian even had access to the animals, and, therefore, no one could verify whether any standards were being complied with.

During recent months, a number of newspaper and magazine articles have been written defending animal experimentation. The standard defense is that researchers are responsible professionals who would never knowingly violate animal-care laws. The American public has been told not to worry about these animals because they are in good hands. This case clearly points out the fallacy of that position. ■



*Animal-rights activists protest the use of animals in experiments at the University of Texas.*

## Oklahoma Shelter Bill Fails

In Oklahoma, many shelter animals often go for days without sufficient food or clean water. In winter, newly born puppies and kittens have sometimes been allowed to freeze to frigid concrete floors. In summer, filth and flies are often the animals' only, unwelcomed, companions. Why does this happen? Simply because counties and small cities in Oklahoma won't spend the money necessary to furnish these shelter animals with basic, decent care.

In an effort to correct these problems, the Oklahoma Humane Legislative Committee and The HSUS backed a bill (S.B. 70) to

establish minimum standards of care for all Oklahoma shelters. The bill was written very simply and required only that local governments provide shelter animals with food, water, sanitation, and protection from freezing. This is no more than an individual pet owner is required by law to do for his or her own pet.

The bill failed in the legislature because some local governments opposed it.

We urge all our Oklahoma members to write their state legislators and ask them to support a minimum shelter-standards bill. ■



*Louisiana animal activists are determined to end cockfighting in their state.*

## Cockfighting Protested

The legalized, bloody "sport" of cockfighting faces strong opposition in Louisiana. A statewide legislative group, the Coalition of Louisiana Animal Activists (COLAA), is promoting bills sponsored by Sen. Nelson, Rep. Forster, and Rep. Herring to outlaw these cruel events. Unfortunately, the first attempt was not successful, as cockfighting forces persuaded rural legislators to oppose the bills.

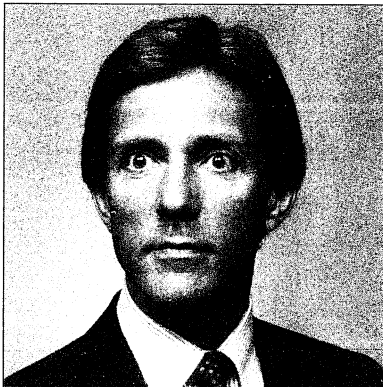
COLAA and Louisiana groups are already planning for new legislation for the next session. If you can help get petitions signed, write to the Jefferson SPCA, 4636 Sanford St., Metairie, LA 70006. ■

## Educators' Association Organized

A new region-wide humane educators' association has been formed by The HSUS with the goal of expanding humane education within our communities. Humane education is essentially the process of sensitizing young people and adults to the philosophy of reverence and respect for life. This is accomplished by giving people the

*continued on page 4*

## DIRECTOR'S COMMENT



by Bill Meade

During the last few years, the humane movement has faced growing opposition from groups and individuals who are involved in exploiting animals, either for hobby, habit, or monetary gain.

Many are shocked when they first realize not everyone agrees that prevention of cruelty is a desirable social goal. Frequently, people will claim to be opposed to cruelty, but their definition of cruelty does not include activities such as dogfighting and cockfighting, killing for selfish reasons, or recreational killing of animals.

The humane movement should clarify to the public exactly what values we hold.

There are simply too many opinions of what constitutes "cruelty" to have a clearly defined meaning to the public. Because of this ambiguity, we need to state publicly our underlying philosophy in a way that will not be misconstrued.

My suggestion for a philosophical position is the following: *Reverence and respect for all life expressed through a nonviolent lifestyle.* Reverence for life excludes selfish or unnecessary killing. Respect allows all creatures to live a fulfilling, natural existence; nonviolence excludes all actions that destroy and harm our world, other people, animals, or ourselves.

Certainly, there will be those people who will debate what is "necessary" killing and what is "harmful" to life. For instance, is it necessary to kill surplus shelter animals, or is it necessary to kill food animals? Is it necessary to experiment on animals? These questions can be answered through pragmatic, factual inquiry. The answers are there. The question is, are we and the public willing to accept the answers?

I firmly believe we have a much greater ability to influence the public and motivate positive change if we advocate and demonstrate a philosophy that unquestionably stands for reverence, respect, and nonviolence. ■

## AROUND THE REGION

■ **EL PASO, TEXAS**—We are pleased to report an important victory that was announced in May by the Animal Alliance Society. The City of El Paso has finally agreed to use injection as the primary method of euthanasia for unwanted pets. A petition with more than five thousand signatures was used to convince the local health board to take this step.

■ **NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA**—Members of Animal Peace marched into a department store's fur display on Canal Street carrying fur coats and steel-jaw animal traps stained with red. After speaking to customers about the cruelty of furs, they were escorted outside, where their protest continued.

■ **LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS**—Ninety-four cruelty complaints have been investigated this year by the Pulaski County Humane Society. Two especially sad cases were a cat used for target practice by a bow-and-arrow marksman and a horse that had been starved beyond help before anyone reported the case.

■ **SHAWNEE, OKLAHOMA**—The Pottawatomie County Humane Society has spayed or neutered more than two hundred animals since beginning the Elmer Washichek Spay/Neuter Program. This is a progressive and far-reaching accomplishment worthy of copy by other small Oklahoma societies. We encourage other societies to follow their example. ■

## Humane Education

continued from page 3

facts on animal-exploitation issues, thus helping them to see the implications of their actions on all other life forms.

An annual symposium and workshop will be held by the new association to bring in nationally renowned speakers on relevant topics.

The association will be governed by its own elected steering committee. The chairman of the committee is Joe LaPalomto, who can be reached at the Houston SPCA (519 Studemont St., Houston, TX 77007) for membership information. ■

## 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/General Counsel, The Humane Society of the United States, 2100 L Street, NW, Washington, DC 20037.

The Regional Report is a publication of

**The Humane Society of the United States  
Gulf States Regional Office  
6262 Weber Road, Suite 305  
Corpus Christi, TX 78413  
(512) 854-3142  
William R. Meade III, Director**

The HSUS Gulf States Regional Office serves Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas. All contributions made to The HSUS Gulf States Regional Office are tax-deductible. The office operates Monday through Friday and is closed on federal holidays.

© 1988 by The HSUS. All rights reserved.

9/88