TYPICAL SIGNS ADVERTISING ROADSIDE ZOOS. THERE IS NO SHELTER FOR THE THREE BEARS IN THE CAGE, AND NO WATER IN THE ALLIGATOR'S TANK. NOTICE THE HOSE IS HANDY, BUT NO ONE HAS BOtherED TO TURN IT ON.
The Roadside Zoo

Summer is the time most people plan their vacations. An increasing number of people are visiting national parks and recreation areas each year. And, even if they don't visit a national park, many people select secondary highways in preference to major turnpikes or expressways, in order to identify more closely with nature and the unspoiled, delightful rural scenery. It is these secondary highways that are often littered with once colorful signs proclaiming the proximity of the next roadside zoo. "Rare Capuchian Monkeys", "Thousands of Monkeys", "Man-Eating Alligator", or "See the Dancing Bear" signs, usually poorly maintained, are a blight on the highway scene. Hopefully many of these eyesores will eventually be eliminated by new legislation governing billboards and other advertising signs along the nation's highways. Far more serious than the pollution of the tourist's view from his car window, however, is the confinement of wild animals for the public to view, as an attraction to roadside businesses. What the tourist will encounter in many roadside zoos is enough to make any humanitarian's blood boil with rage.

Seldom are the animals housed in proper quarters. Seldom are their quarters maintained in sanitary condition. Frequently animals are found without water. People are often invited to feed the animals foods that provide little or no proper nourishment, which can be purchased, of course, from the proprietor. Tourists are attracted to stop and view these animals by the same motivation that leads them to buy a ticket at the circus to see the bearded lady, or see the man with two heads. These animals are not a freak of nature, but a freak of civilization, victims of exploitation. Seeing animals in a poorly maintained roadside menagerie instead of the way to appreciate them or learn anything useful about their habits. Some privately owned roadside zoos appear to have no other major source of revenue than admittance fees and concession stands, and often have a large collection of animals on display. These facilities are just as truly exploiting animals for the tourist's amusement and the owner's profit as the gas station that pumps more gas by keeping a bear in a cage. Neither offers any educational value to the experience of seeing the animals so confined.

New federal legislation governing the confinement and exhibition of wild animals is accompanied by regulations that should, in effect, put most inferior roadside zoos out of business, or demand significant improvements. However, it hasn't yet achieved that objective, primarily because of limited funds, resulting in a low level of manpower enforcement efforts, as well as complicated procedures involved in sentencing violators. The United States Department of Agriculture, the enforcement agency, has put a number of zoos on notice, allowing a reasonable time period for improvements to be made. Should a zoo fail to comply with requirements listed by USDA within the specified time, the case must be sent to the Justice Department to be heard. There is no record of a roadside zoo violation having been prosecuted by the Justice Department to date, although the law became effective in December of 1971. The Humane Society's Sue Pressman, who has investigated hundreds of zoos, when asked about the delays in prosecuting offenders, stated: "Well, we simply haven't lived long enough to see this law work effectively".

Among the regulations are the following requirements:
Staff trained in animal husbandry.
Sufficient space to permit the animal to make normal postural and social adjustments with adequate freedom of movement.
Veterinary consultation on preventive medical care, nutrition, and pest control, from a licensed veterinarian.

Obviously it will take more than an act of Congress to remove the blight of the roadside zoo from the nation's highways. It will require the participation of every person who discovers a roadside zoo, or is in the least bit concerned about the animals displayed as objects of curiosity in such menageries. It will take the expression of the will of the people, to the enforcement agency charged with a responsibility on behalf of all Americans, to urge this law be properly and rigidly enforced.

You can help animals in roadside zoos. Document all the information you can on any roadside zoo you know about, or discover during your trips this summer. List all the information you can, in as much detail as possible. List the types of animals displayed, the approximate size of cages, including height, description of any shelter provided for the animals (from rain, sun, or heat), the condition and presence or absence of water, or indications of food. If it is an animal that should have water in which to submerge its body, such as an alligator,
describe the tank and the water it contains. Take photos. (Remember the photo contest described in the May issue). Send as much information as you can about each animal and provisions for its care to KIND, to help us document roadside zoos. Be sure to give an accurate description of the facility and its location.

Actively protest the keeping of wild animals as curios on display by refusing to purchase any merchandise from the business that keeps a roadside zoo. Further, take enough time to tell the proprietor what you think is wrong about the animal display, and that you are not buying anything from him in protest to his keeping animals on display at all. If it is a business that is part of a large brand name, as many gasoline stations are, write to the main office of the company, telling them you will no longer buy their products because a branch store, carrying their brand name, has a roadside zoo. Be sure to give its exact location, and the name of the proprietor, if possible.

You may also wish to report any roadside zoo conditions that you feel should be corrected to the Department of Agriculture. There are regional offices of USDA throughout the U.S., usually found in a state capital. Your county extension agent can probably provide you with the right address. Be sure to ask for the United States Department of Agriculture representative, not the state agent. Ask to be informed on the results of any investigation they are able to make of the conditions you report.

Wherever you travel this summer, wouldn't it be more pleasant if your trip were not marred by the memory of shoddy roadside zoos you passed on the way? Your trip next year may be free from this blight on the nation's highways, if you act this year to get roadside zoos removed from the rural American scene.

OPPS! -- We forgot to give credit to the Monterey County SPCA for the photo of the raccoon in the trap, which appeared on the trapping posters. Our apology.

WANTED--Volunteer artists to prepare simple line drawings, illustrations for the next Kindness Club kit we are planning. If you want to help younger KIND members learn about animal friends, help us include interesting illustrations of various animals. Many are unusual animals (mostly sea animals) that you'll have to look up in your local library to know what they look like, before attempting to draw them. Let us know if you want to help, and we'll send you the list of animals that are needed for this new kit. All artists whose illustrations are used in the kit will be given appropriate credit, and a copy of the completed kit when it is published, for your own personal memory collection.

One More State to Protect Infant Easter Animals

The North Carolina Senate, in unprecedented swiftness, added clarifying amendments to the Chick Bill, after it passed the House, and returned it to the House for confirmation of the amendments. The House responded quickly, and the Senate gave final approval of the bill on May 10. The Governor has already stated publicly that he would sign the bill if passed by both houses and sent to him for signature.

A special celebration was held at Miss Lena Couch's fourth grade class at David Caldwell School, in Greensboro. Miss Couch served cake and punch, after greeting her class with a large sign, which read: "Thanks to 27 precious little people who value life, North Carolina has a chick law". It was these 27 students who launched an intensive campaign for introduction and enactment of this legislation, and, primarily because of their many letters, that the Senate responded to the bill so quickly and so positively. One legislator said that, because of the students' letters, the lawmakers understood the bill better, and realized how important it was to have such a law. North Carolina becomes the 18th state with such a law. Maine and North Dakota prohibit the sale of dyed animals, but do not prevent their sale, undyed, as pets. KIND members in any state where no such law exists may wish to use the example of Miss Couch's class to seek protection for Easter animals.

States which protect Easter chicks: Alabama, California, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia

Amanda Blake feeds a fox at KIND Headquarters. Amanda, who plays 'Kitty' on the popular "Gunsmoke" television series, is a member of the Board of Directors of the Humane Society. Recently she attended a hearing in support of a bill in Colorado to outlaw calf-roping and steer-busting at rodeos in that state. In spite of the evidence presented of injuries animals receive in these events, the bill is not expected to be passed.

photo by Don Rypka

5.
Dear Mr. Hylton:

I just received my DEFENDERS kit and was trying to think of a way to get more members. If you had just a tiny spot in nationwide newspapers for an entry blank you’d get many more members. I’m sure many kids would like to join The Humane Society but just don’t have the chance.

Robin Oanes, Fargo, N.D.
age 13

Dear Robin:

You have an excellent suggestion. Trouble is, The Humane Society just doesn’t have any money we can spend on advertising space in newspapers across the country. There is one way KIND members can help tell others about KIND, though. Try writing a short letter to the editor of your local newspaper, telling what being a KIND member means to you. Suggest other readers might want to become KIND members, and give the KIND address. If every KIND member did that, we could blanket the nation with free public service advertising, and really add to our members. Our goal is to double our 20,000 membership again this year. Every KIND member can help make this hope a reality. I hope you will.

Your friend, Dale Hylton

EXPLORER POST #9041 MEMBERS MANNING THEIR BOOTH THAT DESCRIBED THE CRUELTIES OF TRAPPING, SITE OF THE BOOTH--THE ANNUAL FESTIVAL IN SALISBURY, MARYLAND, WHERE THE SPECIAL FEATURE OF THE FESTIVAL IS A MUSKRAT SKINNING CONTEST! EXPLORERS REALIZED THEY WOULD BE IN ENEMY TERRITORY, BUT THEY WANTED TO PROTEST THE TRAPPING OF MUSKRATS WITH THE STEEL JAW TRAP, AND PROTEST THEY DID--PEACEFULLY. A FILMSTRIP RAN CONSTANTLY, DEPICTING AGONIES OF ANIMALS CAUGHT IN THE STEEL JAW TRAP.

WILD BURRO RESCUE

by Robert Franklin Leslie
A Golden Gate Junior Book Childrens Press $4.33

This is an unusual tale of one man's dedication to save wild burros. WILD BURRO RESCUE is one of the best books we have ever read. It details a school teacher's determination to help wild burros that have been shot at from planes, poisoned, or used for target practice, and left to die. Taking a crash course from a veterinarian in treatment of sick or injured animals, Robert Franklin Leslie documents his experiences in practicing veterinary medicine, without a license, solely to help persecuted wild animals. His faithful companion and guide, Winkie, once a wild burro herself, demonstrates an uncanny understanding of his self-appointed task, and helps Leslie befriend wild burros that need help, and protects him against other members of the herd while he treats the sick and wounded. Throughout the book Leslie relates experiences with wild animals that prove his attunement with the true realities of nature, and sensitivity to animal behavior, communication, and intelligence that we often fail to realize. You'll want to read it again and again. Leslie is truly a St. Francis to the wild horses, who have been persecuted mercilessly, and need your help so they may be permitted to live in harmony with nature, protected from harm.

Dear Sirs:

I am writing to you in complaint of a law recently renewed by the New York legislature. This law prohibits dogs from roaming free outdoors from sunset to one hour past daybreak. This law, dating back to the nineteen twenties, has been passed in twenty-three of New York's sixty-two counties. Any dog found outside after sunset will be shot on sight after the given time. Is it the poor dog's fault if he is left out?

These are the counties involved: Allegany, Broome, Cayuga, Columbia, Genesee, Livingston, Onondaga (except city of Syracuse), Ontario, Orleans, Otsego, Rensselaer, St. Lawrence, Saratoga, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, Tioga, Tompkins, Warren, (except city of Glens Falls), Washington, Wayne, Wyoming, Yates.

Sincerely, Leslie Kuhn, Dewitt, N.Y.

Dear Editors of KIND,

My friends and I got together and made a petition to stop stores from selling baby ducks and chicks at Easter, and it worked! We stopped three different stores from selling little animals at Easter. Thank you so much for giving me the idea! Please keep putting more wonderful ideas in the EcolofKIND magazines. They are very, very good.

Nancy Krom, Lyndora, Pa. age 15
Observe "Deer Crossing" signs faithfully. Slow your speed and be especially alert in these areas. Over 200,000 deer are killed annually on the nation's highways.

Dear KIND,

As you know, in very hot weather, large dogs get rather uncomfortable. We find that an inexpensive child's plastic pool solves this problem nicely. The dogs soon learn what it is for, and have great fun splashing around in it. This is an easy and effective tip your readers may be interested in. It will make a lot of dogs happy!

Sincerely, Julie Hildebrand, Lexington, Va. age 16

Editor's note: Thanks, Julie, for an excellent idea. I'd like to hear from more KIND members with good ideas like this.