Cockfighting Raid in Napa

A team of more than 30 investigators, including a SWAT team, sheriff's deputies, federal agents, local humane and animal control agents, and WCRO representatives served search warrants on two locations in south Napa County in early August. The team seized more than 2,000 gamecocks. It was the second such raid carried out in Napa County this year (see spring 2003 WCRO Regional News).

“This raid resulted not only in one of the largest seizures of gamecocks to date, but also in the confiscation of one of the largest collections of illegal cockfighting implements I've ever seen,” said WCRO Director Eric Sakach. Over the two-day search, officers found hundreds of “claws—the razor sharp knives that are attached to the legs of fighting birds.

“Investigating and raiding an operation of this size is no easy task,” said Sakach. “The HSUS commends the Napa County Sheriff's Department for their proactive effort to stem the growth of this cruel and illegal industry in their jurisdiction, and we commend each of the agencies and organizations that provided personnel to assist them.”

WCRO's Cynthia Cutler participated in the Napa County cockfighting raid.

Dosha, The Miracle Dog

Within the span of several hours, Dosha was hit by a truck, shot in the head, and left in a freezer. Somehow, the eight-month-old mixed breed dog survived it all.

Dosha's ordeal began on April 15, 2003, when she reportedly escaped her yard and was hit by a truck in Clearlake, California. A Clearlake police officer who arrived on the scene thought the dog was suffering, or potentially dangerous, and decided to perform emergency field euthanasia by shooting Dosha in the head. Dosha was then transported to a freezer used by Lake County Animal Control.

When interim Lake County Animal Control Director Denise Johnson arrived two hours later to retrieve Dosha's body, she encountered not a deceased animal, but a young pooch sitting up, very much alive. Johnson rushed the injured animal to the Clearlake Veterinary Clinic, where she was X-rayed and treated. To everyone's amazement, Dosha had not suffered any life-threatening injuries.

After receiving reports of the incident, WCRO's Bob Reder traveled to Clearlake and met with the Clearlake Animal Welfare Society (CLAWS), county and town officials, the director of the county animal control, the attending veterinarian, the dog's care-giver, and of course with Dosha herself, who was recovering quite well. Her medical expenses have been covered, thanks to donations sent to a fund created by CLAWS, including a $500 donation by The HSUS.

During his meetings with government officials, Reder learned that there is a serious problem with dogs running at large and a disregard for the dog licensing laws. Reder also learned from officials that there is not adequate animal control available in Clearlake. Police Chief Robert Chalk made it clear that he doesn't believe his officers should augment animal control efforts. Chalk also advised Reder that his officer made the correct decision under the circumstances. When questioned, Chalk told Reder that his officers do not receive training in the recognition of vicious dogs, evaluation of life-threatening injuries, or performance of acceptable euthanasia techniques, and the police department does not have an emergency animal transportation procedure in place. To this end, Reder offered to provide training to the Clearlake City Police. Chalk explained that he did not have funds in his budget to cover the cost of overtime to accomplish the training.

WCRO asked that CLAWS host a continued on page 2
Regional Efforts to Prepare for Disaster

Doing the Drill for Disaster Preparedness

The North Valley Animal Disaster Group (NVADG) knew their training had paid off when they were invited to participate in the Butte County/Canyon Oaks multi-agency disaster drill in June. As part of a mock wildfire scenario, NVADG members worked side by side with law enforcement, city and county fire officials, the California Department of Forestry, and the County Office of Emergency Services. The collaboration between human and animal responders enabled both groups to exercise their own disaster plans and better understand the roles each group has in a disaster.

During the drill, responders evacuated animals to a temporary animal shelter at a local equestrian center. The team set up areas for animal intake, veterinary services, security, sanitation, large and small animal housing, feeding, and exercise. WCRD Program Coordinator Cynthia Culter participated in and helped critique the drill. “The North Valley Animal Disaster Group has come a long way in a year,” said Cutler. “The teams handled themselves effectively and professionally even when presented with challenging situations. In the event of an actual disaster, animal owners need to be prepared to evacuate with their animals. Residents living in this area should know that rescued animals will be well taken care of in a disaster.”

Hawaii Animal Disaster Training

In July, WCRD’s Cynthia Culter and Southeast Regional Office Director Laura Bevan joined forces with Kauai Humane Society (KHS) Executive Director Becky Reder, to handle the first HSUS disaster training to Hawaii. Hawaiian Humane Society Director of Shelter Operations Linda Haller and Mark Marshall of Kauai Civil Defense Agency were also on hand to conduct the training. The KHS is a beautiful 30,000 square foot facility with a housing capacity of 1,000 animals. During times of disaster, the basement will be utilized as the Red Cross human evacuation center. Evacuees are welcome to bring their pets and house them upstairs in the animal shelter. In addition, KHS can house pets displaced by disasters as well as care for their own shelter animals. The three-day course included personal disaster planning, establishing pet-friendly shelters, maintaining the health and safety of responders, managing volunteers, and learning the incident command system. Thirty animal care professionals and volunteers attended. The training also included a hands-on component in which shelter staff and volunteers were presented with various disaster scenarios. Participants had to design and implement a functional evacuation animal shelter for those displaced.

Conference Excess in Educational Offerings

Every year WCRD stuff exhibit and present a varied way of specialized education programs at conferences and training programs throughout the region. Helping local animal cruelty investigators and other animal care specialists gain expertise and skills to do their jobs more efficiently is one of the major objectives of The HSUS. One event such as The HSUS helps to support is the Animal Care Conference, an animal event sponsored by the California Association of Animal Control Directors, the State Humane Association of California, and the California Veterinary Medical Association. Attracting close to 600 participants, the 2003 Animal Care Conference was held in San Jose, California, last March.

Among the dozens of educational sessions, WCRD Director Eric Sakach led a course on illegal animal fighting that was filled to capacity; while WCRD Special projects Coordinator John Donners helped present the conference’s first Award of Excellence in Education to human education filmmaker Erik Friedl. Friedl has produced seven outstanding films, some of which have aired on PBS stations across the country. Ink and Fur Productions is known for its educational and entertainment programs at conferences throughout the country. Ink and Fur Productions is known for its educational and entertainment programs at conferences throughout the country.

Ravs Visits California Reservations

In an effort to inform residents of the Tahoe Basin area about peacefully coexisting with black bears, the folks at Safeway Supermarkets joined with the Tahoe Council for Wild Bears (TCWB) to put “bears on bags.” For several weeks in July, all northern California Safeway stores distributed paper grocery bags that displayed a “keep bears alive” message. “TCWB is a unique coalition of 11 government and non-government organizations working together to educate the public about bears and create an environment that promotes the peaceful co-existence of humans and bears,” said Bob Reder, WCRD regional coordinator and member of TCWB’s executive committee.

Bears who grow accustomed to people can become bold and lose their fear of humans. To avoid this behavior, do not let bears become habituated to human sources of food. Once habituated, bears will seek out those sources, creating conflict with humans. The bears’ behavior will not stop voluntarily, and unless the nuisance behavior can be corrected, bears may be killed. Remember, a fed bear is a dead bear.

Get the RAVS E-news

No matter where in the world the RAVS team travels, you can follow along with the RAVS E-newsletter. Whether it’s a waiver/neutral clinic for pets in California or an equity wellness clinic in Peru, readers can get a glimpse into the activities of these hard-working volunteer veterinary students.
by the disaster. The training had such a positive impact that shelters from neighboring islands are interested in bringing the training to their areas.

**WCREO Speaks to Search and Rescue Professionals**

During the National Association for Search and Rescue conference in Sparks, Nevada, in May, WCREO's Cynthia Cutler joined HSUS Disaster Services Director Anne Culver and Chief Technical Instructor Kim Little to present a workshop aimed at keeping first responders safe when rescuing animals during disasters. The presentation showed search and rescue professionals how to integrate animal rescue into their response. Because rescue teams are first responders, they frequently come into contact with animal victims. Many rescuers want to help animal victims. Many rescuers want to help

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**Nevada Man Convicted in Dogfighting Ring**

In June, after a trial that stretched over seven days, a Nye County jury found a Pahrump, Nevada, man guilty on two counts related to instigating dogfights and keeping a place for the fighting of animals. During sentencing on September 9, 2003, District Court Judge John F. Davis said he was "appalled" by the crime. He sentenced Michael Van Winkle to one year in the county jail, fined him $5,000, and placed him on five years of formal probation. Michael Van Winkle is the first of three defendants to be tried in the matter. He and his brother Jeffery both lived in Pahrump, where, according to evidence presented during trial, they bred pit bulls for fighting. When they raided two locations in Pahrump in the spring of 2002, sheriff's deputies and animal control officials found evidence that included severely scarred dogs, a bloodstained portable dogfighting arena, weight scales, photographs of dogs in combat, treadmills, breaking sticks, drugs and veterinary supplies, underground dogfighting publications, and computer records. Jeffery Van Winkle has pleaded guilty and is awaiting sentencing. Jason Sinie--who has been a fugitive from justice since the properties were raided--will also be prosecuted.

According to testimony presented during trial, a dozen or more dogs were kept on Van Winkle's property. A neighbor testified that about once a month, between September 11, 2002, and March 2002, a host of cars with Arizona and California license plates could be observed at Van Winkle's property. Another witness, a former caretaker, told jurors that Michael Van Winkle held a "gala grand opening" at his animal handling, and while he didn't actually witness dogs fighting, there was "a lot of blood" to clean up in the "paw" afterwards.

Key expert testimony came from WCREO Director Eric Sakash, who reviewed evidence and met with investigators at the request of the district attorney. "This was a sophisticated operation," said Sakash. "There wasn't anything they needed that they didn't have."

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**Legislative Update**

**California**

- Penalties increased for cockfighting. S.B. 732, sponsored by WCREO and introduced by Sen. Nell Soto (D-32nd) of Ontario, was signed into law by Gov. Gray Davis on September 2, 2003, and takes effect January 1, 2004. The new law raises charges for a first-offense conviction of illegal cockfighting up to $5,000. Second offense fines go up to $25,000. Both also include a jail sentence of up to one year. The HSUS is grateful to the California Legislature and to Gov. Davis for passing this legislation to crack down on the barbaric and widespread practice of cockfighting. Cockfighting is not only inhumane, but it is also often associated with a range of other criminal activities, including gambling and narcotics trafficking.

- Sales of unweaned pet birds regulated. A.B.202, supported by The HSUS and introduced by Assemblywoman Ellen Corbet, prohibits pet shops with six or more employees from possessing unweaned parrots unless they employ two people who have completed the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Councils avian certification program. If the shop employs five or fewer, it is required to have one certified employee. Pet shops may not sell unweaned parrots, nor may anyone sell unweaned parrots at swap meets or bird fairs. This bill has passed both houses of the Legislature and awaits Gov. Davis's signature.

- Resolution A.C.R. 16, introduced by Assemblymember Joe Nation, passed the General Assembly in June. It urges state agencies to develop nutritionally sound school lunch menu plans that include optional vegetarian choices. The Day of the Horse has been designated as December 13, by resolution

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**Hawaii**

Pet quarantine eased. Gov. Linda Lingle signed an administrative rule change this June that relaxes the state's pet quarantine system. The rule change shortens the quarantine for pets who meet specific requirements before they get to the Aloha State, reducing the stay to five days or less, rather than the present 30- to 120-day quarantine.

Under the new rules that took effect June 30, Hawaii residents for the first time will be able to travel with their pets and return to the islands without their animals being quarantined. Non-Hawaii resident pet owners hoping for shorter confinement of their animals upon arrival in the state must present proof that their animal has had two rabies vaccinations, microchip implantation for identification, and clear results of blood serum tests. Quarantine costs for the reduced confinement program will be $165 if the pet qualifies for direct release from the airport and $224 if the pet must be held for up to five days.

Qualifying for the more lenient rules may require several months of preparation. To learn more, go to www.hawaiitax.org/hour

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**Nevada**

Horse tripping banned. On August 19, 2003, the Nye County Commissioners passed an ordinance that makes the inhumane practice of "horse tripping" illegal. Often found in Mexican-style rodeos, called charreadas, horse tripping can be found in three events that often result in severe debilitating injuries or death to the animals.

The first, "paides en el hienzo," is an event in which team members rope the hind legs of a running horse, jerking him sharply to a stop. Although penalties are supposedly incurred if the animal is not brought to a gradual stop, quite often the horse is jerked by his hind legs to the ground.

The second and third events are perhaps the most horrific. In the "manganas a pie" the charro (cowboy) stands on foot and ropes a galloping horse by his front leg, intentionally falling the animal to the ground, sometimes head over heels. The "manganas a caballo" is an identical event except that the charro ropes the galloping horse from horseback.

All three events are extremely dangerous, for horses. Broken bones, fractured shoulders, and severe face and leg lacerations are commonplace, and such activities are already banned in a number of states including California and Texas. The ban took effect September 8, 2003.

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**Animal Care Expo**

Where: March 10-13, 2004

Why: Hyatt Regency Reunion, Dallas, TX

The 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.hsus.org/sheltering/general/expo_information.html to learn more.

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**WCREO Publications**

*WCREO Regional News* Fall 2003

**The Humane Society of the United States**

WASHINGTON, D.C. (September 17, 2003) -- The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) is grateful to

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**THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES**

WCREO Regional News Fall 2003

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**I want to learn how I can help my 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 my assets in case of emergency.
- Planning my estate and will to help animals and The HSUS.
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- Giving The HSUS a gift of stock.
- Promoting the protection of all animals.

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THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES

HUMANE ADVICE TO ANIMAL OWNERS

P.O. Box 417220 (mailing address)

2004, COAST 5301 Winkle held a grand opening" at his animal handling, and while he didn't actually witness dogs fighting, there was "a lot of blood" to clean up in the "paw" afterwards.

KEY EXPERT TESTIMONY CAME FROM WCREO DIRECTOR ERIC SAKASH, WHO REVIEWED EVIDENCE AND MET WITH INVESTIGATORS AT THE REQUEST OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY. "THIS WAS A SOPHISTICATED OPERATION," SAID SAKASH. "THERE WASN'T ANYTHING THEY NEEDED THAT THEY DIDN'T HAVE."
We live in an age in which violence seems to permeate every aspect of our lives. And if there isn’t enough actual violence with all its real victims and all their real suffering, we flock to simulated (and sometimes real) violence presented as entertainment. The fact is that we’re immersed in violence, and we still can’t seem to get enough of it. It’s difficult to imagine that things will improve any time soon for people, let alone animals, when we seem to be so inclined to commit acts of violence against others because they are of a different race, speak a different language, practice a different religion, or because they are a different species.

Throughout history, great thinkers and learned scholars have expounded on the importance of instilling in children a humane ethic, not just for the sake of the animals, but for all life. Humane education is not a new concept at all. As early as 1933, the National Parent Teacher Association Congress issued the following statement in support of humane education:

“Children trained to extend justice, kindness, and mercy to animals become more just, kind, and considerate in their relations with each other. Character training along these lines will result in men and women of broader sympathies, more humane, more law-abiding—in every respect more valuable citizens. Humane education is teaching in the schools and colleges of the nations the principles of justice, goodwill, and humanity toward all life. The cultivation of the spirit of kindness to animals is but the starting point towards that larger humanity which includes one’s fellow of every race and clime. A generation of people trained in these principles will solve their international difficulties as neighbors and not as enemies.”

As we first reported in the spring 2002 issue of the WCRO Regional News, a proposal by Dr. Yale Wishnick for a Humane Education Charter School in the Sacramento area, the first in the country; has received the support of our office. Charter advocates say they hope such a school for 300 students in kindergarten through sixth grade could open in 2004.

I am especially heartened by the fact that WCRO staff has served as part of the charter school’s planning committee from the very beginning, and we have been continually impressed with the way Dr. Wishnick has been able to bring together local parent and teacher support groups as well as many statewide and national groups that believe the school will be widely accepted and highly respected. The HSUS will provide resource personnel and materials for the project as well as guide curriculum development.

Finally, add Yale Wishnick to the list of great thinkers and learned scholars.

For updates on the Humane Education Charter School, call Yale Wishnick at 916-212-9297, or visit www.ctaregion2.org/San%20Juan%20Final.pdf.