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Guadalupe County Fair

Cruel ‘Coon Games Called Off

After more than a year of investigation and statewide publicity, officials of the Guadalupe County Fair did not hold the usual round of raccoon games this past fall at the annual exposition.

In the past these games have included treeing of raccoons, “coon in a hole,” “coon in a log,” and “coon in a barrel.” In a statement filed with Guadalupe County Attorney Elizabeth Jandt in October, 1976 Bernie Weller, field representative for the Gulf States Office, HSUS, said these games were inhumane and cruel. Saying she did not believe there was enough evidence to justify it Jandt refused to act on the complaint. She maintained that the Texas State Law prohibiting cruelty to a “wild, living creature previously captured,” had not been violated.

HSUS Gulf States Director Scott and HSUS Board Member Dr. Amy Freeman Lee brought the cruel “coon games” to the attention of U.S. Attorney John Pinckney. The matter was placed in the hands of the Justice Department’s Civil Rights Division.

Scott called the ‘coon dog trials flagrant violations of the Texas statutes (section 42.11 of the penal code) which outlaws animal cruelty and makes violation of the statute a Class A misdemeanor.

Many of Field Representative Weller’s accusations were verified by a former judge of the ‘coon dog trials. He told how that in ‘coon sacking contests ‘coons fall as far as 40 feet after being shaken from treetops.

In the treeing portion of the ‘coon trials a dog barks, snaps and bites at a raccoon that is placed in a small, wire cage, causing the raccoon to huddle fearfully in the corner. Then the cage is raised 6 to 8 feet in a tree and the dog is timed as he runs to the tree, jumps and barks at the raccoon.

In her statement refusing the complaint, County Atty. Jandt said “I have no intention of taking a complaint against the fair association. If I accept this complaint then I’d have to file on the rodeo, the Lions Club for their turtle races, and who knows what else.”

The Board of Directors of the Guadalupe County Fair were reluctant to call off the events. However,
Regional Round-up

The three-day program was designed for teachers, school administrators, church leaders, members of humane groups and other interested persons. Its purpose was to help these persons in assisting students develop a greater respect for life through animal-related classroom and outdoor activities. Workshop topics were comprised of nature investigation activities which included a lecture about the story of animals in the growth of America. John Dommers, director of NAAHE, and Charles Herrmann, director of educational media for HSUS were on hand to conduct the workshop. It was co-sponsored by the Gulf States Regional Office of HSUS and Man and Beast, Inc. of San Antonio.

Regional Round-up

Groups interested in co-sponsoring a PAAL workshop in their community should contact the Gulf States Regional Office.

PAAL Workshop Held

The National Association for the Advancement of Humane Education (NAAHE) held one in a series of Workshops entitled People, Animals, Attitudes and Life (PAAL) recently in San Antonio.

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A live raccoon is tied in the back of the "hole" and a panel is removed briefly allowing the dog to get a glimpse of the 'coon as he tries violently to reach the wild animal. On some occasions dogs have reached and injured the animals before owners could restrain them.

Informed sources cited the adverse publicity from San Antonio television stations and newspapers in the area as influential in their decision not to hold the trials at last year's fair.

The board allegedly admitted they do not want Amy Freeman Lee, Bernie Weller and HSUS in general back to "harass" them again.

Efforts to keep this event from being reinstated at the fair are still being pursued by HSUS.

The Report is published by the Gulf States Regional Office of HSUS, 5333 Everhart Rd., Bldg. A, Suite 209, or P. O. Box 6375 Corpus Christi, TX. 78411 (512) 854-3142.
Douglas M. Scott .................. Director
Bernard Weller ..................... Field Representative
Elaine McLendon .................... Editor
Dolores Scott ...................... Secretary

1978 HSUS ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN DEARBORN, MICHIGAN OCTOBER 12, 13, 14, 15 Make plans now to attend.

A Humane Gift
Don't forget that memberships in HSUS for adults and KIND for children make excellent gifts. Not only will members receive magazines and special reports, but you may be opening the door to new attitudes and values for your friends and associates. Of course your gift as a donation helps stop animal suffering and promote humane education, also.

If you want to remember a friend, relative, animal control officer, your veterinarian, newspaper editor or others, remember HSUS. Send your gift memberships to the Gulf States Regional Office.
Voting Member ......$10  Sustaining Member ....$100
Family Membership . 18  Sponsor ............. 500
Donor ................... 25  Patron ............ 1000
Supporting Member . 50  Kind Youth Member ... 3
                      (through age 18)
Gifts to HSUS are fully tax deductible.