Pawtucket Decides to Close Slater Park Zoo

The Slater Park Zoo, a small municipal zoo in Pawtucket, R.I., is scheduled to close on July 1, 1993. Having changed little since its opening in 1957, the zoo has been criticized as outmoded and inhumane.

In February 1991, The HSUS began receiving letters from Rhode Island constituents who complained of the zoo’s conditions. That April the Pawtucket-based environmental group Save the Park, in a formal appeal to HSUS Chief Executive John A. Hoyt, requested HSUS involvement. The NERO contacted the City of Pawtucket officials and offered assistance in addressing the zoo’s problems.

NERO Program Coordinator Frank Ribaudo investigated conditions at the zoo and—with the assistance of John W. Grandy, Ph.D., HSUS vice president, Wildlife and Habitat Protection, and Randall Lockwood, Ph.D., HSUS vice president, Field Services—prepared an evaluation that was submitted to the Pawtucket Recreation Committee.

The HSUS believes that wild animals continued on page 2

Baer Joins Task Force on Hunting Safety

Late last fall, while hunting where it is legally allowed, a man accidentally shot and killed Kevin Elliot of Morris, Conn. Elliot had been jogging near a town reservoir. The incident caused a public outcry and ensuing controversy over the need for stronger hunting regulations.

In response, Connecticut Gov. Lowell Weicker created a special task force on hunting and public safety. NERO Director Arnold Baer was appointed to the group. The task force, which includes hunters as well as nonhunters, is charged with examining the safety of hunting as practiced in Connecticut. The task force is not to consider whether hunting should be abolished but whether it can be made safer.

Over the past few months, the task force has held a public hearing and conducted a number of open meetings. The group will present its findings to the gov- continued on page 3
John W. Grandy inspects the small outdoor elephant enclosure at Slater Park. Grandy
was assessing the zoo’s future, the HSUS spokesperson for our report on the Green
Mountain Dog Race Track on page 2, The HSUS opposes dog racing. The practice
involves cruel training methods, large-scale breeding (and inevitable destruction) of
greyhounds in hopes of producing winners, and often-cruel methods of killing nonwinners.

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AROUND THE REGION

VERMONT—The Vermont Coalition for Animal Legislation, of which NERO is a founding member, is backing legislation requiring rabies inoculation of cats as well as legislation providing for student choice concerning dissection. The group is also aggressively opposing a moose hunt sought by the Department of Fish and Wildlife.

NEW HAMPSHIRE—NERO recently sent New Hampshire HSUS members an Action Alert urging their support for legislation, proposed by the New Hampshire Federation of Humane Organizations (NHFHO), to establish a low-cost spay/neuter program. The NHFHO may also propose a mandatory spay/neuter bill.

MASSACHUSETTS—Undaunted by a governor’s veto last session, the Carriage Horse Action Committee and other groups in a legislative coalition continue to work for passage of comprehensive regulations for the carriage-horse industry. Also, a humane trapping bill has been reintroduced.

MAINE—Last year the Maine Federation of Humane Societies successfully lobbied for improvements in the state government’s approach to animal control. The Non-hunter Rights Alliance is working in support of legislation to increase public safety during hunting season.

CONNECTICUT—Bills aimed at more comprehensive animal-protection laws and safer hunting practices (see p. 1) will receive great attention this session.

RHODE ISLAND—Last year Gov. Bruce Sundlun signed two bills backed by The HSUS and other animal-protection groups. Transporting any animal outside a vehicle’s enclosed portion without proper and safe restraint is now illegal. Another law has established a Rabies Control Board, composed of seven members with varied backgrounds, including animal protection.

These successes derive from a strong effort by the Rhode Island Legislative Animal Action Coalition (RILAAC). This year RILAAC is introducing a bill requiring spaying/neutering of dogs and cats adopted from public or private shelters. The group is also supporting a bill designed to tighten regulations on bringing exotic and other non-domestic animals into the state.

Aqua Circus Emphasizes Environmental Awareness

With the help of the NERO and Massachusetts animal-protection groups, Cape Cod’s Aqua Circus continues to improve and will now emphasize education and environmental awareness rather than entertainment. The park has hired an education coordinator and is developing a theme of indigenous Massachusetts wildlife.

“One of our dolphin experts, ‘Dixie,’ a 19-year-old Atlantic bottle-nose dolphin who had been at Aqua Circus since 1977 and was the facility’s only dolphin, was found dead in her tank on February 27, 1993. Preliminary reports indicate the cause of death was age-related disease. Director Dennis Markham said Aqua Circus has no plans to acquire another dolphin.”

The new red fox natural habitat enclosure reflects the Aqua Circus’s philosophy of displaying animals in natural settings far better than did the old caging (inset).

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/Senior Counsel, The Humane Society of the United States, 2100 L St., NW, Washington, DC 20037.