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Animal Protection in Louisiana Makes Gains

Animal activists gathered on January 7 at a day-long workshop in New Orleans to hear GSRO Program Coordinator James Noe speak on the search for and seizure of abused animals. Afterwards, attendees were given an opportunity to test their knowledge by answering hypothetical questions relating to search-and-seizure situations. Susan Kreston, assistant district attorney for Baton Rouge Parish, spoke on the subject of case preparation and presentation to proper authorities.

Later in the week, Noe toured the southwestern portion of the state with Jeff Dorson of Legislation in Support of Animals (LISA). Dorson has a great deal of experience investigating smaller municipal shelters in the state. The HSUS is very concerned about the state of Louisiana’s shelters, as many of the shelters are largely inadequate, with animals kept in crowded, unventilated conditions and eventually killed by being shot or inhaling hot, unfiltered carbon monoxide gas generated by a fast-idling engine.

The Louisiana legislature has recently passed a law setting minimum operating standards for animal shelters. However, this toothless law was left as an optional statute—only enforceable if individual parishes wished to comply with its guidelines.

The HSUS and LISA are interested in compiling further information about other inadequate shelter conditions in Louisiana. You can help by visiting your local shelter and advising us of your findings. Call James Noe at the GSRO headquarters or Jeff Dorson at (504) 888-1148. We plan eventually to introduce legislation calling for mandatory standards for all state shelters.

The pipe extending from the front of this carbon-monoxide chamber connects to the tailpipe of a fast-idling engine, killing an animal with uncooled, unfiltered gas.
Sea Turtles Gain Protection—Use of TEDs Enforced

The endangered Ridley sea turtle has finally gained nationwide protection. Gulf Coast shrimpers, on the other hand, claim they themselves are now the endangered species, alleging that the required use of turtle-excluder devices (TEDs) so interferes with their catch that their continued economic survival is threatened.

Initial enforcement of the new regulations fell upon the National Marine Fisheries Service, a federal department of the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration. However, the department is not staffed actually fulls on the U.S. Coast Guard, responsible for enforcement of TED regulations along with their daily boater-safety and drug-interdiction tasks. Should USCG agents find a violator, they will immediately issue a citation and notify the NMFS, which will review each case and determine appropriate fines. First-time offenders can be fined $12,000 and upwards and possibly serve jail time. Habitual violators can be fined and jaled and their vessels permanently confiscilated.

Shrimpers are required to have TEDs installed and functional from March 1 through November 30, their primary trawling season. Shrimpers may not trawl during June or the first two weeks of July, allowing shrimp an undisturbed breeding season.

Student workshops that can be scheduled for any Saturday in March or April in our Corpus Christi, Tex., headquarters office. The workshop will assist you in integrating the Adopt-A-Teacher program into schools, obtaining corporate or individual sponsors, and obtaining grants for large scale endeavors. For further information, call Dorothy Weller at the GSRO.

A Coast Guard agent checks a shrimp net to make certain a turtle-excluder device is in place as required.

Change Needed in TPWD’s Administration

Last summer, the GSRO circulated petitions to our Texas members that urged the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) to step up its enforcement on state parks and wildlife refuges, a clear miscarriage of the original intent and purpose of the park system. The TPWD’s objectionable hunting policy is evidently only the tip of the iceberg.

In a recent article published by Texas Monthly, investigative reporters disclosed that the TPWD’s nine commissioners, appointed by the governor himself, are typically sport-hunting businessmen or political contributors. Rarely are environmentalists or conservationists asked to serve on the commission.

The Texas Monthly article also reported that, last year, the number of citations issued by the TPWD’s 2,600 employees for wildlife violations averaged only two tickets per week. Late in 1989, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service conducted the biggest raid on wildlife hunting violations in the state’s history, yet, as the article pointed out, the raid had only a small effect.

The TPWD also appears reluctant to expand its enforcement efforts. In 1997, the Texas legislature authorized $95 million in bonds for land acquisition and development. In 23 years, only $45 million of the appropriated funds have been spent.

We urge you to write your state representative calling for an ethical change in the TPWD’s administration and policies.

Shame of Fur” Campaign Targets Gulf States

On November 24. “Fur-Free Friday,” the volunteers for Animal Welfare staged an anti-fur demonstration at one of Oklahoma City’s largest shopping malls. As many as 50 people joined the protest. Nearly 15 “Shame of Fur” billboards were posted throughout the city, educating thousands of people of the cruelty inflicted upon fur-producing animals.

On January 13, The HSUS, in cooperation with the Legislation in Support of Animals (LSA), sponsored an anti-fur demonstration in downtown New Orleans. More than 40 animal protectionists participated in the event, which drew the attention of hundreds of onlookers and passersby. The event was covered by local television news broadcasts and newspapers throughout the New Orleans area and was part of The HSUS’s “Shame of Fur” campaign targeting 17 major cities across the nation.

Through billboards, public service announcements, and peaceful demonstrations such as these, The HSUS hopes to educate potential fur buyers of the cruelties involved in all fur production, be it raccooned fur or trapped. Over the past year, The HSUS made headlines and rallied hundreds of thousands of people to the anti-fur cause. The result is a marked increase in public opposition to fur garments.

Recent news accounts indicate the fur industry is suffering as a result of greater compassion for animals and understanding of the fur trade on the part of the public. (The fur industry blames the recent warm winters and general economic slowdown for the reduction in sales.)

The HSUS has vowed, with the help of local groups like LISA, to continue the battle against the fur industry until it no longer exists.

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Solutions to Problems with Urban Wildlife

The GSRO is sponsoring the “Humane Solutions to Problems with Urban Wildlife” workshop in New Orleans, La. This seminar provides information on methods of resolving problems created by wildlife in the urban environment. Contact the GSRO for more information.

On April 22—Celebrate Earth Day’s 20th anniversary. Local and regional organizations are hosting many different activities to promote a global environmental awareness. For activities in your area, write: Earth Day 1990, PO Box AA, Stanford, Stanford University, Stanford, CA 93309-415. 321-1990.

ARKANSAS—The Humane Society of Pulaski County in Little Rock urges its members to write their state legislators insisting the state anti-cruelty statute be clarified, thus enabling stricter enforcement. This follows an unsuccessful attempt to stop a diving-mule act in Little Rock.

TEXAS—Officials for the Wilburger Humane Society in Vernon recently seized a beated, water-soaked puppy from its owners. The owners claimed that the severe abrasions about the animal’s head and chin must have occurred when it was being taught how to walk on a leash. Criminal charges are pending.

The Brazos Animal Shelter, serving Bryan and College Station, recently launched a pet-licensing campaign, using billboards and radio and television announcements, to continually educate and remind the constantly changing population of Texas A&M University students of the need to keep current tags on their pets.

An El Paso radio station canceled its ill-conceived promotion called the “Amigo Cat Drop” after the GSRO and the Animal Alliance Society of El Paso expressed outrage over this obviously harmful message. Originally meant to broadcast the various cruel methods of disposing of unwanted pets, the promotion concluded with a fictitious cat drop over Arizona.

AROUND THE REGION

EVENTS

• March 30—The GSRO, with the Louisiana SPCA, is sponsoring the “Humane Solutions to Problems with Urban Wildlife” workshop in New Orleans, La. This seminar provides information on methods of resolving problems created by wildlife in the urban environment. Contact the GSRO for more information.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

• ARKANSAS—The Humane Society of Pulaski County in Little Rock urges its members to write their state legislators insisting the state anti-cruelty statute be clarified, thus enabling stricter enforcement. This follows an unsuccessful attempt to stop a diving-mule act in Little Rock.

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"Be a P.A.L.—Prevent A Litter" Campaign for 1990

Every time people decide to let their pet have "just one litter," they add to the problem of pet overpopulation. Even people who plan on finding homes for each of their pet's offspring contribute to the pet surplus with "just one litter." The sad truth is, only one in five puppies or kittens will find a good home—the rest will die. The Humane Society of the United States invites you to become part of the pet-overpopulation solution.

Join our national effort to combat the problem of pet overpopulation. Our most ambitious and comprehensive campaign continues this year, addressing pet overpopulation and promoting solutions to it.

To get the word out in 1990, we are again offering the colorful "Be a P.A.L.—Prevent A Litter" kit. For $5, you will receive the kit containing a wide array of promotional materials to spread the spay/neuter message and promote April as "Be a P.A.L.—Prevent A Litter" Month. We now offer a poster specifically targeting cat overpopulation. In addition, our "Be a P.A.L." T-shirt has been updated and now features the popular "P.A.L." logo on an all-white, 100 percent cotton "Beefy-T." Information on how to order posters ($1.50), T-shirts ($9), fact sheets ($0.35), litter bags (12/$2), buttons (20/$7), bumper stickers ($0.25), and other materials at discounted prices is included in the kit.

We also have "Be a P.A.L." television PSAs, produced by Gail Christensen of the Coalition for Pet Population Control in Los Angeles. These PSAs feature TV and movie personalities, including the stars of TV's "The Golden Girls." Videos are available in 3/4-inch, broadcast-quality format for $20.

Help carry the message! Be a P.A.L.—Prevent A Litter!

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 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

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.

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