KINDNESS CIRCLES THE EARTH

Members of The International Kindness Club, Representing You, March On The Australian Embassy To Present The Kangaroo Petitions You Sent to KIND.

Photo courtesy World Federation for the Protection of Animals  R. Senn, Photographer
Dear friends,

Chirrup was the proudest mother raccoon anywhere in the deep woods. She sang to her three babies her own special little song, "Chirr-r-rup, chirr-r-rup," that had earned her her name. She and her babies were snug and warm in the deep nest in the hollow old tree. This was Chirrup's first family. Her mate, too, was proud, and guarded their home territory against intruders. But she was beginning to get restless in the nest. She wanted badly to run and play for awhile, and stretch her legs, and feel the refreshing cool breeze of spring in her fur. Perhaps tomorrow night when the moon came up and her babies had fallen asleep, she would sneak away for just a little while and join her mate at their favorite spot by the creek. Her little fingers began to rub together as she imagined feeling in the soft mud bottom of the creek and finding a tasty crayfish. Oh, how good that would taste! The water was low in the creek this spring and it should be easy to find all the crayfish and minnows they could eat.

The following night, as soon as the moon rose over Dark Mountain, and her babies were asleep, Chirrup slipped quietly out of the nest and joined Tanka, her mate, where he was waiting by the boulder near the main path.

Tanka wasn't too happy about Chirrup's leaving the nest so soon. He even wanted to stay and guard the babies, since she was determined to have her outing. But he knew, too, that they would be safe in the hollow tree. Chirrup and Tanka had always had such good times together that, after a few moments of hesitation, he followed her down the path to the creek's edge.

Chirrup stuck her sensitive hands down into the water immediately and felt around for crayfish. Sure enough, she found one almost right away. She didn't even rub it very much in the water, she was so anxious to taste the juicy morsel. The cool water felt good on her fingers.

She waded in deeper and felt the mud bottom again. SNAP! Something grabbed Chirrup's left wrist and held it in a crushing vice-like grip. Chirrup screamed in pain. She tried to pull free, but it wouldn't let go. It was hard and cold, and Tanka's sharp teeth didn't make any impression on the hard steel jaws of the trap. Tanka returned to the shore, and began pacing back and forth. What to do? Then he thought of their three babies back in the cozy nest in the big hollow tree. In a few hours they would waken and be hungry again. They were still too tiny to eat anything but their mother's milk. If Chirrup couldn't get free from the evil thing, the babies would surely starve to death, and there was no way he could help them.

Chirrup must have been thinking of her babies, too, for she began fighting the wicked jaws of the trap with renewed vigor. It didn't help, and it was soon obvious she could never leave the trap that gripped her tiny hand. It was past midnight already, and her babies usually woke by 3:00 A.M., almost on a regular schedule, crying and hungry. Chirrup worked herself into a frenzy as she thought of her babies, crying from hunger and cold, for they were still so tiny they needed the warmth of their mother's body during the coldest part of the night, just before dawn. Chirrup began to chew on her own wrist, where it was gripped in the jaw of the trap.

It was nearly 5:00 A.M. and the first light of dawn was beginning to color the deep woods. Chirrup's leg was nearly chewed through. With one final yank she pulled free from the steel jaw of the trap. Her hand still dangled in the trap's jaws. Feebly she limped to the shore, and licked her throbbing wound. Then she hopped down the path and, with great effort, tried to climb the old tree to her nest. She didn't make it on the first two tries, but, fortunately, the tree leaned a little, and she managed to scramble into the nest on the third try by climbing up the back side of the leaning tree.

Chirrup's babies are nearly grown now. They are still with their mother most of the time, but soon they will be going off to find their own mates and live their own lives. No one can mistake Chirrup's family, because, as they learned to walk and run and play, and learned from their mother how to catch crayfish, each of the three babies followed mother Chirrup's example. They learned so well, in fact, that all three babies limp and hop as they walk, just as mother Chirrup does, because she has no left hand.

Your friend,

[Signature]
THE STEEL JAW TRAP

More than 6 million animals were trapped in the U.S. in 1971. Most of them were caught by the steel jaw trap. Only a few, like Chirrup, escaped the trap to live the rest of their lives with a handicap. As more people learn about these cruelties, there is growing concern to ban the steel jaw trap. You can help:

1. Urge your friends, neighbors, and classmates not to buy or wear anything made from the skins of wild animals.
2. Order the special report on trapping from KIND to give to others. 12 copies of the report are only 25¢
3. Write to stores that sell furs and protest.
4. Write a letter to the editor about the cruelties of trapping, or send a copy of the report on trapping to the editor and ask him to print an article.
5. Write the Legislative Reference Bureau at your State Capitol. Ask for a copy of the laws on trapping. Ask, too, if a bill has been introduced to ban the steel jaw trap. Get addresses you need from the local library.
6. Florida banned the steel jaw trap by administrative order. Write the Fish and Game Commission of your state and ask them to ban the steel jaw trap, by administrative order, as it was done in Florida.
7. If you live in New Jersey, order copies of the laws on trapping to distribute from:
   HSUS New Jersey Branch
   1140 East Jersey Street
   Elizabeth, N.J. 07201
8. If you live in Connecticut, Indiana, North Carolina, Oregon, Washington, West Virginia, or Wisconsin, there is a bill to ban the steel jaw trap. Write your state Fish and Game Commission and ask them to support that bill. You can also write such a letter if you live in California, Nevada, or Pennsylvania, because we expect a bill to be introduced in these states.
9. Order trapping posters (12 for 25¢) to put up in your neighborhood.
10. Find a way to earn money to send as a donation to help The Humane Society of the United States ban the steel jaw trap.

PROTECTION FOR WOLVES

Recently the State of Minnesota wanted to make wolves a game animal, so they could be hunted. But the U.S. Department of the Interior, called for a moratorium on the killing of wolves. They pointed out that wolves were not endangered species of the U.S., and thus were protected. Most of America's 500-1,000 eastern timber wolves live in Minnesota, with only a few in Wisconsin and Michigan.

Elsewhere, in Quebec, where there are many more wolves, the government decided not to put out poison after the big wolf hunt they held. They said there was just too much public outcry. Whenever you protest the cruel treatment of animals, be assured your protest will do some good.

DON'T LET YOUR DOG FLY

The March issue of Consumer Reports magazine reports some shocking things that happen to dogs that are shipped by air—things The Humane Society has tried to change for many years. Now there is a bill in Congress that would regulate air shipment of dogs. You may want to write the U.S. Department of Agriculture and ask them to support this bill to help protect animals. In the meantime, don't let your dog fly if it can possibly be avoided.

AMANDA BLAKE ON HUMANE SOCIETY BOARD

Amanda Blake, who plays Miss Kitty in the Gunsmoke television series, devotes a lot of time to helping animals. She has now been elected a member of the Board of Directors of The Humane Society, which means she will be even busier. Humane Society Board members are expected to attend every meeting to help make the decisions on the most important programs The Humane Society should undertake in helping animals, and how these programs can be the most effective. Board members receive nothing in return for their help to The Humane Society, other than the great satisfaction that they are helping needy animals.

SPAY POSTERS

This poster in full color, and one of a Samoyed also, are available to encourage pet owners to have their pets spayed. They can be ordered from KIND at $1 each. Please specify whether you want the poster of the cat or dog.
SAVE THE CHICKS, DUCKS, AND RABBITS! FOURTH GRADERS WORK FOR EASTER ANIMAL BILL

Fourth graders of Miss Couch's class at David Caldwell School, in Greensboro, North Carolina, have written their state legislators asking for a bill to ban the sale of Easter animals. The bill was introduced and now they are waiting for it to be voted on. In the meantime, they continue to work to tell others of the suffering that baby animals, bought as Easter toys, endure. Their slogan is Be an INCAT. You can: Follow Directions, Solve Problems, Make Decision, Check Your Work, Learn, Make The System Work. They are helping animals and also learning how laws are enacted. One girl, inspired by their project, has already announced: "I'm going to be President". If she does, we're sure she will support kindness to animals laws, from her experience as a member of the fourth grade Kindness Club.

Dear Mr. Hylton:

Room 107, Grade 2 at John Gary School has a Kindness Club for 24 members. Miss Margaret Compere is our Raccoon Captain. We are learning about animals and conservation and we are very happy to be members. We organized January 2, 1973.

For our first project we have saved Hunt's labels to help the Eagles and we saved enough labels to buy 975 square feet of land for the Eagles.

We were very proud to be able to help this endangered bird and hope to work on other projects that come along. We hope to buy posters to hang up for spaying of animals in our school and homes. Michelle Moreno, Secretary, Defenders Kindness Club Hampton, Va.

Dear Sirs:

The branch club called the Prairie Pups want to help wildlife and animal exploitation. Please use this $8 to good use. We have nine people in our club.

A member, Mary Baxter, Olathe, Kansas

Dear Mary and all the Prairie Pups:

Thank you so much for your thoughtful gift. We shall use it carefully to help as many animals as possible. Some Kindness Club members don't realize, as we know you do, that everything the Humane Society does to help animals, is only made possible by the donations members send to us. And we use the money people send in whatever program they want it used for. Your donation was used to help wildlife, and to protect animals from exploitation, as you have requested.

Your friend,
Dale Hylton

Dear Mr. Dale Hylton:

My name is Richard Smith. I am the new secretary of the group called the "Leopards". We read the newsletter for this month and we're trying to figure out what the mystery animal is. My idea is that it is a European Polecat. The World Book Encyclopedia on page 545 says it is related to the North American skunk.

Polecat belongs to the family Mustelidae; it is classified as genus Mustela. Its food is rabbit, rats, mice, eels, fish, frogs, snakes, eggs, and wild birds.

It lives in a tree or underground; they have four or five young in May or April.

They make good pets but the female becomes irascible when pregnant.

Sincerely,
Richard Smith

Congratulations! You were the first to guess our mystery animal correctly. We call him a ferret, because his closest relative, the domestic ferret, goes by that name, as does a more distant cousin, the Black-Footed Ferret, whose future is threatened by possible extinction. Our friend Freddie is a lot of fun, and especially likes to romp in the KIND office while his cage is being cleaned, hissing at the staff, exploring cupboards and boxes of supplies, and turning over wastebaskets. Your report was very complete--I'll bet you even looked up the meaning of that word irascible.

Your friend,
Dale Hylton

Mary Anne Moreland wants a pen pal. She lives at 1240 Bennet Road, Herndon, Virginia 22070, and is nine years old.
MARCH TO SAVE KANGAROOS

Over 100 delegates march to the Australian Embassy in Zurich, Switzerland, to present 151,000 signatures on petitions from 60 countries, appealing for a ban on killing kangaroos. This delegation represented The Kindness Club internationally, and carried the petitions KIND members circulated in the U.S. The Australian government has responded with protection for the kangaroo, and the U.S. now bans import of any kangaroo products.

Photo courtesy World Federation for the Protection of Animals
R. Senn, Photographer.

BE KIND TO ANIMALS WEEK

May 6 to 12 is the official Be Kind To Animals Week this year. Of course, being kind to animals is appropriate for every week of the year. But during this special week, plan a special celebration to remind people to be kind to animals all year long.

Your Kindness Club Letter is published monthly for members ages 6-10 by KIND, youth membership division of The Humane Society of the U.S.
R. Dale Hylton, Editor

This is recycled paper.