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TYPICAL SIGNS ADVERTISING ROADSIDE ZOOS. THERE IS NO SHELTER FOR THE THREE BEARS IN THE CAGE, AND NO WATER IN THE ALLIGATOR'S TANK. NOTICE THE HOSE IS HANDY, BUT NO ONE HAS BOTHERED TO TURN IT ON.
A roadside zoo may be any privately owned place where animals are confined on display to the public. It may even be a regular animal-farm that charges a small admission and has concession stands. Or it is more likely to be a small collection of cages, or perhaps just one cage, alongside a gasoline station, restaurant, or gift shop. The signs along the highway advertise the animals you can see long before you get to the roadside zoo. Then, when the tourists to stop to see the animal, then, while they are stopped anyway, they will refuel the car, have lunch at the restaurant, or buy gifts to send to friends back home.

The advertising signs appeal to tourists to stop to see an animal as if it were a freak of nature, much like the circus sideshows that sell tickets to people to see the bearded lady or the man with two heads. A caged wild animal is not a freak of nature, but a freak of civilization, a victim of exploitation. If you have seen one caged wild animal, you don't need to see another, because there is nothing you can learn about an animal or its natural habits when he is confined to a small cage.

Animals in roadside zoos are frequently kept in cages much too small; there is often little or no shelter; sometimes they have no water, and the food they are given is often inferior in quality. Sometimes tourists are invited to buy peanuts, candy, or soft drinks to feed the animal--none of which he should have in any quantity. Often the cages are not kept clean; what water is available is dirty; and animals like alligators that like to lie submerged in water are not provided with enough water in their tanks to do so.

There is a federal law that requires roadside zoos to provide certain minimum care for caged animals. The U.S. Department of Agriculture is in charge of this law. But Congress didn't give them enough money to enforce it properly, and if a roadside zoo fails to improve conditions as required by the USDA, the case is turned over to the Justice Department. So far, no roadside zoo has been prosecuted for failing to provide proper care for their animals.

You can help animals in roadside zoos when you travel on vacation this summer. Watch for the typical signs along the highway--usually on secondary highways that take you through rural countryside that provides enjoyable scenery and allows a more leisurely and relaxed pace than the expressways do. Stop and visit roadside zoos. List the animals and how big their cages are. List everything you see that you think is wrong. Take pictures if you can. (Remember the photo contest? See your May newsletter.) Report what you find to KIND, to help us in The Humane Society's continuing investigations of roadside zoos. Be sure to give the name of the place and its exact location.

If the roadside zoo is part of a business, and is there to attract tourists so they will spend their money, get your family to agree to boycott the sponsoring business. You may talk to the proprietor and tell him you are not buying anything from him because he is exploiting animals to attract customers. If it is a store that is part of a large chain, such as a gasoline station of a major oil company, write a letter to the company's main office, telling them you refuse to buy their products because of their branch store (give the location) that is exploiting animals. Include the name of the store owner, if possible. On many gasoline stations, the name of the owner appears on a sign above the door.

You may also report any conditions that you think are very bad to the USDA. The conditions can probably be corrected faster if you report them to your nearest regional representative. Your county extension agent will probably have his address. Be sure to inquire for the United States representative, not the Agriculture representative of your own state. When you report bad conditions to USDA, be sure to ask to be informed on the results of the investigation. You may be the one to help an animal in a roadside zoo this summer.

WANTED--Volunteer artists to prepare simple line drawing illustrations for the next Kindness Club kit we are planning. If you want to help younger KIND members learn about animal friends, help us include interesting illustrations of various animals. Many are unusual animals (mostly sea animals) that you'll have to look up in your local library to know what they look like, before attempting to draw them. Let us know if you want to help, and we'll send you the list of animals that are needed for this new kit. All artists whose illustrations are used in the kit will be given appropriate credit, and a copy of the completed kit when it is published, for your own personal memory collection.
Dear Kindness Club,

There is a cat in our neighborhood who has eczema on his ears. They’re all bloody and he keeps scratching them. Is there anything we can do besides taking him to the vet? (He’s not our cat).

Carol Saulen, Holliston, Mass. age 12

Dear Carol:

Yes, the first thing to do is to identify the owner and obtain permission to help the cat, if you can’t persuade him to take the cat to the veterinarian. If you can’t identify the owner, you can try treating the cat’s ears with mineral oil. Drop it right into the ear, filling the ear with it. Massage around the ear gently so the oil will reach all areas. Keep the oil in the ear for a few minutes if you can. The eczema is probably caused by ear mites. Mineral oil will kill them by cutting off their air supply. It will also soften the crust on the infection and ear wax, so on later treatments you can use a soft Q-tip and clean the cat’s ears. This should be done daily until the condition has completely disappeared. Good luck!

Your friend,
Dale Hylton

Dear KIND,

While taking our dog for a walk, we heard a crying noise. We investigated and found a puppy that had been dumped. We kept looking until we found a second one. We put them under our coats and took them home, and made them a bed and fed them. The next day we took them to the veterinarian, who said they looked to be only about five weeks old. He said he would try to find homes for them. I think dumping baby puppies is one of the cruelest things anyone can do.

Your friend, Jill Davey, age 12

DEFENDERS: If you agree with Jill, see your January newsletter for action projects you can do to help prevent homeless animals.

Kindness To All Animals

“Be kind to animals--
Be kind to all.
Some are large,
While others are small.
There are animals of all kind.
Give them water and food,
All the animals you can find.
Love them and pat them
on their heads,
And give them, please,
nice, soft, warm beds.
Just remember to be kind
To your little animal friends,
And you will be happy
Until your very life ends.

Darleen Grace Foster
Age 12
Lebanon, Pa.

Drawing by Karen Doman,
age 14, Pottstown, Pa.

Dear Mr. Hylton:

I just received my DEFENDERS kit and was trying to think of a way to get more members. If you had just a tiny spot in nationwide newspapers for an entry blank you’d get many more members. I’m sure many kids would like to join The Humane Society but just don’t have the chance.

Robin Oanes, Fargo, N.D.
age 13

Dear Robin:

You have an excellent suggestion. Trouble is, The Humane Society just doesn’t have any money we can spend on advertising space in newspapers across the country. There is one way KIND members can help tell others about KIND, though. Try writing a short letter to the editor of your local newspaper, telling them what being a KIND member means to you. Suggest other readers might want to become KIND members, and give the KIND address. If every KIND member did that, we could blanket the nation with free public service advertising, and really add to our members. Our goal is to double our 20,000 membership again this year. Every KIND member can help make this hope a reality. I hope you will.

Your friend, Dale Hylton

Dear Sirs:

I am writing to you in complaint of a law recently renewed by the New York legislature. This law prohibits dogs from roaming free outdoors from sunset to one hour past daybreak. This law, dating back to the nineteen twenties, has been passed in twenty-three of New York’s sixty-two counties. Any dog found outside after sunset will be shot on sight after the given time. Is it the poor dog’s fault if he is left out?

These are the counties involved: Allegany, Broome, Cayuga, Columbia, Genesee, Livingston, Onondaga (except city of Syracuse), Ontario, Orleans, Otsego, Rensselaer, St. Lawrence, Saratoga, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, Tioga, Tompkins, Warren, (except city of Glens Falls), Washington, Wayne, Wyoming, Yates.

Sincerely, Leslie Kuhn, Dewitt, N.Y.

FOURTH OF JULY COMES NEXT MONTH. It’s not too soon to start planning for your dog’s comfort and safety when the firecrackers explode. A dog’s ears are much more sensitive than your own, and those explosions must be mind-boggling to his keen ears. Many dogs become frightened by the strange noises. Plan now for a safe place for your dog to spend the Fourth of July, perhaps in the basement, where the noises will not bother him as much.
EASTER CHICK LAW PASSES IN NORTH CAROLINA

A bill to ban the sale of chicks, ducklings, or baby rabbits as toys at Easter passed the North Carolina Senate May 10. It had already passed the House, and its future is assured, since the Governor had stated publicly that he would sign the bill if it ever got to his desk. Fourth grade students in Miss Lena Couch's class celebrated with cake and punch the next day. They were greeted as they entered the classroom with a sign which read: "Thanks to 27 precious little people who value life, North Carolina has a chick law".

Legislation was first introduced because these fourth graders wrote their Representative and asked him to help infant Easter animals. When he introduced a bill, they began writing other legislators, asking them to support the bill. When one representative objected to the bill, they got students in other classes to write, too. Together they bombarded him with over 100 letters, explaining how important it was to ban this source of animal suffering. He later voted for the bill, and even presented a state flag to the class whose student wrote the best letter. Sponsor of the bill, Representative Charlie Webb, said that the lawmakers themselves learned just what the bill would accomplish, and therefore how important it was, from the students' letters.

North Carolina becomes the 18th state with such a law. Maine and North Dakota forbid dyeing chicks, but do not forbid their sale as toys. KIND members who live in a state which has no law banning the sale of Easter chicks may wish to use the example of this class to seek protection for Easter animals.

States which protect Easter chicks: Alabama, California, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia

Dear Sirs:

I am writing this letter to ask you to urge all KIND members to write their state senator, asking him to introduce a bill banning the sale of all Easter animals.

I strongly hope you urge all KIND members to do this. Thank you.

Yours truly, Pam Wilms, Carlton, Oregon age 14
ARE YOU RECEIVING THE RIGHT NEWSLETTER?

If you're not, its because we don't have your birthdate. This is very important so our records can be handled automatically, and we can 'graduate' you into the next age level at the right time. See the schedule below. If you're not receiving the right newsletter, write and tell us your birthdate, especially the year of your birth.

The Kindness Club............................... ages 6-10
DEFENDERS........................................... ages 11-14
EcoloKIND.............................................. ages 15-18

Dear KIND,

As you know, in very hot weather, large dogs get rather uncomfortable. We find that an inexpensive child's plastic pool solves this problem nicely. The dogs soon learn what it is for, and have great fun splashing around in it. This is an easy and effective tip your readers may be interested in. It will make a lot of dogs happy!

Sincerely, Julie Hildebrand, Lexington, Va., age 16

Editor's note: Thanks, Julie, for an excellent idea. I'd like to hear from more KIND members with good ideas like this.

DEFENDERS is published monthly for members ages 11-14 by KIND, youth membership division of The Humane Society of the U.S.
R. Dale Hylton, Editor

Add this newsletter to your kit for supplementary information.

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