Roadside Zoos are not Zoos

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HSUS Launches Campaign Against More than 1,000 Menageries of Misery

Joe is an American Black Bear. No one is really certain just where Joe came from, but there are some facts about Joe's life that we do know.

For six years, Joe lived in a cage that was so small he could not stand up on his hind legs without hitting his head on the wire that enclosed the top.

The bottom of the cage was seldom cleaned thoroughly, so Joe spent much of his time standing in old straw, candy wrappers, and his own waste, causing ulcers to develop on his feet.

Instead of having a balanced diet, Joe lived mainly on doughnuts and sodas, resulting in medical problems that stunted his growth.

Fresh air, clean water, and room to exercise were strangers to Joe. His task in life was to sit in his cage and attract the attention of the people who patronized his owner's riding stable.

After months of pressure and insistence by HSUS staff members, the owner of the riding stable finally agreed to let us find Joe a new home. When the time came for him to leave, however, he had to be sawed out of his cage because the lock on the door had completely rusted over.

Today Joe is living in an animal orphanage in California, where he is well fed and cared for. Thousands of other animals like Joe are not so lucky. They remain imprisoned in so-called roadside zoos, under grossly inhumane conditions, where the best thing that could happen to many would be a painless death.

A Widespread Problem

No corner of the country is free from these menageries of misery. The Humane Society of the United States estimates there are more than 1,000 such establishments nationwide.

Unlike zoological gardens, these menageries are run by amateurs whose prime motives are economic. Roadside
menagerie operators lack the knowledge and expertise to care for animals properly. Good zoo staff make use of their experience to foster a positive human-animal bond.

A good zoological garden, in addition toproviding food, housing, and medical supplies, is an educational institution. The good zoo maintains an outreach program linking it with institutions of higher learning, providing a platform for learning and public engagement.

For the welfare of animals and a dedication to learning and wildlife conservation, zoos work in respected institutions. The good zoo maintains an outreach program linking it with institutions of higher learning, providing an environment for breeding rare and endangered species.

Improvement and convey a negative message about zoos because they have no potential for improvement. A parks and recreation person may see primates drinking canned soda pop or swimming in filthy pools, as polar bears, often have no pool. Climbing animals, such as monkeys, may have trees or bars to climb and swing on. Some animals actually live in cages which do not allow them to move to that space. Enclosures often provide no shelter from the elements. FILTH is readily apparent. In many menageries, cages are seldom cleaned. They are filled with feces, rotting food, candy wrappers, and other garbage. Flies and other organisms which breed there spread to the public.

Concern for the welfare of animals and a dedication to learning and wildlife conservation is what distinguishes the zoological community as well as professional zoological community as well as the public.

The HSUS was one of the first national animal welfare organizations to take a long, hard look at all zoos, including roadside menageries. During the last ten years, we have worked intensively, conducting zoo inspections, public education and awareness programs, and developing a working relationship with the professional zoological community as well as U.S. Government agencies charged with the care of animals.

The HSUS is: Inspecting zoos. To date, we have inspected a total of 395 major and minor zoos and menageries. Most have been inspected several times. Reporting violations of the Animal Welfare Act to USDA officials and pressuring them to correct substandard conditions. Teaching sections of the USDA training program for zoo inspectors. Working for the passage of additional amendments to the Animal Welfare Act which would further protect zoo animals. Stimulating public pressure to bring about enforcement of the Animal Welfare Act. Following up on USDA inspections. If an inspector sanctions conditions we find unacceptable, we will go to USDA superior and demand remedies. Petitioning USDA to strengthen its regulations for the enforcement of the Animal Welfare Act. Using the Freedom of Information Act to obtain USDA inspection forms to document our case and bring unwen enforcement of the Animal Welfare Act. Accompanying USDA inspectors on many zoo inspections. Activity looking to close menageries. Several have already been targeted for action.

Evidence has been collected and we are now preparing legal presentations to public sector groups charged with overseeing the selected menageries. Working with USDA Washington, D.C. staff on a day-to-day basis. Making use of anti-cruelty laws and other state laws protecting zoo animals and native wildlife. Pressuring local officials to shut down roadside menageries in their jurisdictions. Using the Freedom of Information Act to obtain USDA inspection forms to document our case and bring unwen enforcement of the Animal Welfare Act. Following up on USDA inspections. If an inspector sanctions conditions we find unacceptable, we will go to USDA superior and demand remedies. Petitioning USDA to strengthen its regulations for the enforcement of the Animal Welfare Act. Careful planning has gone into the development of these investigative, legal, and educational efforts. It is our hope that they will help us in our fight against the cruelty of roadside menageries. As you read this report, the first steps in this stepped-up campaign have already been taken.
Animal Welfare Act Not Working!

When captive wild animals were included under the Animal Welfare Act in 1970, it was our belief that menageries such as those already described would be found standard and closed permanently. Indeed, it was the intent of Congress to put an end to roadside menageries. The law was written to cover most warm-blooded zoo animals and set minimal standards for such things as transportation, food, water, sanitation, shelter, ventilation, and veterinary care of animals. Enforcement of the Act was delegated to USDA veterinarians and inspectors who conduct routine inspections of all licensed animal facilities. Violators of the Act can receive letters of warning, cease and desist orders, fines, have their licenses revoked or suspended, or be imprisoned. While the intent of the law was good, there are several reasons why it is not working:

- It sets only minimal standards.
- It is vaguely worded and open to wide interpretation, which has resulted in uneven enforcement.
- USDA veterinarians who enforce the law are oriented toward domesticated animals and do not always appreciate the special needs of wild animals.
- The USDA has not been provided with sufficient funds to adequately enforce the law.
- The USDA has failed to act strongly against violators. Too often, inspectors get wrapped up in the problems of menagerie operators, and seem to forget that their job is to look out for the welfare of the animals.
- As a result of the ineffectiveness of the Animal Welfare Act and a lack of enforcement as it applies to these roadside menageries, The HSUS has intensified its efforts to close these institutions.

Help The HSUS End the Misery

You can do a lot to help The HSUS end the misery of animals imprisoned in menageries. Join our nationwide campaign to close the menageries! By becoming aware of the problem and educating yourself, you will become an extension of our educational efforts through conversations with people around you.

Your financial support will help enable The HSUS to continue zoo inspections. Our professional investigators are a necessary part of the process if we are to put an end to all menageries.

Our investigators serve two distinct purposes. First, they report violations and seek redress on behalf of the animals. Second, they serve as watchdogs for Agriculture inspectors who are supposed to be enforcing the law. USDA and state government agencies have no action to stop the cruelties found behind the rusty bars of menageries. We know that fewer animals are suffering because of our zoo program. Your membership and support makes this continuing effort possible.

Please use the enclosed postage paid envelope to send your tax deductible contribution today.

Join Our Campaign To Close Roadside Menageries

Zoos have been an accepted part of the American culture for so long that they have taken on an aura of respectability. The amateurs who run menageries are taking advantage of this situation. They have created animal prisons and call them zoos! Sometimes dressed in their khaki safari outfits, they try to convey an image of jungle veterans who have personally tracked down, captured, and transported their captive beasts across the seas for us. They'd like us to believe that they understand the habits and habitats of their captives. Don't be fooled!

Join our campaign to get rid of these miserable menageries. Work with us. Use our three step program to end the misery.

What You Can Do

1. Go to the Menagerie
   If you find a roadside or municipal menagerie in your area, pay a visit. Look for signs of crowding, filth, poor housing, inadequate diets, and bad medical care. Take photos and notes.

2. Contact Authorities
   Take your evidence to local authorities such as fish and game commissioners, humane agents, and political leaders (especially if it is a public facility).

   If local authorities fail to respond, contact the nearest USDA office. You can also contact state officials who administer laws pertaining to captive wild animals, or call your county attorney's office.

   Report your findings to The HSUS. If local authorities refuse to take action, we may be able to help. But you must help in the battle by keeping us informed.

3. Talk to Others
   Tell your friends and associates about menageries you have found. Ask them to join you in not patronizing or supporting such places. Give copies of this report to interested parties.

   Naturally, when inspecting or evaluating a menagerie, you should not represent yourself as an agent of The HSUS. Our investigators have had many years of training and experience to draw upon. Your views, as a resident of the area, will carry plenty of weight.

Roadside "zoos" Waste Wildlife!

All contributors of $10 or more will receive this bumper sticker. By displaying the bumper sticker on your car you will be helping The HSUS publicize the roadside zoo problem. Who knows, perhaps your bumper sticker will make someone choose not to enter a menagerie of misery.

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