RODEO — CRUELTY DISGUISED AS SPORT

Rodeo is big business where the bucks matter as much as the bucking. Each year thousands of professionally sanctioned rodeos attract millions of spectators and pay competing cowboys millions of dollars in prize money. Unfortunately, the many animals supplied by stock contractors to be roped, ridden, wrestled, and “busted” on the rodeo circuit will be the big losers.

Rodeo contestants claim that the animals seldom get hurt and they lead enviable lives. A recent news article stated, “Today’s pro rodeo bucking horse spends approximately five minutes a year ‘working’ by either bucking PRCA cowboys off or carrying them to the pay window.” When analyzed, that claim gives a clear illustration of the terribly difficult and stressful life these animals actually lead.

In bronc riding, the horse is ridden only eight seconds at each outing. It takes more than 37 outings to equal five minutes “work,” meaning the horse is really used for a bronc riding event about every two and a half days through the three month rodeo season. This, however, is just the action the public sees. Behind the scenes, animals are used over and over again in practice and training sessions. Greater abuses probably occur in practice than in public because cruelties that might disqualify a cowboy in competition are just a learning experience in training.

Each outing in public or private brings the possibility of bruises from nervous rearing or shying while in the chute, abrasion injuries from being raked by the rider’s spurs, and muscle or tendon injuries sustained while bucking and charging about the arena. Additionally, there is the pain and terror of being shocked out of the chute with an electric prod, and the short and long term effects of the flank strap that is used to make the horse buck wildly.

Calves, bulls, and steers used in rodeo face different abuses in the ring, but virtually all rodeo animals have in common the day-to-day drudgery and stress of being transported constantly from place to place in conditions that, in the long run, can be dangerous to the animal’s health. Though a horse or bull may seem ill-tempered, wild-eyed, and mean as it bucks around the arena, what spectators are really seeing is a terrified, tormented animal making money for its rider, its owner, and the rodeo sponsors, while living in misery itself.

Calf roping is possibly the most pitiful event in rodeo. A calf may be running 27 miles per hour when the lasso tightens around its neck, jerking it to a sudden stop. The cowboy flings it to the ground and must tie three of its legs in ten seconds or less. If the calf hits the end of the rope with enough force, it will be jerked off its feet and slammed to the ground. The force of the impact can cause bruising and hemorrhaging around the neck and shoulders.

In steer busting, the animal must be jerked to the ground by the rope. The cowboy lassoes the steer around the neck or horns (usually horns), loops the lariat around the rear end of the steer, and gallops his horse off at an angle that will trip the steer. The steer’s legs are knocked from under him and he is flipped into the air, sometimes being swung around 180° and slammed to the ground on his back. Other events such as team steer roping and steer (continued page 2)
Rodeo Cruelty (continued)

wrestling are even more popular and may result in broken bones and injuries to the horns and neck muscles.

Rodeo associations defend their events as justified by organi-
tarian complaints by pointing to a list of rules that allegedly
insure humane treatment of livestock. Some of these rules are
much too lax and some inherently cruel acts are overlooked
together. Conditions are even worse for animals in the non-sanctioned, bus-lease rodeos that
account for almost 70% of all rodeos in this country.

HSUS and AHA ISSUE JOINT
POLICY STATEMENT ON
RODEO CRUELTY

The Humane Society of the United States and the
American Humane Association have reached common
ground on their position that professional rodeo events are
incompatible with the humane treatment of animals. Both societies have issued a joint rodeo policy
statement that reads as follows:

We are opposed to rodeos because they result in torment, harassment, and stress
being inflicted upon the participating animals and expose rodeo stock to the probability of pain, injury, or death. We
denounce this type of unnecessary exploitation and the
use of devices such as electric prods, sharpened sticks,
animals to react violently. We find these abuses cannot be
accurate or harmless portrayal of ranching skills; rather,
viewed as a cruel means of entertainment, a form of animal
abuse and suffering occur during nonsanctioned or
amateur competitions and especially when animals are
used repetitively for practice. Therefore, we believe that a
prevent the
animal sheltering facility and animal
use of the decompression chamber and experiments
for experimentation.

We have determined that professionally sanctioned
rodeo events are not an accurate or harmless portrayal of ranching skills; rather,
your financial needs and at the same
direct benefits of our Life Income Program,
provides for your financial needs and at the same

Shelter Studies Completed


city of San Bernadino

Animal Control

CRWO Investigator Eric Sakach has completed a study of
the animal sheltering facility and animal control
operations for the City of San Bernadino. The CRWO
received a formal request for the evaluation from Mayor
W. R. “Bob” Gerber, an in-depth study of the County’s animal control and sheltering facilities was undertaken by Eric
Sakach at this office. A report of Sakach’s findings with
recommendations for improvements has been sent to area
officials.

ANIMAL NEEDS:
National and Regional

The West Coast Regional Office of The
Humane Society of the United States coor-
dinates national programs and activities
directed at this region. You are aware that our major
concern is the prevention of cruelty and suffer-
ing to animals.

Among our several programs which ad-
dress the needs of animals is one which pro-
vides for your financial needs and at the same
time creates a future gift for animal welfare.

If you would like to know more about the
dual benefits of our Life Income Program,
please send for the complimentary brochure entitled
“Planning for the Future.”

Mail to: Paul G. Irwin,

Vice President/Treasurer

The Humane Society

of the United States

2100 L Street, N.W.

Washington, D.C. 20037

NAME

ADDRESS

An Education In Illegal Animal Fighting Ventures

At Cerritos Community College

Co-sponsored by the South East Area Animal Control
Authority, Cerritos Community College, in Norwalk,
California, hosted a seminar on illegal animal fighting
ventures for law enforcement officials in mid-May.

About 100 peace officers, humane officers, and animal
control officers attended. The program was conducted
by WCRO Investigator Eric Sakach and HSUS Director of
Investigations Frantz Dantzer.

IT’S FREE!

Leaving your pet in a parked car when it’s warm or
humid can be a deadly mistake. The HSUS has produced a
ew “safety-first” flyer to help prevent the
getting rid of this cruel device. Just as with past legislation
banning the decompression chamber and experiments
on live animals in elementary and high schools, difficult
issues in the California Legislature take a number of
sessions to resolve.

The WCRO is revamping the petitions and redacting
the Children and Youth Against the Steel Jaw Trap Kit. The
HSUS will continue the fight for the welfare of animals.

DIRECTOR’S DESK

1992 has been a busy year for legislation. In California, passage
of Senator David Robert’s SB 1438, which prohibits dogs and cats being
released from shelters for research purposes, has been a major goal for
over 100 humane organizations. Petitions with over
200,000 names on them have been turned in. Four
hundred and thirty eight doctors signed a statement:
“Pound seizure is an inhumane practice, capable
denouncing the good name of science and to its quality.
These animals are not testing subjects for experimentation,
and not only unnecessary and unethical, it is detri-
tional to sound research.”

If Assemblyman Larry Kapiloff’s AB 3048 passes the Senate, children and animals will not be allowed
to ride in the backs of pickup trucks unsecured.

The mountain lion moratorium bill, SB 1333, passed the Senate last week in the Assembly. We’re
sorry that this bill is not a permanent moratorium,
but only for three years.

Dog guard training schools at present do not have to
be licensed or bonded. Assemblyman Richard
Katz introduced AB 2456 to meet this need. The bill
went through the Assembly and is now in the Senate.

If you’d like a list of California legislation that becomes law, drop us a line and, when the session is over,
we will send you one.

CHARR DEMERON

DIRECTOR

AB 2600 is dead,
BUT THE MOMENTUM IS ALIVE...

In the course of trying to get AB 2600 through the
California Legislature, the bill was compromised in such
a manner that the entire thrust of it was lost.

The letter-writing campaign, which the HSUS and the
Humane Society of the United States, 1713 J Street,
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NAAHE On The West Coast


The workshop was a working meeting with opportunities for the participants to become actively involved in their own learning experience. Gauging from the evaluation sheets passed out at the end of the meeting, the participants clearly had received practical assistance for beginning and/or improving their humane education efforts.

Featured speakers were: Kathy Savesky, Director, NAAHE; Walter Morey, a children’s author; Dian Kaufman, Director of Humane Education, Tacoma-Pierce County Humane Society; Carol Moulton, a freelance writer; Char Drennon, Director, HSUS, West Coast Associate, HSUS, West Coast Regional Office; and Judi Kukulka, Humane Information Associate, HSUS, West Coast Regional Office.

During the meeting our newly released NAAHE People and Animals: A Humane Education Curriculum Guide was discussed in detail and ideas were given for putting it to good use. Also, Kathy Savesky and Judi Kukulka had visited the state departments of education in Washington, Oregon, and California to discuss with officials how humane educators in their states could best assist teachers through the use of the curriculum guide. The response was exceptional and Kathy and Judi met with the Oregon and Washington workshop participants to share the positive suggestions and guidance offered by their respective state officials. Judi later met with California humane educators on June 18, 1982 in Monterey for a one-day WHEA mini-workshop on the use of the guide. She shared with them the information and guidelines offered at the California State Department of Education visit.

If you are not familiar with HSUS’s new national curriculum guide or you know an educator you’d like introduced to it, send your and/or their name and address to the West Coast Regional Office and we’ll send an informative brochure by return mail. We are proud the guide has been so well received by state officials, teachers, and humane educators. It was field tested by 350 teachers in seventeen states and in Ontario, Canada. An overwhelming 80% indicated they would use the guide on a regular basis. HUMANE EDUCATION has definitely arrived.

High Marks For HSUS Academy and Students

HSUS’ Animal Control Academy held its 100-hour Animal Control Certification program at Peninsula Humane Society’s Humane Education Center in San Mateo, California, in February. Forty-four students from five states, including Alaska, attended the program which was co-sponsored by the Marin Humane Society.

HSUS’ Academy opened its door in 1979 in cooperation with the University of Alabama’s Law Enforcement Academy to answer a demand for professional training in animal control. Academy instructors include recognized authorities in animal care and control, university professors, and law enforcement officials. The students take an entrance exam; then, after two weeks of rigorous study, they retake the exam to determine their progress. Students at San Mateo improved their scores by as many as 20 points. The highest final grade was 98 out of a possible 100, and the class average was 89. They also receive eight units of continuing education credit and the opportunity to exchange ideas and information with others.

The HSUS West Coast Regional Office serves California, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington. Requests for assistance should be addressed to Charlene Drennon, West Coast Regional Director, 1713 J St, Suite 305, Sacramento, CA 95814 (916-447-3295). All contributions made to the HSUS West Coast Regional Office will be used for regional purposes and are tax-deductible.