BIRTH OF SEALS CELEBRATED — A NEW EFFORT AT STOPPING THE SLAUGHTER

Near the end of February and the beginning of March, more than 400,000 baby harp seals opened their eyes for the first time on the ice floes off Canada’s Newfoundland coast. By mid-April, the glistening ice will be red with blood—nearly half the seal pups clubbed to death for their snow-white fur.

This brutal business has been going on for years and so has the struggle of humanitarians to end the slaughter. This year, in an effort to focus world attention once again on this tragedy, The Humane Society of the United States headed a coalition of hundreds of concerned organizations in this country to celebrate International Day of the Seal on March 1. Resolutions carried by the U.S. Congress proclaimed March 1 “National Day of the Seal” and the month of March was a time not only to celebrate the birth of the seals and their tragic plight to the attention of millions. In a special telegram to HSUS President John Hoyt, California Governor Jerry Brown said, “With the threatened loss of so many species of wildlife, the time has come in which we all need to strive to protect and live in harmony with our fellow creatures. Our coasts and seas are indeed enriched by the presence of thirty-three different species of seal. I am pleased to join with you in this day of celebration for the seal and commend your efforts to protect and preserve this familiar and innocent mammal for future generations.”

The event was celebrated with demonstrations from coast to coast, concerts, the distribution of information about seals, and the release of white balloons into the air.

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals honored the harp seals by presenting Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher with a petition of a half-million signatures protesting the importation of seal products. The Canadian Federation of Humane Societies also recognized the event.

On the West Coast, humane societies and humanitarians gathered to march and demonstrate throughout the month in many major cities to bring the birth of the seals and their tragic plight to the attention of millions. In a special telegram to HSUS President John Hoyt, California Governor Jerry Brown said, “With the threatened loss of so many species of wildlife, the time has come in which we all need to strive to protect and live in harmony with our fellow creatures. Our coasts and seas are indeed enriched by the presence of thirty-three different species of seal. I am pleased to join with you in this day of celebration for the seal and commend your efforts to protect and preserve this familiar and innocent mammal for future generations.”

The West Coast Regional Office asks that you remember the seals throughout the year. Your voice will be heard. Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to the WCRO and we will send you free a fact sheet on seal hunts. Read it, use it, give it to a friend who cares. Continue the celebration and the fight. The slaughter must end.

Californians Can Solve The Problem of Raccoons As Pets

Senate Bill 480 has been introduced by Senator Henry Mello to outlaw the importation and sale of raccoons as pets. As preparation for the proposed legislation, the WCRO sent an alert to all humane organizations and members on the legislative alert list asking for documentation from wildlife workers, veterinarians, and other experts in support of passage of the bill. The results were overwhelming, with responses from local humane societies, animal control agencies, wildlife experts and clubs, veterinarians, and others—all citing reasons why raccoons should not be allowed as pets.

Importers and retail dealers of exotic pets make glib promises of easy care and consumer satisfaction. They aren’t likely, however, to tell you that vaccinations will be

(Continued next page)
LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES GET HELPING HAND FROM HSUS

Several hundred police officers, sheriff's deputies, vice officers, cruelty investigators, and prosecutors attended a series of training sessions on the investigation of illegal animal fighting ventures. The sessions were conducted by HSUS' Director of Field Service and Investigations Frantz Dantzler and WCRO Investigator Eric Sakach.

Two seminars were held jointly by the Contra Costa County District Attorney's Office and the WCRO. Sheriff's Department, Shy doesn't mean help, and the District Attorney's Office. One seminar was hosted in San Mateo County by the Peninsula Humane Society and a coalition of Bay Area humane societies. The workshops were held in response to an increase in animal fighting activities, particularly dogfighting—a felony under California law and in several other states. Law enforcement officers worked with dog pounds in Northern California with several attending from Southern California and Washington State. Topics covered included intelligence gathering objectives, state and federal laws, methods of obtaining on successful investigations, evidence, and special films of actual animal fighting events and raids.

The West Coast Regional Office of The Humane Society of the United States believes that raccoons make unsuitable pets under virtually all circumstances and that for many people are equipped to maintain them in the home environment.

Members who want to have their names added to the list of those supporting this needed legislation should contact the WCRO. If you like, request a copy of the bill and we will send one to you.

ANIMAL NEEDS:
National and Regional

The West Coast Regional Office of The Humane Society of the United States coordinates national programs with direct attention to this region. You are aware that our major concern is the prevention of cruelty and suffering to animals.

Among our several programs which address the needs of animals is one which provides 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 a copy of our brochure entitled "Planning Your Future: The West Coast Regional Option".
NEW MEXICO CALLS ON WCRF FOR ASSISTANCE

Citizen outrage over organized dogfighting and loosely interpreted statutes in New Mexico led Senator Les Houston and Representative Max Coll, both of New Mexico, to introduce two new bills in that state’s legislature. HB 69 would make dogfighting and cockfighting misdemeanor crimes and SB 2 would increase the penalties for dogfighting to a felony level. At the request of Senator Houston, Eric Sakach went to Santa Fe and provided background information on dogfighting activities in the southwestern states and testified on behalf of Representative Coll’s bill before the House Agriculture Committee.

As we go to press, Senator Huston’s office has advised us that Governor Bruce King has signed SB2 into law. Unfortunately, the cockfighting provisions of the House Bill were dropped with Representative Von Rue Crawford stating, “I think we should have some rights left in this country.”

THE WEST COAST REGIONAL OFFICE STANDS READY TO HELP

Humane education has expanded at an astonishing rate on the West Coast. Recent years have seen the development of sophisticated humane education materials and programs by humane societies and animal control facilities. However, The West Coast Regional Office is still contacted daily by those just entering this field. They ask, “Where do I begin?” “Where can I get help?”

To answer these questions and the many others commonly asked by the beginner, our office has compiled a “How To” packet. The contents of the packet give a well-rounded view of what is necessary to develop a successful program. This new service will not, of course, replace the personalized assistance offered in the past, but will give the beginner a broad base from which to work and a hands-on reference.

For those who strongly believe in humane education but lack the resources to do an outreach program, or are not humane educators, The HSUS has a special offer designed for you. Kind magazine, our publication for children eight years old and above, makes it easy for anyone to bring the humane ethic to hundreds of children.

Right now, when you purchase one Kind subscription at the regular price of $4, you can have a second subscription sent to the library of your choice for $2—half the regular price. If you don’t have a child to send the first subscription to, why not have it sent to another library, or your local school. Use the coupon to order. Make your check for $6 payable to Kind and mail it today to the West Coast Regional Office.

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