HSUS RAIDS SAVE SUFFERING DOGS
Kansas Puppy Mill & New York Kennel Shut Down

Legal Action Taken Against Operators

Washington, D.C.—Today, there is one less source of puppies for the commercial puppy trade. And, there is one less substandard dog kennel in operation. Recent HSUS raids have shut down a filthy puppy mill and a disgraceful kennel.

In two raids separated by more than 1,000 miles, HSUS investigators seized several hundred suffering dogs, arranged for their care, and spurred legal action against the collector and breeder. Describing the two places as “cesspools”, Frantz Dantzler, chief HSUS investigator, said “These two places were chosen for raids because they are typical of the many substandard puppy mills and kennels found in rural out-of-the-way America.”

Both the Roseboom, New York Kennel and the Columbus, Kansas puppy mill had similar violations of humane standards and everyday common sense. Most of the seized animals had advanced cases of mange. Many animals had open festering sores. They lived in dark, airless, filthy shacks and rusty cages filled with excrement. All were clear violations of both states’ anti-cruelty laws and the federal Animal Welfare Act.

According to John A. Hoyt, President of The Humane Society of the United States, “These two raids are a warning to shady operators and misguided collectors of unwanted dogs. Rural America is no longer a safe haven for operators of dog prisons. The Humane Society is determined to erase this cruel blight.”

Similar raids are now being planned for various parts of the coun-

HSUS chief investigator Frantz Dantzler (right) and Dwain Marshall, shelter manager for the Joplin (MO) Humane Society discuss the condition of a dog seized at the Kansas puppy mill. Dantzler obtained a search and seizure warrant prior to raiding the premises.
try. "It is our intention," said Dantzer, "to publicize these cruel conditions and to make it difficult for local law enforcement officials to ignore them any longer."

HSUS investigator Phil Steward participated in both raids. During an interview with the News Mr. Steward said, "We will continue to expose the problem of substandard dog care and kennels. But The HSUS is accelerating its program to search out, find, and shut down these disgusting and tragic places. Individuals who pick up unwanted animals by the dozens and then fail to care for them properly must learn they are not being humane. And, the puppy mill disgrace must be made known to the public who innocently buy puppies at the pet shop."

The Kansas Raid

Columbus, Kansas — This puppy mill was recently featured in a ABC-TV news broadcast reported by Roger Caras. Caras' report zeroed in on the poor care, housing, and transportation of puppies from such places.

As a result of the Caras telecast, the operator of this puppy factory voluntarily turned in her Department of Agriculture permit. However, she had not gotten rid of any of her dogs at the time of the raid.

The USDA only acted after the publicity caused by the broadcast. Incredibly, USDA had inspected and approved the site only 6 months prior to the raid!

Two sheriff's officers, the county attorney, a county commissioner, HSUS investigator Phil Steward, HSUS Midwest representative Ann Gonnerman, and members of the Joplin Humane Society, MO, accompanied Frantz Dantzer to Gladys Foote's commercial breeding business. They found a run down house, outbuildings in disrepair, and a pack of friendly dogs running loose on the property.

The conditions were almost unbelievable. "It would be impossible to keep the place clean," Dantzer said. There was no visible equipment for cleaning. Animals were found in the outbuildings in cages piled on top of another. Excrement had fallen through the mesh floors and had ad-
cal care and placed in isolation until their conditions improved. If the court allows, they will be put up for adoption.

Though this facility did formerly have USDA approval, it was a mockery of the Department’s regulations. The owner had never used a veterinarian and did not even know one to call if needed.

Mrs. Foote has been charged under Kansas law with violations of the state’s anti-cruelty statutes. The complaint was signed by the county attorney. Now it’s up to the courts. According to HSUS’s Dantzler, “You can feel good about this raid, if it is possible to feel good about such things, in the sense the dogs will not suffer anymore. I only wish we could have gotten there sooner,” he said.

The New York Raid

Roseboom, New York—It was almost as though the Columbus, Kansas puppy mill had been transported from the plains to the Catskill Mountains. The scene was the same. In this case, the dog prison was not a breeding source for pet shops. Mrs. Ruth Koechling simply collected unwanted dogs and kept them on her premises. Her intentions were good and her compassion was real, but the results were cruel and inhumane.

More than 200 dogs were found living in unsanitary, substandard, illegal conditions. HSUS investigator Phil Steward with the aid of Eileen McShane, President of The New York State Humane Association, went to the scene. They took along a veterinarian from the State Department of Agriculture.

The first attempt to examine the animals without a search warrant failed. “You have seen the animals and you know what they need,” the owner told the veterinarian. “Since you have not brought me any food or medicine for the dogs, I can only feel you are here not to help the animals, only to hurt them,” she said.

The group obtained a search warrant and returned to the site. Dogs were found with parasites, skin irritations, pus filled sores, crusty eyes, hair loss, and bloated stomachs. They were living in dark smelly barns with earthen floors.

In one barn, dead dogs were found stuffed in plastic bags. Very little food was seen. Some dogs were eating dry food off the earthen barn floors.

Following the search, the owner was arrested and held on $500 bail. All of the animals were placed in the protective custody of the Otsego County (NY) SPCA. The court allowed the seized dogs to be fed, watered, and housed. However, the court would not allow euthanasia since the owner had not given her permission for any of the sick animals to be destroyed.

As of this writing, the disposition of the dogs and the kennel operator has not been determined by the courts. However, there is one saving grace—Mrs. Koechling is out of business.

You could not call these two operations fly-by-night setups, yet in many ways they had similar negative characteristics. Both operators did not have the know-how or the resources to properly care for the animals in their charge. Neither one could be called a legitimate breeder or kennel operator by any thinking person. Both operators contributed to the massive
Eileen McShane, president of the New York State Humane Association, holds a puppy found with a massive stomach wound. The dog was rushed to the intensive care ward of the Cobble Hill Animal Hospital in hopes of saving its life. All efforts failed. The dog died shortly after reaching the hospital.

Bob Ives, humane agent for the Otsego County SPCA, and HSUS’s Phil Steward (right) discuss plans for the care of the seized dogs. All participating groups are sharing the costs of care during the period the court is deliberating. Two hundred and six dogs were seized in Roseboom, NY.

For some of the dogs in Kansas and New York, death was the only thing that ended their suffering. All parties involved made every effort to save as many dogs as possible. However, in some cases, the dogs were too far gone.

overpopulation problem of dogs. And, the conditions in which the dogs were kept were totally inhumane.

Other people must have known about these places yet the law enforcement officials had not been informed or they chose to ignore these clear violations of their state laws. The HSUS has found this kind of blind apathy in other parts of the nation. It’s doubtful any arrests or seizures would have been made had it not been for the sudden raids by The HSUS.

Your Help is Needed

Action is required to put not only out-of-the-way substandard breeders and kennels out of business, but also those in more highly populated areas.

In order to accomplish this nearly impossible task, The Humane Society needs your help. It takes money to search out, collect evidence, and prosecute the cruel users and collectors of animals. If you believe animals in situations like these must be protected, please indicate your support by using the enclosed contribution envelope.

Your help will produce results! Fewer animals will have to suffer. Let’s begin a new era for animals and put an end to animal abuse.

As We Went to Press . . .

Word has just reached HSUS headquarters that the operator of the New York kennel pleaded guilty to a charge of cruelty to animals. The judge hearing the case gave Mrs. Koechling a suspended sentence. He said she can never own more than five dogs again. And she will be periodically monitored by the local humane society.

Even though a stiff fine was not handed down, this operator will never again be allowed to repeat her inhumane acts.