PROTESTS, PUBLICITY CURTAIL ANIMAL ACTS

The first annual fair at the Meadowlands Sports Complex in East Rutherford, New Jersey, was held on August 3-10, 1986. Promoted as a "family-oriented event," the fair staged two animal acts that drew sharp criticism and protest from The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) and other animal-welfare/rights groups and individuals.

Tim Rivers' High Diving Mules and Victor the Rasslin' Bear were scheduled for four performances daily at the eight-day fair. The mule act featured two mules, one pony, and one dog that are lead up to a 30-foot-high platform, and each animal dives into an 8-foot tub of water. The bear act featured an 8-foot, 3-inch, 650-pound bear, wrestling all contenders 18 years and older.

Offered as wholesome entertainment, these acts are blatant exploitation in which animals are put in risk of severe injury. Further, they are an insidious way of conditioning the public, especially impressionable children, to accepting performances in which animals are put in ludicrous and dangerous situations.

Prompted by The HSUS Mid-Atlantic Regional Office (MARO), the United States Department of Agriculture Animal Plant and Health Inspection Service (USDA-APHIS) investigated the animal acts for possible violations of the Animal Welfare Act.

On opening day, protestors attended the fair to oppose the performances. By the third day, due to much publicity of the opening day's protest in New Jersey and New York newspapers, news teams from WABC-TV, New York, came to cover the controversy. MARO program coordinator Rick Abel; Kathy Johnson, Bergen County (New Jersey) Humane Society; and Pamela Marsen, Mobilization for Animals, were interviewed on camera.

On the fifth day, the Bergen County prosecutor's office stepped in. Owner George Allen was advised his bear act might be in violation of New Jersey's anti-cruelty laws, and the act was temporarily stopped. Next day, a court ruled the bear act could continue.

Meanwhile, citizen opposition to the animal acts continued to swell. Plans were made for a mass protest on the eighth and last day of the fair. After the seventh day, however, Tim Rivers and his Diving Mules ended their per-

(continued on page 2)
Protests, Publicity Curtail Animal Acts

The HSUS and its Mid-Atlantic regional office. Its

Chief Executive Officer, New Jersey

State House, Trenton, NJ 08625, and a

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work with Hurt "Bill" Smith, Director, HSUS Animal Control Academy

Euthanasia Technician Seminar

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Endangered Species Act of 1973

The purpose of the visits is to better

With Hurt "Bill" Smith, Director, HSUS Animal Protection Academy

Extending MARO's Outreach Within the Region

North Carolina should be aware that

As an experienced and licensed exter­

The pet industry worked and lobbied

Because of this virtual certainty, we

One thing that struck me with par­

At our home, we are trying to let

nature handle our insect problem and

We believe the bats in our attic bring

We are happy to protect some pets and pet

Nina Austenberg and Rick Abel took part in the

New York demonstration at the opening of the

Director's Comment

BY NINA AUSTENBERG

Needs Your Support

New York Bird Law

Bats are well-liked in China and

Bats are well-liked in Japan and are often portrayed as si

We believe the bats in our attic bring

We are happy to protect some pets and pet

Nina Austenberg told the news

Our goals and objectives.

Robert E. Mulcahy, III, President and

Chief Executive Officer, New Jersey

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Carriage Horses at Risk in N.Y.

The introduction of the automobile basically negated the horse-drawn carriage as a major mode of personal transportation. But, over a half century later, many communities and urban centers maintain carriage horses as a tourist attraction.

The horse-drawn carriage has been a constant feature in New York City for nearly 120 years. In contemporary times, these animals are subjected to severe stress, forced to inhale noxious fumes as they plod nose-to-bumper behind buses, trucks, and cars, their ears assaulted by noisy traffic. Currently, not limited to any parts of the city, the horses must compete with congested traffic. This causes accidents, leading to injury and sometimes death. And, an injured or wornout horse will most likely end its days at the slaughterhouse.

The problem is compounded by carriage horses being driven and handled by people with little knowledge of proper equine care and management.

Two bills have recently been introduced in the New York City Council that would help the carriage horse. The Dryfoos Bill (Intro. #489) was originally introduced in 1983. This bill is primarily offered to amend the charter and administrative code of the City of New York, so that “horsedrawn cabs may only be worked inside Central Park after picking up a fare at the designated stand and then proceeding on the public street to the closest legal entry point into the park.”

The most recent bill, introduced in 1985 by Council Member Eisland at the request of Mayor Koch (Intro. #6), proposes to restrict the carriage horses during peak traffic hours in areas where there is heavy traffic congestion. According to the bill, “Horsedrawn cabs shall not be operated between 11:30 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. Monday through Friday within the area bounded on the east by Lexington Avenue, on the south by Thirtieth Street, on the west by Seventh Avenue and on the north by Fifty-ninth Street.”

Also, noted in this bill is the inclusion of, “Training program and examination. The department shall offer a training program and examination for horsedrawn cab drivers. Subjects addressed in such training program shall include, but need not be limited to, proper horse care, handling and maintenance and the laws and regulations applicable to the operation of a horsedrawn cab in the city.”

The ASPCA and New York-based Carriage Horse Action Committee have informed MARO that they are recommending to New York City Council members a combination of the bills to restrict the carriage horse to Central Park and create mandatory training for drivers.

In support of this recommendation, we urge all New York City residents and visitors to write letters encouraging the creation and passage of this more humane legislation. Please write to Mayor Ed Koch, Office of the Mayor, City Hall, New York, NY 10007.

Reflect for a moment....

HOW CAN I HELP ANIMALS EVEN WHEN I NO LONGER SHARE THEIR WORLD?

By your bequest for animal protection to The Humane Society of the United States.

Your will can provide for animals after you’re gone.

Naming The HSUS demonstrates your lasting commitment to animal welfare and strengthens the Society for this task. We will be happy to send information about our animal programs and material that will assist in planning a will.

Please send will information to

Name ________________________
Address ________________________
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ZIP code ______________

Mail in confidence to Murdough S. Madden, Vice President/General Counsel, The Humane Society of the United States, 2100 L Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20037.

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The Regional Report is a publication of

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Nina Austenberg, Director

Muko serves the states of New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania; and Delaware. The office is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. with a 24-hour answering service.

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