Hundreds Gather to Protest Trapping

When the National Trappers Association met in Peoria, Ill., in August, the trappers weren’t the only ones who showed up. An estimated two to three hundred animal activists were also there for a rally and silent march to mark the National Day of Unity to Ban the Leghold Trap. The event was organized by Elsa Wild Animal Appeal of Illinois and supported by more than a dozen organizations, including The HSUS.

Frantz Dantzler, HSUS North Central Regional Director, was one of the featured speakers. In his remarks to the crowd, Dantzler said, “Trapping is an anachronism in this day and age. It is a practice that cannot be justified technically, ecologically, morally, or in any other way.”

Demonstrators came from a number of states and many, including Robin Weirach of The HSUS’s Great Lakes Regional Office, drove in from Ohio for the rally. After a number of speeches and statements of support from celebrities such as Mary Tyler Moore and Loretta Swit, the demonstrators marched a few blocks to the site of the trappers’ convention. The line of marchers, stretching for nearly three blocks, continued on page 2

A silent line of sign-carrying marchers stretched for nearly three blocks on the way to the trappers’ convention site.

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Legislative News Is Both Good and Bad

State legislatures have adjourned for 1988, and that has given us time to reflect on legislative action in the states of the North Central region during the past year. There were some successes, but there were also a few unfortunate examples that show us just how far we have to go to protect animals.

First, the good news. In Minnesota, there are two new laws that protect animals. One makes it illegal to leave an animal in a vehicle in such a manner that the animal is unsafe. This helps immeasurably to protect animals from being locked in parked cars, particularly during hot weather, without a legal way to remove the animal. Minnesota was also one of five states that was able to get a bill through the legislature that should help address the many problems associated with vicious dogs.

Now, the bad news. In Wisconsin, legislation was passed that legalizes horse and dog racing. There is still some maneuvering going on in individual communities continued on page 3
Trapping Protest

blocks, carried signs and silently circled the open-air display area. The purpose of the demonstration was not confrontation with the trappers, and the march remained peaceful. But many of the marchers undoubtedly found it difficult to keep silent as they passed by stacks of pelts from slaughtered fur-bearing animals and racks of traps.

The rally and march were well covered by the media, with television crews, newspaper reporters, and photographers at both events. We hope that means the public got our message.

But, as one of the day’s speakers pointed out, we can’t demonstrate on one day each year and expect to make progress in the fight against trapping.

The HSUS has been working hard on this issue and will continue to do so, with your support. We hope you’ll take a few moments to read the other articles in this report for ideas on how you can help.

HSUS Trapping Case Reports

Document Incidents

An estimated 22 million animals are killed each year by traps. Most of those unfortunate creatures are slaughtered for the fur trade.

That is odious in itself. But many people aren’t aware that more than 5 million of the animals that are needlessly killed are “nontarget” animals. That is, they aren’t even wanted for their fur. Nontarget animals can include birds, endangered species, and even pets and dogs and cats. The HSUS has also documented at least ten cases of human injuries caused by traps.

We believe information about specific incidents of injury and death due to trapping can be used to make powerful arguments for banning these barbaric devices. To gather such information, The HSUS has developed a Trapping Case Report form. It asks such questions as whether the trap was set on public or private property, the type of trap involved, the type of animal trapped, the type and extent of the injury, the result of the incident, and whether any action was taken, particularly in the case of pets that have been injured or killed.

We have sent these forms to veterinarians and humane organizations around the country. They are also available to you. If you live in an area where there is recreational or commercial trapping, you may want to have some on hand. You can get them by contacting Pat Ragan, The HSUS.

National Anti-Fur Campaign

The HSUS is about to launch a major national campaign in opposition to the buying and wearing of fur, hoping to convince consumers to shun fur. We don’t want to tip our hand before the campaign begins, so we are not able to give you much detail here. But please pay close attention to the fall HSUS Close-Up Report for information about the campaign and what you can do to extend the message into your community.

NCRO Called In to Assist With Deer Problems in Illinois

Communities all across the country are reporting problems with deer populations. There may be many reasons for these situations. Development encroaching on deer habitat. Growing deer herds. Deer losing their fear of humans through increasing proximity. But officials tend to react to every situation in the same way: by proposing a hunting season.

In North Dakota, however, we are finding that hunting seasons only exacerbate the situation by increasing reproduction. Hunting seasons also fail to address long-term solutions to the problems.

The HSUS recently encountered such a problem and proposed a solution with regard to the Ryerson Nature Preserve in Lake County, Ill. In response to an increase in the deer population, a shooting season for deer in the nature preserve was proposed.

At that point, NCRO Director Frantz Dantzler and HSUS Vice President for Wildlife and Environment John Grandy got involved. The HSUS is now working with the Concerned Veterinarians and Citizens Committee to Save the Ryerson Deer, in an attempt to effect a non-shooting alternative solution.

Update on Wild Horse Cruelty Case in North Dakota

In the spring issue of the NCRO Report we told you about an appalling case of cruelty in North Dakota that resulted in the deaths of nearly one hundred wild horses. They were a herd of four hundred horses that had been “adopted” through the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) wild horse adoption program. The case and others like it have drawn attention to the many problems associated with the BLM’s program. But some good has come out of a terrible situation.

There may finally be some long overdue changes made in the BLM’s wild horse program. One of the aspects of the program that had made it possible for this tragedy to occur was the “fee-waiver” provision. That allowed “adopters” to get possession of large numbers of horses without paying the usual adoption fee. Those kinds of adoptions virtually always opened the door to abuse. The BLM has now suspended all fee-waivered, large herd adoptions. The HSUS is urging that this provision be permanently scrapped.

The two men allegedly responsible for the deaths of the horses in North Dakota have been indicted by a federal grand jury on six counts, including charges of inhumane treatment of the four hundred horses, fraud, and making false statements. Ironically, the fraud-related charges are felonies. The cruelty charges, reflecting the suffering and death of hundreds of horses, are merely misdemeanors. The case is now pending.

The HSUS will continue to push for reform as long as wild horses are in jeopardy.

Legislative News

about whether tracks will be allowed in specific areas. We urge activists to work in Wisconsin to keep tracks, particularly hog tracks, out of farm areas.

Even though it’s hard to see a “plus” side to a law legalizing racing, we can report that at least Wisconsin Governor Thompson has appointed a representative from the humane community to the state racing board. This was a provision urged by NCRO Director Frantz Dantzler during his testimony on the issue last year.

We also detected this year that makes it a misdemeanor to free an animal being used in science, research, commerce or education.

How You Can Help

There are a couple of immediate needs. An effort to repeal Minnesota’s law that makes pound seizure mandatory failed at the last minute during the last session. But the effort will begin again. Minnesota residents interested in helping should contact the Concerned Veterinarians and Citizens Committee to Save the Ryerson Deer, in an attempt to effect a non-shooting alternative solution.

In every state, there will be elections this fall, and the people you elect can have a tremendous positive or negative effect on animal protection issues in your community. Now is the time to become politically aware and active in your area. Get to know the candidates and where they stand on animal issues before you cast your vote.

After the November elections, contact the newly elected officials to let them know of your concerns about various animal protection issues. You want to get to them before they begin to make commitments to positions that work against animals and against the people who are fighting to protect them.

Finally, you can help the animals, and us, by being aware of legislative issues in your area, and making a year-round effort to let the that we should support, or work to defeat; please contact the NCRO or Ann Church, HSUS coordinator for state legislation, in our Washington, D.C., office.
Some educators say that the value of these fables is in their tradition and in their moral messages. But I think a seven-year-old is unlikely to grasp the concept or value of such tradition. And the “moral message” he is likely to come away with is that somehow “bad” simply because of their birthright and natural behavior.

I wrote to the publisher and will follow up with the school system to point out that attitudes, values, social behavior, and morals have changed dramatically in the 2,400 years or so since Aesop wrote his fables. It’s time for a change. There are certainly other materials that reflect reverence and appreciation for life.

It is important for children to learn that all animals have intrinsic value, and that they are not to be feared, hated, or abused for their natural behavior, or because of ancient folk tales. As our children go back to school, we should all become aware of the lessons they are learning. Get involved, write letters, and make telephone calls to the school, school board, and publishers of offensive materials.

Let them know what you think about the materials your child is using, and also let them know that there are viable, and better, alternatives.

Join the AAA Team

The HSUS’s Animal Activist Alert (AAA) can give you the help that you need to speak out effectively for animals. AAA is distributed free of charge to HSUS members who wish to play an active role in eliminating animal abuse. If you’re not already on the AAA team, you can join by writing AAA, The HSUS, 2100 L Street, NW, Washington, DC 20037.

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 in your will will demonstrate your lasting commitment to animal welfare and strengthen 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 ____________________________
City ____________________________ State ______
Zip code ____________________________

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