MI Goose Program Expands

Michigan's groundbreaking Canada goose egg removal program in urban and suburban communities continues to grow. At the same time, goose population estimates have dropped by the tens of thousands in southeastern Michigan. HSUS members interested in volunteering to help with this exciting program during April of 2005 should contact GLRO for information this winter. Training sessions are generally held in early April, and you can join other volunteers to help landowners and public parks address goose problems.

This will be the seventh year for the joint HSUS-Michigan Department of Natural Resources project. To date, more than 27,000 goose eggs have been removed from sites in Oakland, Wayne, Macomb, Alpena, Chippewa, and Washtenaw counties. We encourage our members in other Michigan cities experiencing conflicts with Canada geese to call our office and learn how to bring the program to your town.

Leslie Keys of the Detroit Zoo hands a Canada goose egg to volunteer Jennifer Stoddard, a staff member of the Humane Society of Huron Valley. Volunteer Sheri Giardini records the nest's location.

Help Restore the Dove Shooting Ban

With one stroke of a pen, Michigan Gov. Jennifer Granholm broke her promise to Michiganders when she signed H.B. 5029 and ended 99 years of protection for mourning doves in the state. Not only did Gov. Granholm commission the pain and suffering of these gentle and inoffensive birds, but she also demonstrated that she is an elected official who cannot be trusted to stand by her word.

During her 2002 campaign, the governor responded “yes” to the question, “If the Legislature finally did pass a dove hunting bill, would you veto such a bill?” H.B. 5029 declares the mourning dove a game bird and authorizes the Natural Resources Commission to establish a dove shooting season.

In order to restore the shooting ban on this beloved backyard songbird, GLRO, along with dozens of other groups and hundreds of concerned citizens, is working to collect the necessary number of signatures to qualify a referendum for the 2006 ballot. And we are asking that you support.

For decades, Michigan was one of 10 states that prohibited dove shooting. Doves are not overpopulated, nor do they damage crops or eat ornamental plants. They don't cause a nuisance, spread rabies, or do any of the other things that are typically offered as justification for hunting other species.

Shooting doves is nothing more than target practice. These small creatures are seldom consumed. Providing a small number of the state’s hunters with an opportunity to shoot down the quick-flying birds is not a valid reason to add the species to Michigan’s game list. Furthermore, the birds’ irregular flight pattern leads to unacceptably high wounding rates. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reports that more than a quarter of the birds shot are wounded and not retrieved.

Mourning doves are backyard birds much loved by citizens. In fact, several polls indicate that public opinion in Michigan is strongly opposed to dove shooting. In the past, legislators refused to support dove shooting bills; however, that didn't stop the National Rifle Association and the Michigan United Conservation Clubs from trying to overturn the ban anyway. Unfortunately, these groups successfully strong-armed the governor and legislators into passing this fatal dove shooting bill.

What You Can Do

In order to qualify this measure for the 2006 ballot, we need to amass approximately 225,000 signatures through an all-volunteer effort. Please help us restore the protection of Michigan’s official bird of peace. We cannot do this without you! If you live in Michigan and you’d like to help us collect signatures, please contact the Committee to Restore the Dove Shooting Ban at 517-321-DOVE or contact@stopshootingdoves.org.
Appalachian Project Welcomes New Leader

Please join us in saying goodbye to Dr. Louis Lembo, who stepped down as lead veterinarian for the Appalachian Spay/Neuter Project in order to devote more time to his emergency practice. We will miss him, but look forward to seeing him back as a volunteer!

GLRO is proud to introduce you to the newest member of the RAVS family, Dr. Lydia Love. Dr. Love is an old friend of the program, starting as a volunteer in 1999 while she was a veterinary student at the University of Tennessee and continuing after her graduation in 2002. She’s lost count of just how many weekend Appalachian trips she’s been on, but guesses the number is well over 30. She’s also volunteered at three native nation clinics, and in Guatemala. Dr. Love says she was hooked on the program immediately. She added, “You have to have a real love for animals to put up with the demands and rigor of veterinary school. It was easy to lose track of why you were there. RAVS’s was an outlet for my desire to treat animals and to contribute to different communities. It helped put my goals back into perspective.”

When asked to describe her goals as the new lead for the Appalachian Project, Dr. Love didn’t hesitate: “I hope to contribute positively to the lives of individual animals, the communities we visit, and the RAVS program as a whole. And I will always work at making it a rewarding experience for the students and veterinarians who volunteer with us.” Dr. Love led her first Ohio clinic on July 10-11 in Jackson County. Applications and guidelines for veterinary students and professionals interested in volunteering for RAVS clinics are available at www.ruralsavescat.org.

RAVIS Update

GLRO received this picture of Cole enclosed in a six-month follow-up survey completed by a grateful Perry County pet owner. Cole was reportedly in a “tip top shape.” A note on the back of his picture reads: “Cole says, ‘Thank You.’” In addition to Cole, more than 3,000 dogs and cats have been examined, vaccinated, and spayed or neutered at Ohio RAVS clinics since fall 2001.

Donations to this program go a long way toward helping animals like Cole. To support our efforts, you can make a tax-deductible donation to the Appalachian Project.

I’d Like To Support the Appalachian Project.

Enclosed is my tax-deductible donation of $.

My check, payable to the Appalachian Project, is enclosed.

Please charge my 


Expiration Date _____/____ (month/year)

Account # ________________ State ___________

Name ____________________________ City ____________ Zip ________________

Signature _______________________

Please use the enclosed envelope to send this coupon and your donation to GLRO. Gifts made to the Appalachian Project are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Appalachian Project Trips

Dr. Lydia Love takes the helm of the Appalachian Spay/Neuter Project, which has sterilized approximately 3,000 cats and dogs in rural Ohio since the program’s inception.

Disaster Conference the Best Yet

People from across the country described The HSUS’s biennial National Conference on Animals in Disaster as a smashing success. Several attendees said it was the best conference they had ever been to. There was a wide range of communities represented, both geographically and by vocation. They came together—some for the first time—to address issues that concern them all. It was gratifying to see the excitement and enthusiasm of the attendees as well as the speakers. Many participants experienced a renewed vision of how they could help the people and animals in their communities back home.

Participants at the Philadelphia conference included more than 300 people from 42 states as well as Costa Rica, Canada, and England, representing animal control, humane and veterinary organizations, disaster organizations, and state and federal government emergency managers and agricultural officials. Fifty-eight speakers presented 32 workshops.

GLRO’s Linda Reiser led a roundtable discussion on responding to flash floods, calling on her experiences in West Virginia. Keystone speaker Temple Grandin, who is associate professor of animal science at Colorado State University and perhaps the world’s foremost authority on humane animal handling methods, explained concepts such as the flight zone of grazing animals, as well as how to use animals’ natural behaviors to help reduce stress during the evacuation, transport, and sheltering associated with both manmade and natural disasters.

HSUS Golden Anniversary: The Next 50 Years

By HSUS Chief Executive Officer Wayne Pacelle

At the age of 50, any individual or institution pauses to reflect on both the past and the future. That moment arrived for The HSUS.

Five decades since its inception, The HSUS can look back on its accomplishments with pride. The HSUS has grown and diversified since 1954, now employing experts in companion animals, wildlife, farm animals, and animal research and attracting more than 8 million members and constituents. The HSUS has developed the most sophisticated government affairs, investigations, and humane education programs of any animal protection organization, and, recognizing that animal exploitation extends beyond our borders, now extends its programs across the globe.

Yet while our gains and our growth have made The HSUS the largest and most influential organization in the field, the challenges ahead are daunting. Animal abuse—especially in institutional forms, such as farm farming—remains more acute than ever.

As we look ahead, The HSUS will continue to pay attention to the wide range of issues that affect the lives of animals. We will never forget our birthright: the responsible care and protection of companion animals. We will also work to root out persistent forms of animal cruelty such as dogfighting, cockfighting, and other blood sports. But we must redouble our efforts to protect long-neglected classes of creatures, specifically animals reared for food, who are confined and killed by the billions every year.

We must become a powerful and unrelenting force in the public policy domain, working to halt intensive confinement of animals on factory farms; to compel companies to stop needless and duplicative testing on animals when alternatives exist; to shutter “puppy mills” that mass-produce dogs for the pet trade when millions of healthy and adoptable animals face abandonment or euthanasia for lack of suitable homes; to halt the fur trade; and to safeguard animals’ habitats so they, too, have space and shelter.

The professional staff of The HSUS can do a great deal to achieve these goals. But we cannot accomplish them alone. Only when HSUS members in communities are active—in financially supporting our work, writing to newspapers and lawmakers, making responsible and humane choices in the marketplace, and educating people about animal issues in their communities—can we succeed.

Only with your active engagement will we see, on the distant horizon 50 years from today, a truly humane society that accounts for the basic needs of animals and treats them all with the dignity and respect they deserve.

Wayne Pacelle took over as The HSUS’s chief executive officer this summer. He has been with The HSUS for 10 years and served most recently as senior vice president for communications and government affairs.

HSUS Chief Executive Officer Wayne Pacelle and Grace.
Director’s Report

Summit Sets Off Avalanche of Action

Some West Virginians have taken on pet overpopulation in a way that I am excited to share with all of you. I invited people from West Virginia organizations that actively address pet overpopulation to a meeting this past June. I called it a Summit on Pet Overpopulation. At this summit we looked at results from a survey we had done for the Federation of Humane Organizations in West Virginia. The survey attempted to examine the “big picture” of pet overpopulation in their state. We wanted to get a clearer picture of the scope of the problem as well as the scope of services designed to combat it. We asked groups about the number and type of animals they handled over the course of a year. Were both dogs and cats assisted? How many sheltered animals showed up as strays and how many were pets surrendered by their owners? We also asked organizations to describe the extent of spay/neuter assistance programs, which most but not all had in place. Responses highlighted the great work that was already being done as well as gaps in service and assistance that must still be filled.

Then we brainstormed about what we could do to make a difference for these homeless and abandoned pets. Two ideas came out of this session that I hope you will consider for your community and the state as a whole.

The first idea originated with the Monongalia County Humane Society. The group plans to hold a local candidate toolkit workshops travel to west virginia

GLRO’s ongoing series of affordable education opportunities for animal care professionals visited northeastern West Virginia in June. Hosted by the Animal Welfare Society of Jefferson County, the two workshops attracted attendees from West Virginia, Virginia, and Maryland, some of whom appear in the photo at right. The first day’s training was designed for staff and volunteers of animal shelters and animal placement groups. It provided current information about disease management, animal behavior evaluation, customer service, and understanding the stresses unique to the field. It was followed by a half-day session for West Virginia law enforcement agents and prosecutors that addressed animal cruelty investigation and the connection between cruelty to animals and human violence. Member donations underwrite the cost of providing Toolkit workshops. Thank you for helping us to bring the latest information to all corners of the Great Lakes region!

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Promoting the protection of all animals