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GLRO TRACES PET SENT TO RESEARCH

Rarely a day passes that the Great Lakes Regional Office staff is not working in some way to prevent pets from ending up in research facilities.

The staff continually work on legislation affecting animals in research. They assist local humane societies in halting “bunching” at pounds. They write action alerts and compile statistics and work on other projects dealing with research animals.

Recently, Director Sandy Rowland was asked by a humane agent to help locate a pet dog sold from an Ohio pound to an animal dealer who buys and sells animals for research.

The dog, Rocky, had escaped from his heated garage while his owner was away. A neighbor accidentally had let him out.

When the owner contacted the county pound, he was told his dog was not there. Three days later he was told his dog had indeed been there but was sold to another family. Frustrated by the various stories he received from the pound, the owner contacted the county humane agent. Checking the public records, the agent found Rocky had been sold to a known animal dealer.

Rocky had been gone from the pound a month when the GLRO was contacted. It was urgent to locate the dog before he became a victim of research.

The humane agent went to the kennel where the dealer keeps his dogs and, at first, was not allowed to look for Rocky. When law-enforcement officials insisted, the dealer finally allowed the agent to search the kennels but refused permission to check his records to see where the dog had gone. The dealer insisted he never had Rocky.

Rowland, Program Coordinator Kurt Lapham, and the agent began the task of contacting every research facility in the area. After several days of telephoning, their big fear became a reality: Rocky had been sold by the Ohio dealer to a Pennsylvania dealer. From there he was sold to an east coast research facility.

Rocky was a gentle German shepherd loved by his owner and the owner’s three-year-old son. The owner doesn’t have the heart to tell his son what happened to Rocky. The child still asks when Rocky will be back.

The sad, true story of Rocky is a vivid example that shows the need for stiff laws against bunching and pound seizure. It has strengthened our resolve, however, to continue to do everything we can to prevent pets winding up in research facilities.

Pictured is Rocky, a mix breed sold to an animal dealer by an Ohio pound. Rocky died in a research lab in spite of concentrated intense efforts to find and save him.
Dogfighting Still Rampant in Region

Almost every weekend, at various clandestine sites around the region, hundreds of men, women and children gather for an evening at the dogfights. They plunk down admission fees to eat, drink, cheer and place bets as pit bull terriers tear each other to bits. To the spectators and participants, it’s just another evening of pure, unabashed fun. Yet to thousands of fighting dogs that engage in this savagery every year, it means suffering and death—a bloody conclusion for a loyal pet.

HSUS investigators, who, for years, have been working to stop these brutal spectacles in the Great Lakes region and across the country, say legal dogfighting rings are, however, a difficult and dangerous proposition; our investigators have had their lives threatened, they’ve been followed—some have even been shot! Yet this kind of risky investigative work is essential to “bust” these illegal rings and obtain documentation of atrocities for use in testifyng before state legislatures when we seek to upgrade penalties for this cruel activity. (It is HSUS’ belief that felony laws accompanied by stiff fines and lengthy prison terms are the only effective deterrent to participation in this cruel activity.)

Program Coordinator Kurt Lapham is very much involved in this kind of investigative work around the region. He can develop information but we need your help to end these spectacles.

We have previously reported on the success experienced in the legislature in Indiana last year. The new anti-cruelty statute was passed then, and today it is benefiting many animals. Michigan humanitarians fought hard last fall for two bills to stop the use of pets in research. Although the Senate and every humanitarian is sure to have a far-reaching effect.

The Ohio legislature has been de­lugged with phone calls and letters on animal-related issues. The most suc­cessful event in Ohio was a gubernator­ial veto of legislation permitting a bucking straps to allowing padded bucking straps. Even though the HSUS fought the bill vigorously, the financial resources and influence of rodeo promoters proved too much to overcome.

Although Ohio’s twenty-one year old prohibition against the use of bucking straps was changed recently by the legislature, the prancing rod, shown here being used on a steer, still remains illegal to use on rodeo animals.

The Great Lakes Regional Office is interested in establishing a circus and rodeo watch within the region. The purpose is to have a network of individuals and/or organizations willing to be called upon to monitor these traveling exhibitions when they stop in an area. The participating society or individual in the community where the circus or rodeo stops would find out where and when the next performance is scheduled. They would then contact GLRO and we, in turn, would notify the proper organization to cover the event at the next location. This networking effect will assure a constant monitoring of these events.

In November, nearly 500 Michigan residents took part in a rally on the steps of the Capitol Building in Lansing, Michigan, against pets in research. Organized by the Michigan Federation of Humane Societies and Michigan Humane Society, the event coincided with hearings on two state bills designed to put an end to release of animals from pounds to research.

Responding to numerous requests for the need to hold a large-animal abuse training seminar, the GLRO, the Humane Society of St. Joseph County, Indiana, and the Kishart County Humane Society co-sponsored a two­day large-animal abuse workshop on April 17-18. Further details about these events will be displayed in the coming year. Ku­dos to Anne Klokowski!

We are alarmed by the number of missing dogs reported to us over the past six months. Recently, we were asked by the public prosecutor of Clinton County, Ohio, to compile the circumstances surrounding 18 dogs reported missing in that county. All the dogs disappeared within a one-week period. Most of the owners in the same area. A few months later, an of­ficial near Terre Haute, Indiana, gave us details of some 150 dogs missing in the same area. Other individuals have also been reported to our office. So far, we have been unable to pinpoint what has happened to these dogs. We are continuing to collect information.

Legislative Roundup

The key to effectiveness in animal pro­tection is having good laws with which to work. For this reason, the GLRO believes it is imperative to emphasize legislative activities throughout the en­tire region. We have previously reported on the success experienced in the legislature in Indiana last year. The new anti-cruelty statute was passed then, and today it is benefiting many animals. Michigan humanitarians fought hard last fall for two bills to stop the use of pets in research. Although the Senate and every humanitarian is sure to have a far-reaching effect. The Ohio legislature has been de­lugged with phone calls and letters on animal-related issues. The most suc­cessful event in Ohio was a gubernator­ial veto of legislation permitting a bucking straps to allowing padded bucking straps. Even though the HSUS fought the bill vigorously, the financial resources and influence of rodeo promoters proved too much to overcome. Passage of this new law is a defeat for us, but we plan to continue policing rodeo and enforcing other aspects of the Ohio anti-rodeo law.

The hunter harassment bill you have read so much about in The HSUS News is now pending in Ohio. The GLRO will work to oppose its passage.

**HERE’S WHAT YOU CAN DO:**

- Find out if dogfighting is a felony in your state and, if not, write us for a fact sheet and initiate a campaign for a stronger law.
- Educate local and state law enforce­ment officials and ask them to enforce the law.

**About the Region**

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When Michigan resident Anne Klo­kowski read about an elementary school principal skinning a maskrat in front of a class, she was angered by the insensitivity of the principal. She put her energies to work and set up a meeting with the superintendent of schools and the principal to talk with them about the reasons for her strong objections to the demonstration. She searched for filmed footage of trapped animals to show to the superintendent. At that presentation, Anne insisted she be given equal time with the students to talk about her views on the subject of trapping. She got permission to talk and show a film at an assembly at the school. Through all of this she became interested in state legislation to ban the leghold trap and will work towards its enactment in the coming year. Ku­dos to Anne Klokowski!

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**Michigan humanitarians turned out in force to show the legislature their objections to the use of pets in research.**

**Plan to Attend the HSUS National Animal Welfare Conference**

If you plan to attend the HSUS National Animal Welfare Conference, please write to us soon so that we may make arrangements.

**Director’s Comment**

BY SANDY ROWLAND

Whenever I read in the newspaper about a disaster such as a tornado, a flood, or a chemical spill, I become con­cerned about whether or not provisions for taking care of animals caught in these emergencies have been made. Several years ago we incorporated a session into the regional workshop that involved planning for disasters. Per­haps it is time to remind everyone again of the importance of planning now—before tragedy strikes. Unfortunately, there cannot be just one common guide to use in the various types of disasters that can affect ani­mals. However, every humane organi­zation and animal–control agency can and should have outlines of plans for the disasters common in their own areas. These would certainly include tornadoes, floods, and fires.

Your first step is to contact your county disaster services department. Their role is to assist in meeting the needs of humans. You need to impress upon them that, in disasters, people are concerned about the welfare of their pets, and in this regard you can help them. Let them know of your interest in developing a plan and ask for their input. The extent of your involvement may vary, depending on the resources you have available for the various sit­uations.

As always, our office is ready and willing to aid you should a disaster strike. Our past experience can help, we are sure, to make your job easier.

**Director’s Comment**

BY SANDY ROWLAND
HSUS Investigates Exotic Pet Auctions

Ownership of exotic animals has been of interest to various city councils and state legislatures in the Great Lakes region. Over the past two years the GLRO has provided information documenting why private ownership of exotic pets should not be permitted.

Recently, Kurt Lapham took a closer look at what goes on in the exotic animal trade by attending exotic animal auctions around the region. What he found was appalling but not surprising. People from as far away as Maine attended some auctions. Many were looking for “good deals” on animals to buy and sell later at a higher price. Animals auctioned included hooved stock, lions, bears, and exotic birds.

Lapham found that housing did not meet even the minimal standards of the Animal Welfare Act. Cages were extremely small and insecure. Lapham observed one bear bite the finger of a spectator. Later, the same bear was auctioned off as a “tame” animal.

When the investigation was concluded, all violations of the Animal Welfare Act observed by Lapham were reported to the enforcing agency, the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The GLRO will follow up to monitor what remedial action is taken by USDA.

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.

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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, N.W., Washington, DC 20037.

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