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Dogfighting Figure Convicted

Bob Stevens, of Pittsville, Virginia, was convicted in a Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, courtroom for sending videos depicting animal cruelty across state lines, a federal offense. A jury deliberated less than an hour before rendering a guilty verdict against Stevens, who had been served with a search warrant in April 2003, the same date on which James Fricchione and Jack Kelly—publisher and former publisher, respectively, of “Sporting Dog Journal”—were also served in a well-coordinated effort by state and federal authorities in New York, Virginia, and Georgia.

The significance of the Stevens case continued on page 2

This dog, seized in a dogfighting bust in Florida, has suffered the terrible wounds of battle.

NJ Supreme Court Stops Bear Hunt

The New Jersey Supreme Court voted unanimously to cancel the black bear hunt, scheduled for December 6–11, 2004, just four days before it was to begin. MARO’s Barbara Dyer said, “This is a victory not only for the bears, but for everyone who took action on their behalf!”

The relentless pressure by HSUS and its members, The Fund for Animals, other animal protection organizations, and the public forced Gov. James McGreevey and Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner Bradley Campbell to stop the hunt. Campbell ordered the Division of Fish and Wildlife to withhold black bear hunting permits and closed all state land to black bear hunting. This was the first time that a DEP commissioner challenged the independent Fish and Game Council, whose members—save for Jack Schrier—all voted for the hunt.

In November, U.S. Sportsmen’s Alliance Foundation and the New Jersey State Federation of Sportsmen’s Clubs joined two individuals to sue the DEP and the New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife, as well as the DEP commissioner and the Division director, for withholding bear hunting permits. Safari Club International and the Safari Club International Foundation also sued them separately for closing state land to bear hunting.

Deputy Attorney General Barbara Conklin argued both cases for the state. She contended that DEP did not have the resources to conduct a bear hunt that could guarantee public safety. She also argued that if a bear hunt was conducted, it would dominate DEP’s resources so as to preclude non-lethal bear management solutions such as education, enforcement of the feeding ban, and contraception research.

The appellate court ruled against the commissioner over the permits, but ruled in favor of the commissioner for closing all lands owned, managed, or controlled by the DEP to bear hunting, giving Campbell the ultimate authority to determine whether to open these lands to hunting. “The commissioner has established the parks, forests, and continued on page 2

West Virginia: Welcome to the Region!

As of February 1, 2005, West Virginia joined the states covered by HSUS’s Mid-Atlantic Regional Office. Our staff looks forward to working with animal advocates in the Mountain State. You can reach our office at 270 Rt. 206, Bartley Sq., Flanders, NJ 07836; 973-927-5611; www.hsus.org/maro.
In the meantime, the Supreme Court reversed the judgment of the appellate court on the bear hunting applications, thereby canceling the hunt for 2004. This decision does more than just protect black bears from needless killing by trophy hunters, says Wayne Pacelle, president and CEO of The HSUS. “This case sends a precedent that the hunter-dominated Fish and Game Council can no longer thumb its nose at the people of New Jersey and the commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection. The Council’s reckless decision to push ahead with a hunt has been thwarted by a unanimous Supreme Court.”

Your Help is Still Needed to Protect Bears

The Fish and Game Council will want another hunt for black bears in 2005. Watch for the 2005-2006 Game Code to be published in the “New Jersey Register” in May. There will most likely be a hearing in June. Updates will be sent to those of you who have signed up for our regional e-mail list. The ways to help bears are to:

1. Ask your state legislators to support these bills.
   - S. 700, sponsored by Sen. Joseph Vitale (D19), prohibits black bear hunting for five years, requires development of plans for bear population control, and appropriates $95,000 to develop a plan.
   - A. 2452, sponsored by Assemblyman Reed Gusciora (D15), prohibits black bear hunting until completion of a report submitted by Rutgers University and appropriates $95,000.
   - To find out who represents you, call the New Jersey Office of Legislative Services at 1-800-792-8368, or go to www.njleg.state.nj.us/members/legsearch.asp.
   - 2. Join our e-mail activist list. You will be notified when action is needed to help animals. To join, send an e-mail to maro@hsus.org giving your name, city, and state.
   - 3. Contact acting Gov. Richard J. Codey. Let him know that you do not want a black bear hunt. Write, call, or e-mail the governor: P.O. Box 001, Trenton, New Jersey 08625; 609-292-6000; www.state.nj.us/governor/govmail.html.

Bear Contraception Project Underway

During the week of October 18, 2004, a team of HSUS scientists and technicians traveled to Six Flags Great Adventure Wild Animal Safari Park in Jackson, New Jersey, to administer immunocontraceptive vaccine to six female American black bears. The treatment of captive bears is the first step in solving conflicts with black bears. The treated bears may already have conceived, so evaluation and revision of the effectiveness of the vaccine will be available until late fall. The Tufts University School of Veterinary Medicine, under contract with the New Jersey Wildlife Conservation Program, conducted a pilot project to develop a contraceptive vaccine to an anesthetized bear at the Six Flags park in Jackson, New Jersey.

Your help is still needed to protect bears.
Dog Behavior Training for NJ Police

Nationwide, there have been countless reported incidents of unnecessary police shootings of dogs on both private property and in public areas. Such incidents occur because law enforcement personnel in most places have no training in how to read dog behavior. So MARO was pleased to help develop a training video for police in Ocean County, New Jersey.

Heather Cammisa, executive director of the Jersey Shore Animal Center (JSAC), decided to take action after a family dog was fatally shot in Brick Township by a law enforcement authority who, according to the owners, mistakenly interpreted the dog’s friendly behavior as menacing. She called upon The HSUS, Career Training Institute, New Jersey Veterinary Medical Association, and New Jersey Certified Animal Control Officers to collaborate on developing a training video for police in Ocean County.

An existing documentary from In the Line of Duty fit the bill. Cammisa performed some editing, with input from MARO.

Ocean County Prosecutor Thomas Kelaher provided an introduction to the video, which will be shown in Ocean County police agencies. It would be desirable for such training to be mandatory and statewide. But until that happens, we hope that Ocean County’s lead may foster adoption of widespread, optional training in basic dog behavior recognition by police academies across the state and beyond.

NYC Joins Seal Protest

On March 15, 2005, MARO Program Coordinator Barbara Dyer (center above) joined the International Day of Action Against the Canada Seal Hunt, which targets weeks-old baby seals, in a New York City protest. The demonstration was held in front of Canada’s Consulate General. Similar protests against the world’s largest slaughter of marine mammals were held in more than 50 cities in 22 countries. Help us protest the hunt by boycotting Canadian seafood; visit www.protectseals.org.

Thanks to Disaster Responders

The HSUS is deeply grateful for the outstanding work of MARO’s volunteer Disaster Animal Response Team members who provided indispensable assistance during four successive hurricanes that devastated much of Florida last year: New Jersey's Jim Osorio, Willie Cirone, and Bob Boyle; and New York’s Jeff Eyre and Jack Woods.

Porsche Helps Pooches

On March 24, 2005, MARO Program Coordinator Samantha Mullen joined the Porsche Cars North America campaign to assist animal shelters in finding loving homes for adoptable animals. The campaign, Cayenne for Canines, was launched at the International Auto Show held at the Javits Center in New York City. Animal Lovers League of Glen Cove, Long Island, was the regional shelter MARO recommended to partner with Porsche in this project. Other attendees were HSUS staff members Stephanie Shain and Sarah Comis, and comedienne Elayne Boosler. For the next six months, the shelter and others throughout the country will have the use of an SUV provided by Porsche. The company’s national dealerships will encourage the public to adopt “Certified Pre-Owned dogs.”
When a disaster strikes, who will provide care for the animals involved? This is the question posed on the cover of a brochure published by the Pennsylvania State Animal Response Team (PASART) created through a private-public partnership to serve as a unifying network to support prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery when emergencies affecting animals occur. PASART builds County Animal Response Teams (CARTs) across the state. You can join your county’s team at www.pasart.org, or if one doesn’t exist, you can help establish one. The HSUS is proud to support on the PASART board of directors, and we encourage other Pennsylvanians to consider joining this worthy cause.

Pennsylvania and New York join an increasing number of states that are patterning their CARTs and SARTs on the model of South Carolina. New York’s SART is now in the formative stages. MARO is participating in planning meetings and has volunteered to serve on the steering committee of the New York SART, which will also operate as a public-private partnership embracing a broad spectrum of state agencies, private humane organizations and industries, and volunteer groups.

Director’s Report

By Nina Autensteg
Director of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Office

When I was a kid growing up in Brooklyn, children didn’t learn to grow their own vegetables—the only plants we cared for were in window boxes. We certainly never saw farm animals, only alley cats and squirrels. Vegetables, meat and eggs came from the A&P, a meat market, or a local grocery store called Sloggby Louie’s. By the time they got to my family, these goods were wrapped in paper or plastic and didn’t remotely resemble the animals they came from. In those years, vegetables comprised the majority of the dinner plate. My mother would stretch out a pound of ground meat to feed the entire family; eating out was a rarity.

How different things became when farm families becameますますたたり and fast food chains began to crop up everywhere! Burgers were advertised by weight, featuring double patties and more and more meat. Fast food was quick, it was easy, and it was inexpensive. So like millions, we made these restaurants a part of our daily lives. This fast food revolution eventually generated a backlash. Gradually, activists such as Cleveland Amory made us aware of the cruelty associated with factory farming methods. I resolved to reduce my consumption of these products. Like many people, the first thing I did was give up meat. That was easy—my family never served meat when I was growing up. For one, we couldn’t afford it. But my father had grown up on a farm, and I later began to suspect he might have other, ethical objections to this food.

By the time I was married and had my own family, we were much more aware of the issues of animal handling and slaughter. One of the first things I worked on under the leadership of Cleveland Amory was the humane slaughter bill. My son Lance gave up eating meat in junior high around the same time that one of his new teachers was expected to be discussing sport hunting as part of the class curriculum. When that same teacher told parents that their children shouldn’t object to sport hunting unless they were vegetarians, I decided to try to become a vegetarian.

At first, I didn’t even tell my mother for fear that I wouldn’t succeed. I was also concerned about hurting my family who—who—like so many—depended on meat as the centerpiece of holiday meals. As I turned them, I underestimated my family and my friends.

Within a few short years, my husband, Ken, became a vegan, and all of our children became vegetarians. Our family and friends mostly did the same, even every picnic, wedding, or party one that includes options for vegetarians. Of course, not everyone will embrace this lifestyle. Some people who like small portions in eating can make a huge difference. Meat, dairy, and produce can be purchased from natural growers who utilize organic farming techniques and allow animals to range freely.

Every meal offers you an opportunity to improve conditions for the billions of animals who live this way, and it makes us feel better.

And if you slip, don’t beat yourself up—just try again. And remind yourself to be just as considerate of those who don’t share your lifestyle. After all, being humane means demonstrating kindness toward animals and each other.

Prepackaged meat looks nothing like the animal it comes from, which makes it easier to consume. Knowing the origins of your food—and the conditions the animals endure—can help you make wise food choices that may also help the animals.

The Maro Regional News is a publication of The Humane Society of the United States, Mid-Atlantic Regional Office, 270 Route 206, Bartlett Square, Flanders, NJ 07836; 973-927-5611. Nina Autensteg, director. The office is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and is closed on federal holidays.

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