

The Humane Society Institute for Science and Policy

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GSRO Summer 1973

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News of the HSUS Gulf States Region

Police, HSUS Save Neglected Horses

The Gulf States Regional Office was instrumental in getting four horses at Port Aransas, Texas, removed from the custody of their owner recently after HSUS received several complaints of mistreatment and malnutrition to horses.

The case came to the attention of HSUS when the Gulf Coast Humane Society in Corpus Christi and the Corpus Christi SPCA attempted to obtain a warrant for the arrest of the owner of 37 horses on the grounds that he was abusing them. The local police department, sheriff's office, and mayor's office refused to issue the warrant, but the publicity resulted in the owner's splitting up the horses and moving them to three locations, Robstown, Sinton, and Port Aransas. A string of complaints followed as local residents learned of the poor condition of the horses.

"It was in Port Aransas where Police Chief Frank E. Patrova bowed his back and sought advice from the Gulf States Regional Office," reported Gulf States Regional Director Douglas M. Scott.

As a result of the counsel obtained from HSUS, Chief Patrova took four
(Continued on next page.)

HSUS Closes Roadside Zoo; Lion Freed from Jail Cell Cage

HSUS has forced the permanent closing of a Texas roadside zoo that featured an old medieval-style jail as its lion cage.

The owner of the Comanche Gap Zoo, near Killeen in central Texas, agreed to go out of business and turn his animals over to a reputable animal dealer after The Humane Society threatened to take legal action if he didn't make the move voluntarily.

The agreement to close came only after four members of the HSUS national and regional staffs visited the zoo on several occasions. Gulf States Regional Director Douglas M. Scott and Regional Field Representative Bernard M. Weller called Chief Investigator Frank J. McMahon and zoologist Sue Pressman from the national headquarters in Washington, D. C., to assist in the effort.

Mrs. Pressman arranged for the zoo owner to sell some of his more valuable animals to a dealer who supplies animals to zoos and convinced him to give the dealer the remaining animals.

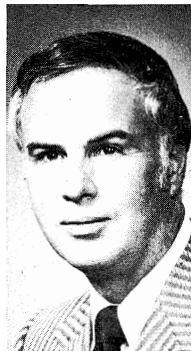
The lion's cage was the most dramatic example of the zoo's inadequacies. The former jail cell that served as his cage was built of rusty
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HSUS on Hunting

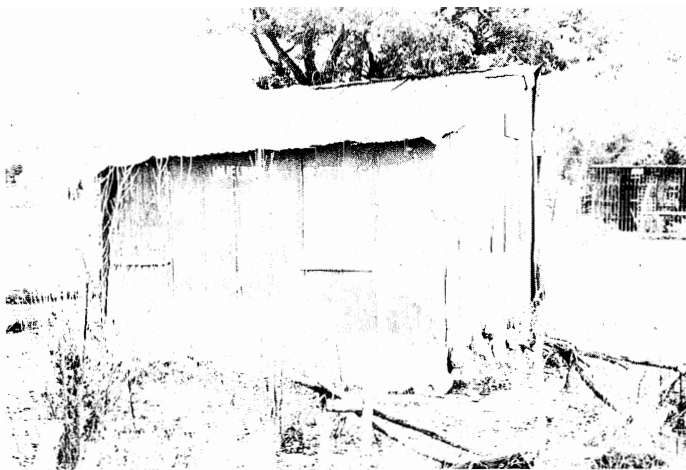
Gulf States Regional Director Douglas M. Scott told a Tyler, Texas, TV audience recently that the killing for fun of any living creature must be seriously questioned for the negative effect it has on young people, as well as for the animal's sake.

"To kill for fun raises many moral questions that cannot be bypassed," Scott said on a news program over station KLTU. "They are the same questions that confront us when we consider the pollution of our water, air, land, and natural resources, with the added dimension of violence."

In response to the often-stated hunting motive of "matching wits" with a wild animal, Scott asked what
(Continued on next page.)



Scott



THIS WAS A ZOO—The shack on the left and the old jail on the right served as quarters for wild animals (notice the lion in the doorway at right) at the Comanche Park, Texas, Zoo until HSUS convinced the owner to close. HSUS put the owner in touch with a reputable zoo animal dealer, who took the animals for relocation.

ZOO *Continued*

steel strips that left openings only 2' inches square. Debris, excrement, and mud covered the floor.

A Canadian bear was confined to a cage approximately 9x9x10 feet with no protection from the elements or provision for hibernation except a tarpaulin over one end.

Scott pointed out that the Comanche Gap Zoo was similar to hundreds of roadside zoos that can be found throughout the United States. Many of them are in the Gulf States Region. He urged local humane societies to make the improvement or closing of these zoos a high priority among their activities.

HSUS believes that the primary justification for keeping wild animals in captivity must be either education of man about the traits and habits of animals or the propagation of species that are failing to reproduce adequately in the wild.

The Comanche Gap Zoo was fulfilling neither function, and few roadside zoos are.

Standards promulgated by the Animal Welfare Act of 1970 now offer humane societies assistance in obtaining action. Among the requirements that all zoos must meet are these:

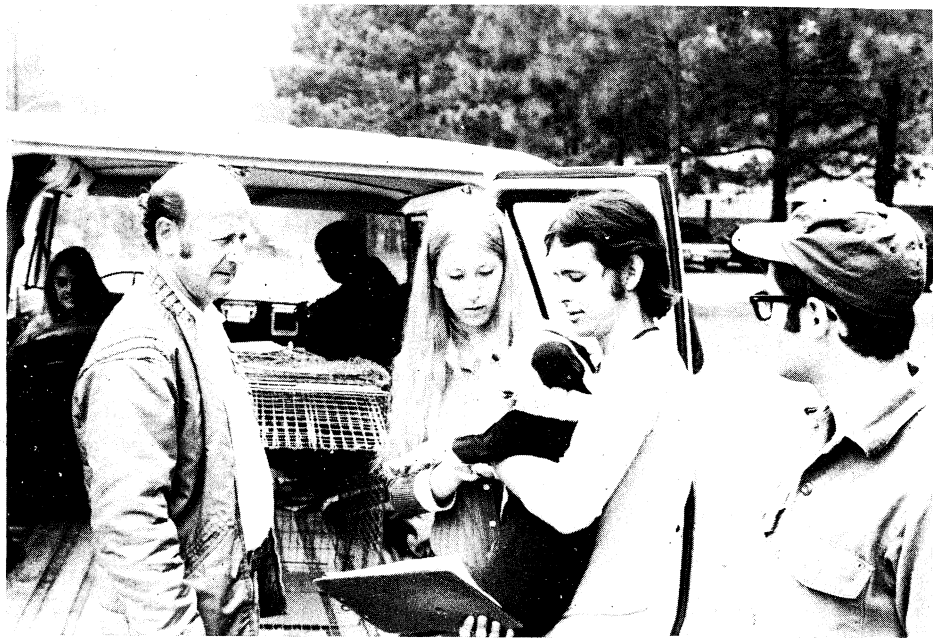
- A staff trained in animal husbandry.
- Sufficient space to permit the animal to make normal postural and social adjustments with adequate freedom of movement.
- Veterinary consultation on preventive medical care, nutrition, and pest control from a licensed veterinarian.

Additional information on the standards and enforcement procedures can be obtained from the HSUS national headquarters, 1604 K St., N.W., Washington, D. C. 20006.

HORSES *Continued*

of the horses that had been abandoned in Port Aransas into custody and charged the owner with cruelty.

As permitted under Texas law, the city sued for a lien for the care of the four horses and won. Chief Patrova sold the horses to people he knew would care for them.



Gulf States Field Representative Bernard Weller (left) watches Nacogdoches County (Texas) Animal Control Officer Bobbie Philpot practice the correct method for picking up a stray dog during a three-day training session. Mrs. Christy Forsythe (center), manager of the Nacogdoches shelter, and Randy Lemonz (right) also participated in the training.

Regional Staff Trains Cities' Employees

The HSUS Gulf States Regional Office conducted a three-day training course for animal control employees of Austin, Nacogdoches, and Tyler, Texas, in April.

The training was conducted by Regional Field Representative Bernard M. Weller, a former law enforcement officer, who worked for the HSUS California Branch and Great Lakes Region before joining the Gulf States Regional Staff.

The sessions included discussions and demonstrations of catching stray animals, care of sick and injured animals, proper feeding, shelter operations and administration, and catching hostile animals.

The training program was instigated by John Davenport, president of the Humane Society of Austin and Travis County, Mrs. Christy Forsythe, Nacogdoches Animal Control Shelter manager, and Mrs. Miriam Dorey, president of the Humane Society of Smith County at Tyler.

Weller said he believes the training will result in major improvements in the animal control programs of both communities.

HUNTING *Continued*

wits does a young fawn have, what competition takes place when captured animals are paraded in front of game preserve customers for close-range shooting?

"The global system in which we live cannot support the present rate of animal exploitation beyond the year 2100," Scott predicted. "To avoid a disastrous collision with nature's imposed limits, man must learn to live in harmony with his environment and respect all forms of life."

The appearance was the result of a chain of events prompted by Mrs. Miriam Dorey, president of the Humane Society of Smith County. Because of her criticism of hunting during a speech in Tyler, many residents wrote the station requesting an airing of the views she expressed. Mrs. Dorey asked Scott to make the presentation.

Workshop a Success

Ninety-five persons attended the first Gulf States Regional Workshop in Austin in June. Participants reported receiving many new ideas.