Workshops Set for Ohio, Texas, Puerto Rico

HSUS will conduct several leadership development workshops in the coming months. The workshops are designed to aid municipal officials, animal control officers, animal shelter workers, and local humane society leaders in solving animal control problems and conducting animal welfare programs. The sessions are under the direction of HSUS Director of Animal Sheltering and Control Phyllis Wright. Workshops will be held in Austin, Texas, on April 9 and 10, Portland, Ore., on June 11 and 12. For further information, write WDR/KSHOPS, c/o HSUS headquarters.

Pet Breeding Scheme Protested by HSUS

HSUS President John A. Hoyt has protested to President Gerald Ford White House encouragement of a plan by the founder of Doctor Pet Centers to set up a Small Business Act (SBA) loan to train disadvantaged persons to breed and raise pets for the pet industry. Milton Doctor, who is now head of Pedigree Industries in Marblehead, Mass., announced last summer that the White House had encouraged him in a scheme to train 400 veterans, minorities, and other economically or socially disadvantaged persons to undertake the breeding of pets, the manufacture of pet products, and the operation of grooming centers, pet cemeteries, retail pet shops, and dog training facilities. The program would be part of the federal Handicapped Entrepreneur Lending Program (HELP), funded by SBA.

Guy R. Hodge, HSUS director of research and data services, testified before a subcommittee of the House Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries at the invitation of the committee. The Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife Conservation and the Environment heard testimony from trappers and anti-hunting groups in preparation for possible action on H. R. 66 (Anderson, D-Calif.), a bill designed to discourage trapping wildlife.

"Trappers have an obligation to conduct their trade in a manner that does not cause suffering to animals," Hodge said. "It is past time that we place accountability squarely on the shoulders of the fur industry."

"They emphasized that wildlife are the property of all the people and that the people as a whole, therefore, have a right and responsibility to determine how wildlife will be treated and used. "HSUS maintains that we do not have an obligation to protect an industry that is unwilling or unable to comply with fundamental doctrines of humane conduct toward other living creatures," he said.

Congress Hears HSUS On Trapping Issue

There can be no justification for trapping or any other activity that needlessly inflicts pain on wildlife, an HSUS representative told a Congressional hearing. "There can be no justification for trapping or any other activity that needlessly inflicts pain on wildlife, an HSUS representative told a Congressional hearing. "Wildlife management is at a crossroads in its history and moving toward the day when it will no longer be the dominant theme of state or federal wildlife programs. He pointed out that, historically, fish and game agencies have been tied to a narrow-based, highly specialized constituency of hunters, trappers, and fishermen. "Wildlife management has operated as a closed corporation," he said. "Persons with divergent views on the utilization of wildlife have been treated as though their concerns were alien and dangerous to the foundation of wildlife management principles."

Hodge concluded that sport hunters' purchase of lands for the acquisition and preservation of wildlife habitat do not qualify the hunter as a multi-billion-dollar benefactor of wildlife programs. He noted that the hunter should not be considered the only source of financial support for wildlife programs.

California Man Named HSUS Investigator

HSUS President John A. Hoyt has announced the appointment of Philip E. Steward to the position of field service investigator for HSUS. Steward, former executive director of the Sacramento (Calif.) SPCA, will be working with Frantz Dantzler, director of field services, on HSUS's investigative staff in Washington, D.C.

Steward brings to HSUS a comprehensive background of animal welfare experience. He worked as a cruelty investigator for the Animal Shelter in Columbus, Ga., and as chief investigator for the Humane Society of Pomona Valley (Calif.) before joining the Sacramento SPCA.

Humane Seizure Law On Trial in California

A California law that allows humane officers to seize animals that are abandoned or neglected by their owners is being challenged as unconstitutional in the state's superior court.

Nathaniel S. Colley, defense attorney for Virginia Lamb and Thomas Neveraz, filed a civil suit in Sacramento charging that his clients' rights under the Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution were violated when humane officers seized their horses without a warrant. Last April state humane officers from the Sacramento SPCA removed 19 horses from a breeding stable operated by Ms. Lamb and Neveraz because the animals were starving and in need of veterinary care. The officers acted under section 5971 of the California Penal Code, which stipulates that it is the duty of humane officers to take custody of neglected animals and provide care with suitable care. Ms. Lamb and Neveraz were subsequently convicted on four counts of cruelty to animals.

Philip Steward, who recently joined the HSUS headquarters staff as an investigator, testified at the cruelty trial.

The lawsuit will establish whether or not it is legal for humane officers to seize private property (the horses) without a prior hearing or warrant. Such hearings and warrants often take 2 to 3 weeks to obtain, while the animals suffer or die in the interim. A court ruling against immediate seizure could set a precedent for other states to follow.

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