ICKY BOBBY GOT A NEW LIFE—and wheels—when an HSUS team rescued him and 57 other dogs from a North Carolina puppy mill. The rescuers initially found the miniature dachshund dragging himself around by his front legs in a filthy kennel. His adopter built him a cart that allows him to run and romp in the grass.

In 2013, the Animal Rescue Team freed 724 dogs and puppies from the squalor, sickness and neglect of mass breeding operations. To reduce demand for puppy mill dogs, an HSUS investigation exposed the perils of buying animals at flea markets and pet stores, where many puppies look healthy but actually carry diseases. At the same time, we helped Polly’s Pet Shop in Texas and three other stores switch from selling dogs to offering animals from local shelters.

Years of work by The HSUS led to a major breakthrough in September, when the USDA issued a rule requiring large-scale breeders who sell animals online to be licensed and federally inspected. A previous loophole had allowed unlicensed mill operators to sell puppies over the Internet to buyers who often assumed they were dealing with small family breeders. Now puppy mills can’t so easily evade federal oversight, says Kathleen Summers, director of outreach and research for The HSUS’s Stop Puppy Mills Campaign. “Hopefully this will enable them to get the big dealers who dropped their USDA licenses but still sell online.”

VETERINARIAN ANTONIA GARDNER at the South Florida Wildlife Center examines a yellow-crowned night heron to determine why he cannot stand or fly. After a month, the bird recovered and was returned to the wild, one of 12,182 animals treated at the center in 2013. Thousands more animals were cared for at The HSUS’s other affiliated centers—like the four orphaned coyote pups at The Fund for Animals Wildlife Center in Southern California who spent three months learning to socialize and hunt for food before being released. The Cape Wildlife Center ministered to wildlife in Massachusetts, including a trio of orphaned baby fishers (members of the weasel family) discovered by lumber mill workers in a felled tree. Duchess Sanctuary in Oregon, permanent home for nearly 200 rescued horses, welcomed several new animals to its herd, among them Nellie, a 20-year-old, blind-in-one-eye horse rescued from extreme neglect. The Cleveland Amory Black Beauty Ranch in Texas continued to provide lifelong sanctuary to nearly 1,000 animals, including Alex, a tiger rescued from the exotic pet trade, while the Doris Day Equine Center at Black Beauty rescued and placed nearly 50 horses. In all, HSUS-affiliated care centers provided sanctuary and rehabilitation to more than 20,000 animals.