REGISTRY WARNING

A California law that took effect January 1, 1992, requires all dog dealers to inform purchasers verbally and by posting a sign that pedigree registration—such as American Kennel Club papers—does not guarantee the quality of any dog. Many consumers do not realize that registry papers do not guarantee the dog buyer a healthy dog or the quality or accuracy of its stated lineage; they don’t even ensure that the dog is purebred. The warning required by the law clearly states that registration does not guarantee the accuracy of the lineage recorded.

The law requires that a dog’s purchaser sign and date an acknowledgment that he/she is aware of this fact. Any dealer or breeder violating the law is liable for civil damages equal to three times the cost of the dog.

“We hope this law makes clear to people that dogs advertised as having papers are not necessarily any better than dogs without papers,” said Charlene Drennon, director of the HSUS West Coast Regional Office.

OSTRICH MEAT ON FUTURE MENUS?

In October investigator Eric Sakach attended the Western Regional Ostrich Association convention. The HSUS believes ostrich breeders sell to other breeders in hopes of high profits, although a market does not yet exist for ostrich meat in the United States. “Much of what we’re seeing right now is reminiscent of [the fads for] chinchilla farms, rex rabbits, and beafaloes,” said Mr. Sakach. “We believe there is a good chance some people are going to be hurt financially... and the animals are going to end up paying the price.”

Ostrich is served in some European and South African countries; the birds are killed by electrocution in African slaughterhouses after being suspended by their wings to avoid damage to the meat.

OPERATION PEGASUS SAVES HORSES

Four mules and a horse stranded in the High Sierra Mountains by a sudden blizzard were flown to safety by helicopter in a daring rescue operation, Operation Pegasus, orchestrated by the HSUS West Coast Regional Office the first week of November.

“Oddly enough, we first heard of the situation from Gloria Acker of Tampa, Florida, who had heard a newscast about a hunting party surprised by a sudden storm that had ended up stranded in deep snow,” said HSUS investigator Kurt Lapham, who coordinated the rescue effort with the four other agencies involved.

Twenty-two people had been stranded in the Stanislaus National Forest on October 27. Although the people were rescued, local agencies had not been able to get the animals out. One hunter had refused to leave the animals for forty-eight hours until he was promised the animals would be taken out. Once the HSUS learned that the animals were not going to be rescued, we chartered two helicopters and coordinated teams from the West Coast Regional Office; the Tuolumne County sheriff’s department, search and rescue unit, and fire department; the Sonora Animal Hospital; and the University of California, Davis (UCD) School of Veterinary Medicine.

The rescue effort was the first to utilize a new sling developed by Charles Anderson of Certi-Weld, working in association with UCD. The device proved invaluable for safely and humanely airlifting the large animals to safety. The rescuers lifted the animals by helicopter down to a grassy area provided by the Dodge Ridge Ski Resort. Each animal was carefully checked for medical problems, sedated, and prepared for its flight by Dr. John Madigan and his team of equine specialists from UCD. Once the animals safely touched down at the ski resort, they were examined by another team, headed by Dr. Jeff Baker of Westwind Helicopters, Inc., for his part in the rescue. Mr. Baker and his pilots demonstrated the highest degree of professionalism and skill, and their contribution to the success of the rescue effort was essential.
CAPTURES OPPOSED

On October 18 the HSUS presented testimony on its own behalf and that of eleven other animal-welfare organizations against the application of the John G. Shedd Aquarium in Chicago, Illinois, to take from the wild and import from Canada four beluga whales.

The HSUS opposed issuance of this permit on the grounds that Canada does not have marine-mammal-protection laws and regulations consistent with the U.S. Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA). The MMPA prohibits the importation of marine mammals for public display from countries with marine-mammal-protection laws inconsistent with those of the United States.

We believe, too, that the methods used to capture beluga whales, remove them from their families, and place them in restricted spaces are inhumane. The HSUS believes that the methods used to capture beluga whales, remove them from their families, and place them in restricted spaces are inhumane.

They violate the MMPA. The National Marine Fisheries Service, which would issue the permit, will consider the HSUS testimony as well as that presented by the captive-marine-mammal industry. A final decision was expected within thirty days of the hearing.

NEBRASKA DOGS SEIZED

On September 19 officers from the Jefferson County, Nebraska, sheriff's department, Bob Downey, executive director of the Capitol Humane Society, and The HSUS's Ken Johnson and Midwest Regional Director Wendell Maddox raided three locations owned by an elderly Steele City, Nebraska, woman. The raid was in response to complaints from town residents. The raid resulted in the seizure of 11 of 106 dogs.

The seized animals suffered from malnutrition, parasites, fleas, worms, mites, and severe skin diseases. They were taken to a nearby Fairbury veterinary clinic, where one dog died during its first night in custody.

A week later the owner agreed to have 26 dogs euthanized because they were beyond recovery. Other animals have been euthanized or treated and adopted.

DISEASED CATS EUTHANATIZED

Late last summer Mr. Maddox, Norma McMillen, president of People for Animal Rights (PAR) and PAR members Judy Henderson and Mike Cienke were asked to help find homes for over 200 cats owned by a Kingsville, Missouri, couple. The couple had been collecting cats at their rural residence for several years.

When Ms. Henderson arrived at the couple's home, she found that the cats were deformed, diseased, or suffering from severe neglect. She filed a complaint with the Cass County sheriff's department.

The couple was subsequently arrested and charged with animal cruelty. A veterinarian determined that the entire colony should be euthanized.

A trial date had not been set as of the end of November.

OPEN FOR BUSINESS

The HSUS Northern Rockies Regional Office opened on October 1, 1991. The office is in Billings, Montana, and serves Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming.

Northern Rockies Regional Director Dave Pauli and Secretary Sylvia Lee have been busy responding to the immediate needs of the region.

HSUS members and supporters can reach the new Northern Rockies office at (406) 255-7161. The mailing address is Transwestern II Building, Suite 315; 490 N. 31st St., Billings, MT 59101.

COLLECTOR TARGETED

The HSUS Northern Rockies office has been working with the Animal Welfare League of Montana and others to curtail the activities of a Montana resident who admits to owning more than 350 horses and 75 dogs. Local residents have complained to local animal-control authorities about the condition of the horses. The HSUS led a team of professionals to the site to evaluate and inventory the malnourished horses.

Based on the evidence the team compiled, cruelty-to-animals charges have been filed. We seek improvements in feeding, veterinary care, and range-management practices. Unless conditions improve, we also seek a significant reduction in herd size.

We will work with local authorities to improve the care of the dogs and address the problem of animal collectors.
INVESTIGATOR HONORED

At the New York State Humane Association’s (NYSHA) recent awards luncheon, Mid-Atlantic Regional Investigator Bob Reder was honored for his participation in a rescue effort that alleviated the suffering and severe neglect of numerous animals.

KIRKPATRICK FETED FOR WORK

In September a reception was held in Princeton, New Jersey, to honor Dr. Jay Kirkpatrick for his work in pioneering immuncontraception for horses. Gov. Jim Florio wrote a letter of congratulations to Dr. Kirkpatrick on his being named as a semifinalist for Discover magazine’s Scientist of the Year award for his work on immuncontraception and its potential use in New Jersey. Nearly one hundred area residents attended, including state legislator Dick Zimmer. Funding for the initial project on immuncontraception has been received from the Morris County Park Commission, the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, and The Eppley Foundation for Research.

HSUS investigator Bob Reder receives an award from NYSHA’s Samantha Mullen during a recent luncheon.

TENNESSEE KILLING

After a heated argument with his mother, Charles “Chucky” Church of Bledsoe County, Tennessee, shot and killed his mother’s beloved dog. Ms. Church immediately contacted the South Central Regional Office and was advised to sign an affidavit that accused her son of intentionally killing the animal. Mr. Church pleaded guilty and was sentenced to eleven months and twenty-nine days in jail. He was required to serve ten days (the remainder on supervised probation). He was also ordered to pay $500 restitution to his mother.

STIFFER PENALTIES PROPOSED

S.B. 1638 and H.B. 1509, which would increase penalties in cruelty-to-animals cases, have been filed for consideration by the Tennessee legislature in 1992. They would reclassify such cases as Class A misdemeanors punishable by a fine of up to $2,000 and a jail term of up to eleven months and twenty-nine days. Fines would be awarded to local humane societies.

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HEALTH DIRECTOR FOUND GUILTY

Rutherford County, North Carolina, Health Department Director Cliff Fields was found guilty of cruelty to animals in the shooting death of a stray dog. Information provided to the local district attorney’s office by the South Central office proved instrumental in prosecution of this case. Mr. Fields, who, ironically, supervises the county’s animal-control program, was sentenced to a six-month jail term, suspended for one year. Mr. Fields immediately filed an appeal.

WORKSHOP UPDATE

The South Central office held a successful animal-protection workshop November 8–9, in Nashville, Tennessee. This event was cosponsored by the Tennessee Humane Association and the Animal Control Association of Tennessee. “Humane Solutions to Urban Wildlife Problems” will be held by the South Central Regional Office on April 3, 1992, in Greensboro, North Carolina. Write 109 Northshore Dr., Suite 400, Knoxville, TN 37919 or call (615) 588-1843 for details.
that this practice can be ended in Ohio once and for all. The HSUS has been fighting since 1968 for increased enforcement of the two sections of Ohio law that mandate humane handling and public accountability in dealing with the disposal of dogs in pounds.

Information concerning the use of dog dealers by Ohio counties should be promptly reported to the Great Lakes Regional Office (745 Haskins St., Bowling Green, OH 43402-1696) to aid in this effort.

Some pounds in Ohio continue to release dogs to dog dealers even though state law forbids such activity.

EXOTICS COMPLAINTS

Last fall, the Great Lakes Regional Office assisted in investigating cruelty complaints involving exotic-animal ownership and provided technical information to several localities attempting to regulate such ownership. We also assisted people opposed to "canned" hunts and to the opening of hunting preserves in their neighborhoods (see page 22). Work continues on legislation to be introduced soon in Michigan and Ohio that would improve the lot of exotic animals in those states.

DOG DEALERS DOG OHIO

The Great Lakes Office recently enlisted the assistance of the Ohio attorney general's office and the state auditor's office to try to eliminate business transactions between dog dealers and dog pounds in Ohio. Program coordinator Robin Weirauch met with officials to point out that, although Ohio law forbids the release of dogs to dealers or contracting with anyone other than a duly organized humane society for euthanasia services, several Ohio counties do so. Other counties are being solicited by out-of-state dealers. It is hoped

SHELTER INSPECTIONS

Gulf States Regional Director James Noe, accompanied by The HSUS's Phyllis Wright, inspected the Louisiana SPCA at the request of New Orleans city officials. Mr. Noe also inspected the Oklahoma City Animal Control and the Humane Society of North Texas shelters. Program coordinator Dorothy Weller responded to reports of substandard conditions at a central Arkansas shelter following the arrest of a shelter employee for illegally dumping animal carcasses on an adjacent property. An outpouring of community support for humane treatment of shelter animals resulted in immediate improvements being made. Ms. Weller's inspection of a small-town animal-control operation in Central Texas resulted in its no longer destroying animals by gunshot, the enrollment of the animal-control officer in a certification course, and an agreement to build a new facility.

HYBRIDS REMAIN RESTRICTED

The Gulf States office and Louisiana Animal Control Association have convinced Louisiana wildlife officials to withdraw a proposal to ease restrictions on the ownership of grey wolves and wolf-dog hybrids. In response to the increasing number of human fatalities caused by hybrids, six other states have passed laws severely restricting possession of these animals. The HSUS and the Louisiana
group argued that deregulation would contribute to the growing number of wolf-dog hybrids in private ownership. Eventually wildlife officials agreed.

**MEXICAN CHARREADAS**

After learning of the death of a horse at a San Antonio charreada, or Mexican rodeo, the Gulf States office began an investigation into such competitions. In Texas, they are sponsored by six charro associations and run from late spring to early fall. Some events require roping horses’ legs, tripping them while in full stride, or the twisting of calves’ tails, causing them to flip and tumble. The usual abuses found at western rodeos also exist. The Gulf States office will continue monitoring these events.

**PROGRAM A SUCCESS**

More than 250 conferences attended the sixth annual Connecticut animal-control training seminar, held at the Holiday Inn in Cromwell. “Rabies...It’s Here” was the conference theme.

**YET ANOTHER COLLECTOR**

In early November New York State Police, with help from the New York State Humane Association (NYSHA) and other animal-protection groups, seized more than 130 dogs and cats at an upstate New York “haven” for unwanted pets and strays. The New England Regional Office was asked by the NYSHA to help coordinate activities at the site.

After the arrest of the owner on animal-cruelty charges, volunteers found a number of neglected animals roaming in the farmlike compound.

Some kennels held dead dogs and cats, a number of which had been dead apparently for some time. Piles of fur and skeletons of cats and dogs were found on the ground, on top of cages, and in trash cans. Veterinarians found it necessary to euthanize 75 percent of the more than 130 animals. News reports estimated that more than 150 additional bodies were scattered around the property.

The majority of the surviving animals were taken to local humane societies.

**URBAN-WILDLIFE SEMINAR AHEAD**

On March 20, 1992, the New England Regional Office, the New York State Humane Association, and the New England Federation of Humane Societies will sponsor an HSUS wildlife-damage-control seminar in Springfield, Massachusetts.

If you do not receive program information by January 31, please contact the New England Regional Office (Norma Terris Center, 67A Salem Rd., East Haddam, CT 06423) for details.

**PROGRAM ELIMINATED**

The Georgia state agency that regulates all animal shelters, pet stores, boarding kennels, horse stables, and breeders has fallen victim to the state’s budget woes. In response, the Southeast Regional Office has launched a major campaign with local groups to convince the public that the cruelties of the dogracing industry outweighed potential financial benefits to the city.

In Birmingham, the coalition against dogracing was upset 20 to 1. However, it kicked off a well-organized publicity campaign two weeks before the referendum with a commercial showing the humane killing of an unwanted greyhound in a Massachusetts shelter. Unfortunately, two local television stations pulled the commercials before the referendum.

law in 1990, the Department of Agriculture had increased its regulation of animal shelters. The division provided invaluable assistance in cases of large-scale breeders or pet dealers who did not take proper care of their animals.

Unfortunately, the job done by the division cannot be taken over by individual counties. The local governments that had allowed inhumane conditions to exist at their shelters have already proved their inability to oversee their animal-control programs. Few counties have the knowledge to conduct inspections of kennels, stables, pet dealers, etc.

The agriculture commissioner has also proposed a repeal of the Animal Protection Act, which contains all regulations governing the humane care of pet animals in the state. We will vehemently oppose such a repeal in the legislature.

**BIRMINGHAM DOG TRACK DEFEATED**

Greyhound racing was dealt a severe blow in Alabama when a move to convert a defunct horseracing track to dogracing was defeated by voters. The HSUS successfully worked with local groups to convince the public that the cruelties of the dogracing industry outweighed potential financial benefits to the city.

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