HSUS STOPS COYOTE KILL

In late summer, Kansas City International Airport officials began a program to eliminate coyotes that had moved onto airport grounds. One coyote was trapped with a snare and killed by an airport security officer.

Midwest Regional Director Wendell E. Maddox asked airport officials to stop the killing and undertake an investigation to determine why coyotes were getting onto the grounds. Airport officials agreed.

Mr. Maddox and HSUS urban wildlife specialist Guy Hodge discovered large gaps in airport perimeter fencing and areas where coyotes had dug under the fence. They recommended that the fence be repaired and flashing lights and noise-making devices be installed to scare the coyotes away.

Airport officials agreed to have the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the state Department of Conservation conduct an environmental impact study to determine the extent of wildlife displacement. The study is currently under way and no other coyotes have been killed.

KENNEL OWNERS FACE CHARGES

As a result of charges stemming from a raid of their Topeka, Kansas, breeding facility, owners of the SSLC Kennel were convicted of cruelty to animals and violation of the state’s animal dealers law. They were sentenced to two years’ probation, 500 hours of community service, and $16,000 in fines and restitution. They are not allowed to own animals as pets or operate a business dealing with animals.

The kennel was raided June 19, 1990, by agents from the Kansas attorney general’s office, representatives of other state agencies, and Wendell E. Maddox.

This was the first conviction of a Kansas puppy mill for violating the animal dealers law, enacted in 1988.

On August 28, 1990, the Hockenberry Kennel in Arkansas City, Kansas, was raided and thirty dogs were seized. The owners were charged with violation of the animal dealers act and cruelty. A hearing on these charges was to have been held on September 18, 1990. However, a petition was filed on behalf of the owners requesting a restraining order against the state. The restraining order was granted and has stalled further action.

On October 5, 1990, the Akusa Kennel in Ottawa, Kansas, was raided and 126 dogs were seized. The owner was charged with a nine-count violation of the animal dealers law and with cruelty. The owner failed to appear at a hearing in October at which he was assessed $3,000 in fines.

HSUS AIDS SHELTERS

Kansas shelters have found themselves overloaded and underfunded while caring for dogs seized in puppy-mill raids. The HSUS has provided financial assistance to High Plains Humane Society, The Helping Hands Humane Society, and Kansas Humane Society in Wichita.

We have also provided food, vitamins, and flea collars to help restore these dogs to good health.

DEFEND IN SAN DIEGO

In a serious blow to those fighting the release of shelter animals for research, San Diego County, California, voters approved in November’s election a measure perpetuating pound seizure. Approval came despite efforts by the West Coast Regional Office, other humane groups, and HSUS members to defeat it. We believe this was not so much a vote of confidence for pound seizure as it was a vote of misunderstanding: the mea-
sure was so obscurely and innocuously worded that it might easily have misled the general public into thinking that pound animals are necessary to find cures for certain diseases.

The West Coast staff is asking anyone who did not get involved in the San Diego ordinance but who is interested in the pound-seizure issue in California to send his/her name, address, and phone number on a postcard with the words “I'm opposed to pound seizure, and I want to help” to the HSUS/West Coast Regional Office at PO Box 417220, Sacramento, CA 95841, (916) 344-1710.

LAST CHANCE TO CHANGE!

In spite of several prior notices, people continue to send mail to our old address. The forward on our new address is about to expire, so please check your records and change our address to the one above. Please discard any preprinted envelopes carrying our former address since mail sent to the old address may well end up in the dead-letter office in the future.

WASHINGTON WORKSHOP

Those responsible for dealing with urban wildlife problems won't want to miss The HSUS's urban wildlife workshop, to be held in the Seattle, Washington, area on March 22. Hosted by the Progressive Animal Welfare Society, this workshop offers solutions to the conflicts that can arise between humans and their raccoon, deer, pigeon, or bat neighbors. For more details, please contact the West Coast Regional Office at the address above.

L.A. BANS ANIMAL SACRIFICE

In September, the Los Angeles City Council voted to prohibit the sacrifice of animals for ritual purposes. Ed Fimbres, Los Angeles city attorney, had contacted Char Drennon, director of the West Coast Regional Office, earlier in the summer for help on a Santeria ritual slaughter of all animals (Santerians most often kill chickens, but satanic cults often slaughter dogs and cats). Violators of the new ordinance will face six months in jail and/or a $1,000 fine.

In August, West Coast investigator Eric Sakach testified in support of the ordinance before the City Council's Public Safety Committee.

GILL NETS BANISHED

One of the few environmental victories in California in the recent November elections, Proposition 132 deserves a round of applause! Prop. 132 will ban the use of indiscriminate and highly lethal gill nets from the last section of California coastline where they had been permitted. Waters south of Point Arguello, near Santa Barbara, will now be closed to gill-net fishing, sealing off the entire western coastline from Mexico to the Canadian border and above. The HSUS thanks our members and other activists for helping us assist the Committee to Ban Gill Nets in circulating petitions to put this measure on the ballot. Assemblywoman Doris Allen, who sponsored this proposition, also deserves our thanks.

ANYONE FOR WORKSHOPS?

The Gulf States Regional Office and the Texas Humane Federation will sponsor a regional workshop in Austin, Texas, March 17-19. This symposium is designed to provide humane societies and animal-control agencies with new approaches to solving problems of pet overpopulation, animal abuse, and staff motivation.

Gulf States Regional Program Coordinator Dorothy Weller has conducted several workshops tailored to the specific needs of local humane organizations. Among the topics available are animal behavior, discipline and fund-raising. Interested organizations should call the Gulf States Regional Office at (512) 854-3442.

A WELCOME TEXAS ADOPTION

Participating in the HSUS Adopt-A-Teacher program, the City of North Richland Hills (Texas) Animal Control Department adopted its entire community of teachers. Pam Burney, environmental services director, estimates that more than 1,500 children will receive the important message humane education brings throughout the school year.
PUPPY MILLS IN PENNSYLVANIA

Investigations by Mid-Atlantic Regional Investigator Bob Reder and local animal-welfare and state agencies point to the existence of numerous puppy mills throughout Pennsylvania.

HSUS Investigator Bob Baker, who has been instrumental in bringing the puppy-mill issue to the public, stated, "The conditions at the Pennsylvania puppy mills are as bad as those found in the midwest."

In October, WCAU-TV in Philadelphia aired an investigative profile of the puppy-mill situation in the Keystone state. Reporter Dennis Waitering went undercover with Mr. Reder to expose the conditions in which these animals suffer.

Mr. Reder also brought Jill Feldman of Philadelphia magazine to many of the larger breeding facilities; a puppy-mill expose was to appear in Philadelphia's December issue.

BANNED IN LOWELL?

The New England Regional Office has joined the Massachusetts SPCA (MSPCA) and the World Society for the Protection of Animals in calling for a ban on so-called bloodless bullfighting in Lowell, Massachusetts.

In October, New England regional staff observed two variations of the bullfights in Massachusetts. Although the spears used in the events are Velcro-tipped rather than spiked, bloodless bullfighting nonetheless subjects the bull to continual harassment and exposes participating horses and people to considerable danger.

A fight earlier in the year had to be stopped by MSPCA law-enforcement officers when the bull fell from exhaustion. Open wounds and scars are found on many of the bulls, most likely the result of poor transporting methods.

Caribou Project Abandoned

As of December 31, 1990, the Maine Caribou Reintroduction Project will have been abandoned. Thirty-two caribou have been released into northern Maine during the three-year project. Twenty-five are confirmed dead, and seven are unaccounted for. The New England office has been monitoring this project since its inception. We originally supported the concept of carefully planned reintroduction programs; however, in an April letter to Governor John McKernon, The HSUS's Dr. John Grandy requested a halt to the program and reassessment due to high caribou mortality. We are pleased that the privately funded project has ended.

TRAP-FREE ZONES

The HSUS joined with Connecticut animal-protection groups in bidding against trappers for trapping rights on state-owned land. Four parcels were successfully acquired and have been declared "trap-free" zones for the four-year tenure of the rights.
Serious allegations of animal cruelty and mismanagement have surfaced involving a north Florida animal shelter. The Southeast Regional Office and Escambia County officials conducted investigations into operation of the local animal shelter in the wake of reports alleging that employees were drowning puppies and kittens and that the facility’s carbon monoxide chamber was routinely overcrowded.

Interviews with employees verified many of the complaints. The county has since suspended the shelter manager and assistant manager without pay and ordered their removal from those positions. Efforts are underway to switch to the use of sodium pentobarbital to destroy unwanted dogs and cats and offer more professional training for employees. The county also is looking into the feasibility of building a new animal shelter.

It has not been determined if criminal charges will be filed.

With the devastation of Hurricane Hugo in 1989 still fresh in their minds, the staffs of South Carolina animal-control agencies and humane societies are preparing for future disasters. At a four-day workshop in November, more than 75 people gathered to develop a comprehensive plan on what should be done for animals before, during, and after natural disasters.

“The terrible destruction caused by Hugo caught most people off guard,” says Laura Bevan, regional program coordinator, who helped in Hugo relief efforts. “We hope to benefit from hindsight and deal with future disasters in a more organized fashion.”

Florida’s gopher tortoise population is rapidly decreasing, and questions are being raised about the effectiveness of the state’s strategy for slowing down that decline.

The game commission has proposed a rule that is supposed to give the agency greater authority to protect gopher tortoises. However, the plan allows permits to be issued for the “incidental take” of the animals during land development, with “take” meaning up to 100 percent destruction of tortoises and burrows on site. In exchange for the permit, the developer is required to supply the state with alternative habitat or money for each burrow that is destroyed.

The HSUS has requested that greater consideration be given to saving individual tortoises through relocation, stricter development regulations, and extensive habitat-protection measures.

A puppy awaits its fate in a dilapidated kennel at an animal shelter in Florida, where The HSUS investigated complaints.

Gopher tortoises are facing a rapid decline in Florida; The HSUS supports relocation and habitat-protection measures.

The forty-ninth session of the Animal Control Academy was held in Charlotte, North Carolina, in November. The eleventh-day course attracted thirty-six animal-control and shelter personnel. South Central Regional Director Phillip Snyder led a class on shelter standards and how shelters are viewed by the public. Other HSUS instructors included Dr. Randall Lockwood, vice president of field services, and Kate Rindy, associate, companion animals.

The South Central region will host two academy sessions in 1991. One will be in Fairfax, Virginia, in February and the other in Memphis, Tennessee, in May. For further information, contact The Animal Control Academy, 5126 A McFarland Blvd., East, Tuscaloosa, AL 35405, (205) 752-0058.

The South Central office has been conducting seminars, workshops, and presentations for many organizations throughout the region. These include the Tennessee Humane Association, McMinn Regional Humane Society, and Pellissippi State Technical Community College in Tennessee; North Carolina Humane Federation, Forsythe Humane Society, and New Hanover Humane Society in North Carolina; and Johnson County Humane Society, Lexington Humane Society, and Morehead Humane Society in Kentucky.