seafood—to stand with us against the hunt and sent new outreach materials to 10,000 producers, directors, and film professionals, among others, to generate support.

We arranged a partnership with vintage clothing chain Buffalo Exchange to promote our Coats for Cubs program, which distributes donated fur garments to wildlife rehabilitators for use comforting the animals in their care. We also directed People magazine readers to our Fur-Free Pledge with several full-page anti-fur ads. We took our message of compassion directly to designers, stylists, and celebrity trendsetters at New York City’s Fashion Week. To reach the next generation of fashion designers, we launched the first annual Cool vs. Cruel student fashion design contest promoting fur-free couture with the Art Institutes of America. And we organized the second Design Against Fur competition for art design students.

We focused our Hunting Issues campaign on canned and Internet hunting—in which paying customers shoot confined animals for a fee—with new print materials and public policy action. Our investigators exposed a tax scam through which trophy hunters wrote off their trips by donating mounted kills to pseudo-museums. And in Michigan, our volunteers secured a spot on the state ballot after collecting more than 275,000 signatures—116,000

I GREW UP IN A SMALL NEWFOUNDLAND FISHING VILLAGE, my house bordered on one side by a deep bay leading into the Atlantic and on the others by mountains and forest. In that wild landscape, animals were part of my daily life—the comical sheep who would spend the night in our yard, the friendly moose who lived among our cherry trees, the families of whales who swam through the bay.

But my most powerful early memory of an animal is of a seal. I was five years old. I’d turned on our television, and staring out at me was a fluffy white pup with luminous black eyes. My initial thrill turned quickly to horror as a sealer strode onscreen and brutally began clubbing her. I remember sobbing as I asked my mother what it was. She answered, “It’s the seal hunt, and we’re against it.” I didn’t know then how significant that moment really was for me.

Twenty years ago, most people thought the commercial seal hunt had been ended for good. But in the mid-1990s, the Canadian government subsidized its return, paying fishermen per pound of seal they killed. As the death toll skyrocketed, I swore I would do everything in my power to stop the hunt. Over the past decade, it has become my life’s work.

I’ve observed the hunt for seven years, documenting horrific acts of cruelty and exposing the images to the world. It’s almost unbearably hard to do. The pups, most less than a month old, are completely trusting and defenseless. The seals’ cries as they are beaten haunt listeners long after they have left the ice. Canadian law renders us powerless to intervene. We stand on the fleses with the only weapons we can legally carry—our cameras. I take some comfort in knowing that, for the sealing industry, cameras are the most dangerous weapons we could have.

Last year I was honored to join The HSUS, and a few months later I stood in the midst of the hunt with my new colleagues. I remember their courage facing sealers armed with knives and clubs. I remember how we moved forward, filming the dead and dying seals the sealers left behind. And I remember one injured pup, only three weeks old, raising her battered head. She had huddled next to a dead seal, trying to find protection in that small cold body. Her bewildered, agonized cries—which continued for the 90 minutes the sealers left her in agony—illustrated far better than I ever could why this terrible slaughter must end.

Experiences like these compel me to continue in this struggle. And even as I prepare to leave once again for ice soon to be stained with blood, I know we are winning. The HSUS is closing markets around the world for seal products, and our global boycott of Canadian seafood has already achieved the support of hundreds of distributors and restaurants and hundreds of thousands of individuals. And with the dedication of members like you, we will stop this hunt.

—Rebecca Aldworth, Director, Canadian Wildlife Issues, Wildlife and Habitat Protection

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