

HSUS Helps in Katrina's Wake

As the National Guard entered New Orleans to quell civil disorder coming in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, members of the HSUS National Disaster Animal Response Team (DART) worked their way into the nearly obliterated regions of southern Mississippi and Louisiana. The situation could not have been more urgent in both areas, with reports of animals locked in homes, kennels, veterinary clinics, and other locations. It was a race against time for our first responders on the ground.

Dozens of HSUS relief workers extended their reach into devastated areas of Louisiana and Mississippi, working to establish pet-friendly shelters, coordinating animal relief activities with local partners in both government and the nonprofit sector, and improvising solutions to a host of animal-related emergencies.

Phones began ringing at The HSUS almost as soon as Katrina struck. The HSUS moved quickly to set up a dedicated Disaster Call Center at its headquarters in *continued on page 2*

An airboat moves down a flooded New Orleans street September 5 with animal rescue workers, a rifle-toting guard, and several rescued dogs. With thousands of stranded pets in the city, HSUS rescuers were frantically trying to reach as many animals as they could.



KATHY MILAN/HSUS

HSUS Exposes Vermont Coyote Kill

Vermont is typically considered a progressive state, but a regressive activity—coyote contest hunts—has put a serious blemish on this reputation. These events harken back to the days of bounty hunters. This year's Howlin' Hills hunt, based in Whiting, awarded \$20 for each of the 46 coyotes killed, as well as additional cash prizes for the "top 10 heaviest coyotes" and the "lightest coyote taken each day." The grand prize was a trip to a canned hunting facility, where hunters pay for a guaranteed kill of a captive animal who cannot escape.

No self-respecting hunter would participate in activities as egregious as canned hunts or contest kills. Because coyotes sometimes kill deer fawns, they are frequent scapegoats of frustrated hunters, regardless of their actual impact on deer populations. Though such frustration may make coyotes easy targets, it does not warrant the kind of wholesale, unregulated slaughter inherent in killing contests. Large-scale slaughters are not even effective—removing coyotes can actually result in a population rebound because surviving coyotes may produce more pups—earning their reputation as wily, adaptable animals.

A grassroots group called Vermonters for Safe Hunting and Wildlife Diversity (VSHWD) contacted NERO when members learned about the hunt. A letter from The HSUS to Gov. Jim Douglas asking him to use his influence to stop the Howlin' Hills event went unanswered, so we sent a videographer to document this senseless slaughter. Since another hunt is planned for this winter, we



TRENT CAMPBELL/ADDISON INDEPENDENT

Coyotes killed in the state-wide coyote hunt in Vermont were laid out behind the Whiting General Store, which served as the official weigh-in station.

will continue to collaborate with VSHWD on ways to put an end to it.

In addition, The HSUS is working with VSHWD to create a "Contest Kills 101" action plan that will guide interested parties in addressing contest hunts in their area. The HSUS will also produce a packet that provides examples of humane fundraising ideas for small communities.

We'd like to hear about your experiences with contest hunts to add your information to our database and help work on humane alternatives. Please contact Kristin Leppert at kleppert@hsus.org or 301-721-6417.

Teaming Up for Disaster Training

It's 4:30 in the morning, and the Kennebec River is flooding in a small town on the outskirts of Augusta, Maine. Some 200 residents have been asked to evacuate and a pet-friendly shelter must be set up at the Augusta Civic Center to accommodate the arriving evacuees.

This was the mock scenario presented in the HSUS Emergency Animal Sheltering training last July. This live exercise, which included more than 60 students, three dogs, two cats, and several carloads of equipment and supplies, provided an opportunity for participants to apply new skills in responding to disasters.

The two-day class was co-sponsored by NERO and the newly established State of Maine Animal Response Team (SMART). Attendees received instruction in a wide range of topics, from establishing emergency animal shelters and working within the incident command system, to training emergent volunteers and handling the media.

All six New England states have addressed animal concerns in their state disaster plans. NERO will continue to support disaster preparedness efforts for all animals, and we have additional classes scheduled for Massachusetts in 2006.

For more information, go to www.hsus.org/disaster.

Participants at the HSUS Emergency Animal Sheltering workshop practice setting up a pet-friendly shelter.



RAVS's New England Debut

For one week in August, the Whiting Community Center—located in Maine near the easternmost point of the United States—transformed into a high-volume spay/neuter clinic. HSUS's Rural Area Veterinary Services (RAVS) sponsored the event in cooperation with a local animal group. By the time the last patient was discharged, approximately 270 animals had been surgically sterilized over the course of five days.

RAVS's goal is to provide free veterinary services to low-income pet owners in rural, underserved communities. The town of Whiting is located in the poorest county in Maine. Several hours east of Bangor, this area has a high unemployment rate and relies on seasonal industries such as fishing and blueberry harvesting. The closest veterinary practices and animal shelters are 40 to 50 miles away.

The week began with the arrival of a team of nearly 50 volunteers who included veterinary students, veterinarians, technicians, and NERO staff. The clinic provided spay/neuter surgeries for dogs and cats, as well as rabies and distemper vaccinations and humane education materials for adults and children. Volunteers got daily reminders of the difference they were making in the lives of animals and their caregivers: thankful pet owners who wiped away tears at the sight of the clinic, generous donations of food and supplies, and a hand-drawn thank-you card.

This event was truly a win-win situation. Veterinary students from schools throughout



Another satisfied customer picks up her cat, who was spayed during the Whiting RAVS clinic in Maine.

the country received hands-on surgical training and exposure to animal welfare issues, and disadvantaged pet owners—many of whom were stretching their limited resources to feed stray and abandoned animals—received veterinary care for their pets.

The Whiting clinic was a landmark event in more ways than one. Although RAVS has been in operation for a number of years, its outreach has focused on American Indian reservations and Appalachian communities. The Whiting clinic marked the first time that RAVS has come to New England, and we hope that the success of this event will translate into additional clinics in our region.

For more information about the RAVS program or to make a donation, visit www.ruralareavet.org.

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the nation's capital, and dozens of staff members suspended their normal duties to handle thousands of telephone calls and e-mails from around the country—many from people seeking urgent assistance as they tried to locate, recover, or keep their animal companions in the midst of the disaster.

On their first foray into the embattled city of New Orleans on September 4, members of the HSUS DART, together with animal control staff from the Louisiana SPCA, targeted animals stranded at the Superdome as their priority. There, they rescued dozens of animals relinquished or abandoned by desperate evacuees who fled the city to escape Katrina's rage.

The HSUS is helping place evacuated animals into adoption programs in Texas and other states. Working with local humane groups, rescuers saved more than 6,000 animals on the hurricane-ravaged Gulf Coast.

"The total number of animals lost to the storm will be difficult to detect for months," said Laura Bevan, director of HSUS's Southeast Regional Office and head of the Mississippi rescue effort. Tens of thousands of people and animals are still waiting for rescue and assistance. "This is going to require a massive, long-term effort," she said. But The HSUS is committed to the task. Emergency contributions are desperately needed.

To support The HSUS's animal protection efforts, go to www.hsus.org/join.

Legislative Update

For up-to-date reports on all the legislation affecting animals in the New England states, go to www.hsus.org/nero and click on "Legislative Activities."

Connecticut

- A bill to prohibit transporting a dog unsecured in the bed of a pick-up truck passed.
- Bills that would have banned elephants from traveling shows and the sale of puppies in pet stores both failed, along with a bill requiring outdoor shelter for animals.

Maine

- A law to secure permanent funding for the new "Help Fix ME" spay/neuter subsidy program will place a \$25 fee on every sexually intact dog or cat sold by a pet store or breeding kennel.
- A new law requires improved shelter and a minimum tether length for dogs who are confined in this way for more than 12 hours in a 24-hour period.
- The narrow defeat of last fall's HSUS-supported bear baiting referendum prompted the introduction of many bills to reform Maine's bear hunting laws. The Legislature instead elected to establish a committee to study the issue, which will include an animal protection advocate.

Massachusetts

- Dissection choice will be in the forefront again after Gov. Romney's veto last session.
- We'll also support a bill to close the loophole in the animal fighting law that

allows people to possess fighting paraphernalia and breeding animals.

- We'll be fighting bills that bring back "recreational" trapping and expand hunting opportunities.

New Hampshire

- Efforts to boost the financial stability of the statewide spay/neuter subsidy program were successful with the passage of a bill to increase the co-pay for participants.
- A new law also requires hunters to report the death or injury of domestic animals.

Rhode Island

- Lethal injection has now been established as the only acceptable form of euthanasia for shelter animals (replaces gas chambers); the new law also includes an exception for emergency gunshot euthanasia in the field.
- Pet owners and guardians will now be able to provide for pets who outlive them by creating trusts for their care.

Vermont

- NERO was appointed to a legislative study committee to evaluate the administration, enforcement, funding, and delegation of the pet merchant industry.
- Both Vermont and Maine joined several other states to ban the perverse practice of remote-control hunting over the Internet.

Send a Message to Trader Joe's

Unlike its competitors in the natural foods market, such as Whole Foods and Wild Oats, Trader Joe's still sells eggs from hens confined in "battery" cages so small they can't even spread their wings. These animals are so intensively confined that they never engage in many important behaviors, including nesting, perching, and dust bathing. Their lives are filled with immense suffering. In the past, Trader Joe's has been responsive to customer concern for animal welfare, but the chain is refusing to stop selling eggs from caged hens.

The HSUS needs you to call Trader Joe's at 781-455-7319 and ask the company to adopt a policy to sell only cage-free eggs.

During your next trip to Trader Joe's, talk with the store manager and request that the chain adopt a policy against selling battery cage eggs.

Please send us your Trader Joe's receipts, c/o The HSUS, Factory Farming Campaign, 2100 L Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20037. We'll send them to the company to show that their customers care about the welfare of laying hens.

I want to learn how I can help our animal friends and The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS).

Please send me information about

- Making a memorial donation to honor the life of a pet, friend, or relative.
- Providing for my pets in my will and in case of emergency.
- Planning my estate and will to help animals and The HSUS.

- Using charitable gift annuities and trusts to support The HSUS.
- Giving The HSUS a gift of stock.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

DAYTIME PHONE _____

E-MAIL (OPTIONAL) _____



Promoting the protection of all animals

THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES.

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Director's Report



By Joanne Bourbeau
*Director of the New England
Regional Office*

Campaigns Are Coming

With the many exciting changes and restructuring happening here at The HSUS, it's sometimes difficult for us to keep up with our own growth! I wanted to take this opportunity to update our members here in New England about one exciting development—the creation of our new campaigns department. It will focus on four areas of animal protection: factory farming, fur, hunting, and cruelty and animal fighting.

While we look forward to the development of tools and resources that both HSUS staff and members can use to spread our message, there are plenty of activities that come under the campaigns umbrella already taking place in our region.

From coyote killing contests and remote-control hunting in Vermont, to bear baiting and hounding in Maine, to pheasant stocking in New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Connecticut, controversial hunting practices have taken center stage here in New England in recent months. While the hunting "tradition" is fairly entrenched here, NERO is often called upon to help local activists put

an end to particularly egregious and cruel forms of hunting that have no place in our modern society (see "HSUS Exposes Vermont Coyote Kill" on page 1). Our hunting campaign will focus on canned hunts at the federal and state level; research and exposure of state-funded pheasant-stocking programs; youth, women, and minority recruitment to hunting; and contest kills.

The banning of gestation crates for sows in Florida and foie gras production in California were both monumental wins for animals that made national news. Massachusetts has followed suit with two bills that mirror these protections, and NERO will be actively lobbying for their passage. The goal of our factory farming campaign will be to help reduce the suffering of animals raised for food by promoting the refinement of abusive husbandry practices as well as the reduction and replacement of animal consumption.

In New Hampshire, NERO objected to a proposed wildlife control operator (WCO) rule that allowed land snaring and allowed WCOs to keep pelts. Despite our objections and supporting scientific evidence that shows how extremely inhumane snares are, the Fish and Game Department approved the rules. Our fur campaign will focus on outreach and advertising to the public, including consumers, retailers, and fashion designers, to reduce and ultimately end the use of fur and fur trim in fashion. We will also continue to apply pressure to the trapping and fur farming industries.

In the realm of animal cruelty and animal fighting, NERO has been and will continue to be very active. We were recently appointed to



ANDREW CUNNINGHAM/TUFTS UNIVERSITY

Thanks to an HSUS reward, those who attacked and burned Phoenix (above) were caught and prosecuted.

the New Hampshire Governor's Task Force Regarding the Humane Treatment of Animals, and continue to provide leadership to similar broad-based anti-cruelty coalitions in Connecticut, Maine, Rhode Island, and Vermont. Training and development of resources have also been major focuses for our office, and we regularly provide advice, assistance, and reward money to local law enforcement officials on individual cases. A reward that the HSUS contributed to in a horrific cat burning case in Uxbridge, Massachusetts, brought forth a father and son who ultimately admitted to the crime and are currently being prosecuted for animal cruelty. The goal of the animal cruelty and fighting campaign is to protect animals from cruelty and violence, including animal fighting, by working with individuals, law enforcement, prosecutors, and other professionals.

We're excited about the positive outcomes these campaigns will have for animals. We'll be sure to keep you informed about how you can help us along the way!

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