

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.

The presence of HSUS personnel was good news for nearly 130 dogs and cats in Gulfport, Mississippi. There, HSUS team members rescued these animals from the animal shelter of the Humane Society of South Mississippi, which was flooded by the combination of a storm surge with an overflow discharge of human waste from the sewage treatment plant next door. Some animals swam in their cages for hours, somehow managing to keep their heads above water. Others were not so lucky.

continued on page 3

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 MILANI/HSUS

PNRO Bucks Deadly Tradition in Omak

Every summer, the town of Omak, Washington, bears witness to a deadly ritual—the Omak Suicide Race. This year PNRO organized a team including HSUS investigators, video crew, and three equine veterinarians to observe and document the event that last year claimed the lives of three horses. Since 1983, 21 horses have died in the race, and an untold number have suffered injuries.

In the dark of night and with the sound of a starting pistol, the first of four races begins. Riders spur and whip their horses into a full gallop for 120 yards to the edge of Suicide Hill, where they plunge 210 feet down a 60-degree slope covered with loose, wet sand—an invitation for broken bones, serious injuries, and fatalities. The team observed several horses lose their footing on the hill and somersault to the bottom.

Horses who survive the dangers of Suicide Hill are raced into the Okanogan River, which is strewn with jagged rocks that often cause horses to trip and go under the water as they navigate the 100 yards to the opposite bank. More than one horse has drowned over the years, prompting organizers to keep a boat at the ready to euthanize downed horses or rescue unseated riders.

As the animals struggle out of the river, riders whip and kick them into a gallop up a gradual grade to the finish line 500 feet away. Although the entire experience may take as little as 36 seconds to complete, the surviving horses appeared exhausted, and our veterinarians observed several showing signs



KATHY MILANI/HSUS

Horses careen Suicide Hill during one of four races that made up the 2005 Omak Suicide Race. Of a field of 17 entrants, eight horses were injured to the point that they could not finish the event.

of lameness.

“This event forces horses into a hazardous and dangerous situation, inflicting emotional stress, terror, injuries, and possible death for the sake of entertainment, financial gain, and bragging rights,” said PNRO Director Bob Reder. The race participation bears this out. This year 17 horses entered the first race. Entries may race in all four races unless event veterinarians disqualify them or the owner pulls the horse out. The overall winner is selected by a point system. On the second night, the field was reduced to 11; the third night, 10; and on Sunday afternoon there were only nine competitors. Nearly half of the horses were either disqualified by the race veterinarian or could not compete because of injuries.

Given the negative attention the race now draws, it seems the event may be on its way out. Please support our efforts and those of many other animal protection groups in putting an end to this spectacle of cruelty. For more information, please contact our office.

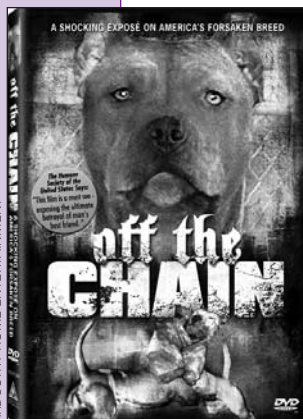
"Off the Chain" Reveals Betrayal of Man's Best Friend

President Theodore Roosevelt owned one. So did Helen Keller. This breed of dog was the trademark of Buster Brown shoes and RCA Victor. Petey was the canine star of television's "Our Gang." And Stubby was the most decorated dog in American history, having received numerous medals and the honorary rank of Sergeant for his services during World War I. What do these famous dogs have in common? They were all American pit bull terriers.

How did such a beloved breed come to be feared as a "public enemy" that is now banned in more than 200 counties and the entire province of Ontario, Canada? That's what director Bobby J. Brown seeks to show in his new film "Off the Chain," available on DVD from Ardustry Home Entertainment.

The film explores the evolution of the breed and gives viewers a disturbing look into the minds of the dog owners and trainers who participate in the gruesome world of dogfighting. Brown spent three years infiltrating the underground subculture of pit bull fighting, gaining the trust of well-established "dog men" who allowed him to film behind their veil of secrecy. But he also captured another side: the loving nature of the dogs and their brutal misuse by those who are supposed to be their caretakers. The HSUS's Eric Sakach is featured in the documentary.

Brown is donating to The HSUS one-third of the proceeds from sales of "Off the Chain" DVDs sold through The HSUS. To order, go to www.offthechainproductions.com/store and use the redemption code: HSUSOTC.



Animal Fighting In WA a Felony Offense

In October 2004, police raided the home of Eduardo Ribaya in Vancouver, Washington.

Authorities seized 21 pit bulls, a photograph of three pit bulls attacking a live boar, and various veterinary supplies and equipment associated with dogfighting. When the Vancouver City Attorney asked PNRO Regional Director Robert Reder to assist in the case, a weakness in Washington's animal fighting law became evident. Authorities charged Ribaya with only five misdemeanors because they did not believe there was enough evidence to meet the level of proof prescribed in the narrow scope of the existing felony law. At

a subsequent press conference in Vancouver, Reder promised that The HSUS would use its resources to help strengthen the law. On May 16, 2005, Washington Gov. Christine Gregoire signed H.B. 1304, making dogfighting and cockfighting class C felonies, punishable by as many as five years in prison and a \$10,000 fine. The law became effective July 1, 2005.

Sponsored by Reps. Tom Campbell (R-2) and Lynn Kessler (D-24), and unanimously approved by the Legislature, H.B. 1304 specifies that a person commits the crime of animal fighting if that person knowingly owns, possesses, keeps, breeds, trains, buys, sells, or advertises or offers for sale an animal with the intent that the animal be engaged in a fight with another animal. It also addresses the horrible act of taking a stray animal or stealing a pet for the purpose of animal fighting, training, or baiting for animal fighting. Until now, animal fighters from nearby states such as Oregon, where the activity is already a felony, would relocate their animals to Washington. Any fines and penalties incurred were simply considered the cost of doing business, because participants in animal fighting make large profits from gambling on the outcome of matches. The animal fighting language was successfully amended to the bill, which also makes it a crime of animal cruelty in the first degree if a person starves, dehydrates, or suffocates an animal to a point where the animal suffers unnecessary or unjustifiable pain or death. Neglect of this nature is now a class C felony.

The HSUS is grateful for the work and dedication of the sponsoring legislators and testimony given by prosecutors, humane officers, and animal protection advocates.



PNRO Director Robert Reder and HSUS lobbyist Jennifer Hillman (right) were present for Gov. Christine Gregoire's signing of Washington's felony animal fighting law.

Taking a Bite Out of Idaho Dogfighting

We're thrilled with the legislative victory for animals in Washington, but Idaho remains one of only two states that do not carry felony level penalties for dogfighting. Idaho is also one of only nine states that do not have a felony provision for extreme and intentional acts of animal cruelty.

Now, thanks to the ongoing efforts of our office, Reps. Tom Trail and Donna Boe, Idaho Humane Society Director Jeff Rosenthal, and the Idaho Department of Agriculture Animal Law Review Committee, Idaho's animals have a chance. Efforts are underway to reintroduce both felony animal fighting and felony animal cruelty legislation, but we need your support. Please contact your representative and voice your support for this much needed legislation. And check for introduced bills at www.hsus.org/pnro.

continued from "Katrina," on page 1

Those rescued went to Jackson, Mississippi, where the HSUS logistical team worked to place them with humane societies around the country.

Meanwhile, The HSUS, in concert with animal protection groups throughout the country, were heading to Gonzales, Louisiana's, Lamar Dixon Expo Center to work with the Louisiana SPCA in its efforts to rescue countless thousands of animals stranded in New Orleans. PNRO's Bob Reder and Inga Gibson were deployed to this facility and to Louisiana State University to help set up and manage two shelters housing 2,500 animals.

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

Get Ready for the Next Disaster

With Mount St. Helens smoldering, the Cascade fault line shifting, the potential for a Puget Sound tsunami threatening, and a region-wide drought raising the risk of forest and wildfires, we all need to be prepared for disaster. Sadly, animals are often the forgotten victims of such disasters, and most emergency shelters for people do not allow animals or provide for their care.

To prepare the region, PNRO presented emergency animal sheltering training, endorsed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The training included a mock disaster scenario and brought more than 70 participants from the fields of disaster response, public safety, law enforcement, and animal care and control.

In addition to professional training opportunities, The HSUS disaster services



PNRO's Inga Gibson (center) works with participants in an emergency animal sheltering exercise.

department works with local emergency responders, humane associations and shelters, and disaster volunteers. A network of trained and equipped volunteers available for nationwide response supports the program.

The HSUS also has information to help you plan for the needs of your animals before any disaster. Contact our office for more information, or visit www.hsus.org/disaster.

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 assistance. "This is going to require a massive, long-term effort," she said.

HSUS President and CEO Wayne Pacelle emphasized that rescue and relief activities in distressed communities of Louisiana and Mississippi will remain The HSUS's first priority in the weeks ahead. "We're just beginning to get a sense of the work that lies ahead of us," he said. "But we're committed to doing all we can."

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

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.



Promoting the protection of all animals

THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES.
PACIFIC NORTHWEST REGIONAL OFFICE
P.O. Box 88199
Seattle WA 98138-8199

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

DAYTIME PHONE _____

E-MAIL (OPTIONAL) _____

Director's Report



By Robert Reder
*Director of the Pacific Northwest
Regional Office*

The HSUS and Factory Farming

Farm animals are social, intelligent individuals who are as capable of feeling pain, frustration, joy, and excitement as the dogs and cats we welcome into our families. Unfortunately, most of the animals raised for meat, eggs, and milk in the United States are raised on factory farms, where they suffer as a result of intensive confinement and mutilation without painkillers, and their lives end with an inhumane slaughter.

The abuses farm animals endure are of particular concern to The HSUS, as animals raised for food comprise approximately 95 percent of all the animals with whom humans have a direct relationship in the United States. Indeed, nearly 10 billion land animals are slaughtered for food every year in the country—more than one million every hour.

In the states served by our office alone, there are approximately 9 million hens kept for egg production. Factory farmed egg-laying hens are confined in tiny, barren “battery” cages—wire enclosures stacked several tiers high and extending down long rows inside windowless warehouses. These caged birds have less floor space per hen

than the area of a single sheet of paper. Severely restricted inside the barren cages, they are unable to engage in nearly any of their natural habits, including nesting, perching, walking, dust bathing, foraging, or even fully stretching their wings.

Despite the fact that egg-laying hens are among the most intensively confined animal in all of agribusiness, they have virtually no legal protection from abuse. Chickens raised for food are exempt from both the Animal Welfare Act and the Humane Slaughter Act. Furthermore, customary agricultural practices, such as confining a laying hen to a space smaller than a sheet of paper for her entire life, are exempted from most states’ anti-cruelty statutes.

Despite the routine abuse endured by farm animals, especially chickens, and the lack of legal protection offered to them, there is hope that their plight will improve.

After working with The HSUS, natural foods chain Wild Oats announced in May that the stores will no longer carry eggs from caged birds. Whole Foods also announced this year that it will no longer sell battery cage eggs. Further, several universities have worked with The HSUS’s new Cage-Free Campus campaign to end their use of battery cage eggs in dining halls and school stores.

Follow the Three R’s: Refine, Reduce, Replace

Each of us can make a significant difference in the lives of farm animals and help decrease their suffering. Refine your consumption by avoiding the most abusive animal products, such as battery cage eggs, chicken meat, veal, and foie gras. Reduce your consumption of animal products. And replace your consumption of animal products with delicious, healthy vegetarian options. Visit HumaneEating.org for a free HSUS “Guide to Vegetarian Eating” to help you transition toward animal-friendly eating.

Contacting HSUS

Write:

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P.O. Box 88199
Seattle WA 98138-8199

Fax:

425-656-5999

Call:

425-656-9797

Web Page:

www.hsus.org/pnro

Promoting the protection of all animals

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 626-599-3817 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 St., N.W., Washington, DC 20037. We’ll forward them to the company to show that their customers care about the welfare of laying hens.

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