

## HSUS Helps FBI in Raid

It is believed to be one of the nation's largest illegal cockfighting pits. And in June 2005, HSUS staff assisted the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation, the Tennessee Highway Patrol, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture in raiding the Del Rio cockfighting pit in Cocke County, Tennessee, while a fight was in progress. Authorities arrested 144 participants on site for illegal gambling and cockfighting, confiscated \$40,000 in cash, and seized more than 300 gamecocks. According to law enforcement, hundreds of cockfighters regularly came to Del Rio from all over the country to fight their birds and gamble on the matches.

The pit was believed to be owned by the former president and current secretary of the United Gamefowl Breeders Association (UGBA), a tax-exempt organization *continued on page 5*

### HSUS's Melissa Forberg with one of the 300-plus birds rescued in an FBI raid.



Laura Bevan/HSUS

## HSUS's Massive Rescue Effort in Wake of Hurricane Katrina

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 in the stricken areas.

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

The rescue in Gulfport occurred as 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



Kathy Milan/HSUS

*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.*

with local partners in both government and the nonprofit sector, and improvising solutions to a host of animal-related emergencies.

But the devastated city of New Orleans was still waiting.

### Answering the Call

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 external communications, logging 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.

Many of the calls came from the afflicted city of New Orleans: A man who couldn't *continued on page 2*



**An HSUS team member bathes a dog rescued from flood waters.**

strikes. Moreover, The HSUS has been tireless in trying to persuade relief agencies and humane organizations of the need for animal-friendly shelter options in every community.

During the evacuation of New Orleans, rescue workers barred pets from buses, shelters, and other facilities. And the Red Cross does not

permit animals in its shelters. The harsh and depressing fact remains: In most disaster scenarios, people and their pets are often forced to go their separate ways.

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 HSUS has been working with local shelters to adopt those pets people may be forced to give up. "It's always hard," said SERO Director Laura Bevan, who is directing the Mississippi effort. "But sometimes it's necessary when large numbers of people have lost their homes."

But there is good news too. "I spoke with a gentleman today who evacuated with four cats and thought he was going to have to euthanize them, but we found them all a home in Galveston, Texas," said Lou Guyton, director of HSUS's Southwest Regional Office and head of the Louisiana rescue effort.

**The Ongoing Mission**

Estimates of the impact on wildlife, captive wildlife, and pets lost to the ravages of Katrina will take time to assess. "The total number of animals lost to the storm will be difficult to detect for months, as it was in the case of the Asian tsunami," Bevan said. Tens of thousands of people and animals are still waiting for rescue and assistance. "This is going to require a massive, long-term effort to help the animals and the people impacted by Hurricane Katrina," said Bevan.

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. We know that it's something that our members support, and we're confident that they'll demonstrate their faith by contributing in every possible way to the work that we're doing."

The costs associated with The HSUS rescue efforts are expected to vastly exceed the organization's previous major disaster responses, which include aiding the animal victims of last year's Asian tsunami and responding to the four hurricanes that hit last year.

To support The HSUS's animal protection efforts, go to [www.hsus.org/join](http://www.hsus.org/join).

**Hurricane Dennis Proves a Menace**

**T**he Southeast was impacted early this hurricane season when Hurricane Dennis came ashore along the same Florida coast devastated by Hurricane Ivan in 2004. In the end, Dennis proved menacing but not as damaging as "Ivan the Terrible."

In early July, when Dennis was churning in the Caribbean, HSUS Disaster Animal Response Team (DART) members mobilized and went to work identifying and preparing for potential relief needs such as animal food, rescue teams, and sheltering locations. They also tapped established partnerships that provide coordination among animal protection organizations, disaster relief agencies, and state and local governments.

More than 100 animals were moved out of the Humane Society of South Mississippi to the safety of shelters in Alabama and Georgia. At the same time, SERO worked with the Louisiana SPCA in New Orleans to help coordinate the evacuation of hundreds of its animals to shelters in Texas.

The disaster team also hauled its newest resource into action: a mobile unit that will stay in the Southeast throughout hurricane season. The new HSUS disaster truck and trailer serves as a mobile command post and medical suite.

*continued from "Katrina" on page 1*

contact a friend with whom he had left his cats. A woman who had boarded animals in a kennel, whose operators she could no longer reach on the telephone. The owner of the golden retriever Blue, saying he would grant permission to anybody he had to to rescue his stranded dog "by any means necessary."

**An Overwhelming Task**

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.

Once the base of operations was established in the city, animal rescue workers faced a grim and urgent challenge. Throughout the weekend, reports of animals in urgent need of rescue continued to pour into the HSUS call center and into other organizations mobilized in the region. "It's just overwhelming," Laura Maloney, executive director of the Louisiana SPCA, told a Knight-Ridder journalist. "There are countless thousands of abandoned pets in the city. And hundreds and hundreds are stuck inside their homes."

The separation of people and pets happens in every disaster, although in recent years, cooperation between The HSUS and the American Red Cross has led to some advances. The Red Cross has done much more to promote pet evacuation planning and to develop referral lists for those who are forced to relinquish a pet when disaster

## SERO Aids in TN Hoarding Case

Animal abuse is found in many forms and in many places. In June, SERO staff, joined by HSUS staff from Texas, Tennessee, and Washington, DC, traveled to the rural mountains of Bledsoe County, Tennessee, to assist the local sheriff's office in an animal cruelty investigation involving nearly 40 animals.

When local law enforcement and HSUS arrived at the property, the animals there were found suffering from malnutrition and skin conditions so severe that several dogs were virtually hairless. The animals' owners relinquished custody of the animals to the sheriff's office, and were later charged with cruelty to animals.

Animal care professionals removed 30 dogs, a rabbit, a duck, a pig, two horses, and three chickens from the property. Because Bledsoe County has no animal control or humane shelter, the animals were transported to the Young-Williams Animal Center in Knoxville, where veterinarians and veterinary students conducted health assessments, and volunteers gave each

animal affection and good food. Unfortunately, 11 of the dogs were in such poor health that they had to be humanely euthanized. The remaining animals, however, were transferred to other shelters, including the Humane Society of the Tennessee Valley, for rehabilitation and adoption.

The animals appeared to be victims of a condition known as animal hoarding. Animal hoarding is a tragic situation in which an individual acquires more animals than he or she is able to provide even basic sanitation, shelter, nutrition, or veterinary care for. The result can be starvation, illness, and even death. Often the persons involved are in denial of the magnitude of the neglect and its impact on the animals, the household, and the humans living in the home.



Laura Bevan/HSUS

**A volunteer with HSUS's Rural Area Veterinary Services examines a dog suffering from severe mange found along with nearly 40 other neglected animals in rural Tennessee.**

"Tennessee is a new state to the southeast region, and resources for animals are limited," says SERO Director Laura Bevan. "However, thanks to a collaborative, multi-agency response, these 38 animals are no longer suffering, and many have been given a second chance at a good life."

## Natural Foods Chain Puts the Chicken Before the Egg

Thanks to natural foods retailer Earth Fare and its 13 locations in North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Tennessee, thousands of egg-laying hens will not have to endure intensive confinement in cruel "battery" cages, wire enclosures so small the birds can't even flap their wings.

After discussions with The HSUS about the routine suffering of birds in the egg industry, Earth Fare agreed to stop the sale of eggs from caged birds in all of its stores,



joining the growing list of grocery chains and universities that have pledged never to purchase eggs from caged hens.

Chickens are intelligent, social animals who naturally spend most of their days foraging, nesting, and dustbathing, and their nights roosting. However, in the United States, approximately 95 percent of eggs sold come from the approximately 300 million hens confined in barren battery cages, unable to engage in nearly any of their natural behaviors and never once feeling the earth under their feet, breathing fresh air, or raising their young. Inside the restrictive battery cages, their lives are full of frustration and suffering.

Earth Fare President Mike Cianciarulo announced, "Because of our commitment to corporate responsibility and the humane

**Eggs purchased from Earth Fare will not contribute to the type of suffering endured by the laying hens in this photo.**

treatment of animals, Earth Fare is proud to have a policy against the sale of eggs from caged birds."

Just this year, Whole Foods Market and Wild Oats Natural Marketplace—two of the nation's largest natural foods retailers, both with stores in the Southeast—announced their pledges to eliminate the sale of eggs laid by chickens confined in battery cages. Similarly, several universities have also ended or dramatically reduced their sales of cage eggs, including George Washington University, Marist College, Vassar College, University of Arizona, University of Connecticut, and University of Rochester.

"Battery-caged hens are among the most abused animals in all of agribusiness," says Paul Shapiro, HSUS factory farming campaign manager. "Earth Fare has taken a positive step to help reduce animal suffering by pledging never to purchase eggs from caged hens; we encourage other grocers to follow suit."

# FL Animal Friend Plate Available

Florida's Animal Friend license plate is now making an appearance on vehicles around the state! After nearly three years of effort, the license plate is being sold at county tax collector's offices for an additional fee of \$25 a year, which will help fund future programs statewide to sterilize animals and, hopefully, reduce the state's pet overpopulation problem.

So far, the Animal Friend license plate is a hit with the public, becoming the highest seller of the 12 new license plates available in 2005. There is stiff competition though, with Florida offering drivers a choice of nearly 100 specialty license plates for their cars.

In May, Florida Animal Friend, the coalition of groups and individuals who worked so hard to make the plate a reality, celebrated with a gala event in Fort Lauderdale. The event brought together 300 people to honor State Sen. Nan Rich, who shepherded the Animal Friend license plate through its approval by the Florida Legislature in 2004. HSUS President and CEO Wayne Pacelle provided the keynote address and presented Sen. Rich with awards for her efforts on behalf of the plate and animals in general. Local media celebrities presented awards to SERO, the Florida Veterinary Medical Association, and the Florida Animal Control Association for their work as coalition members.



**HSUS President and CEO Wayne Pacelle helped celebrate the formation of Florida's Animal Friend license plate program with SERO Director Laura Bevan.**

If you are a Florida driver, look for the Animal Friend license plate at your Department of Motor Vehicles office when you renew your annual registration. Your purchase of the plate could help save dogs' and cats' lives!

For more information on the Florida Animal Friend license plate, visit: [www.floridaanimalfriend.com](http://www.floridaanimalfriend.com).

## Protecting FL Black Bears

A coalition of conservation and animal welfare organizations and individuals, including The HSUS, Defenders of

Wildlife, and the Sierra Club, is taking legal action to force greater federal protection for Florida's black bears.

In June, the coalition notified Secretary of Interior Gale Norton and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service that it will legally challenge the agency's most recent decision to deny protection to Florida black bears under the Endangered Species Act. The Florida black bear, a distinct subspecies of American black bear, historically lived throughout Florida and into Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi. Now an estimated 3,000 bears live in nine isolated populations, occupying only about one-quarter of their former range.

The primary threat to the Florida black bear is habitat destruction caused by increasing urbanization and other human development. In addition, bears are killed on roadways, by illegal hunting and poaching, and by sport hunting in Alabama and Georgia. The coalition hopes that a listing under the Endangered Species Act will provide Florida black bears with essential protections necessary to prevent further population losses.

"Once again, the Fish and Wildlife Service is relying on state agencies and local officials to protect these bears, even though entire populations of this subspecies are being exterminated on the state's watch," said Jonathan R. Lovvorn, vice president of animal protection litigation for The HSUS. "Without federal protection, bears in Florida will have no meaningful defense against a multitude of threats, including habitat loss, poaching, and even future trophy hunts."

### 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.**  
 SOUTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE  
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 Tallahassee, FL 32308

# "Godfather" of Louisiana Dogfighting Goes Down



One of Floyd Boudreaux's dogs, whom HSUS teams helped rescue.

Earlier this year, the national dogfighting industry suffered a huge blow with the arrests in Louisiana of Floyd Boudreaux, purported to be one of the most infamous dogfighters and breeders in the United States, and his son. A task force comprised of Sandy Christiansen and SERO's Jen Hobgood; HSUS staff from Washington, DC, Texas, and Montana; Louisiana SPCA employees, and state and federal law enforcement officers pooled resources and information to execute the raid. Fifty-seven pit bulls were seized from Boudreaux's premises, many showing scars and injuries consistent with this brutal blood sport.

While authorities collected evidence for Boudreaux's prosecution, animal care professionals removed the dogs and documented their physical condition. Industrial bolt cutters were needed to cut the heavy logging chains shackled to most dogs' necks. Later the dogs were transported to the Louisiana SPCA in New Orleans where veterinarians evaluated them and cataloged their scars and injuries. Unfortunately, because the dogs were trained fighters and a threat to other animals or children, they were humanely euthanized.

Boudreaux's lineage of dogs dates back almost 60 years. The dogs, who are sold sometimes for tens of thousands of dollars, are bred and trained to compete in vicious fighting matches. The HSUS estimates that more than 40,000 people across the country buy and sell fighting dogs and are involved in organized dogfighting. Many registered pit bulls currently used for fighting have allegedly come from Boudreaux's stock. Known as "Eli" dogs, the bloodline is considered the top choice for dogfighters. It is hoped that his arrest will lead to the eventual elimination of his line of dogs, and the "sport" of dogfighting altogether.

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representing the interests of cockfighters nationwide. The HSUS has asked the Internal Revenue Service to revoke the UGBA's tax-free status because it promotes illegal activities.

Staff from SERO and HSUS headquarters in Washington, DC, joined animal handlers from Spartanburg Humane Society in South Carolina to participate in the raid. "We found more than 30 birds who had already been fought thrown into the trash. Another 300 were waiting to be fought over the weekend," according to SERO Director Laura Bevan. "The Del Rio had a booth to buy cockfighting equipment and supplies, as well as an array of T-shirts promoting the illegal blood sport. Most appalling was a children's shirt for sale with fighting roosters right on the front."

Cockfighting is a misdemeanor in Tennessee, punishable by 11 months and 29 days in jail and a \$2,500 fine. Since 2002 a federal law has prohibited the interstate or foreign transport of fighting animals. Despite that, law enforcement authorities reported license plates from many states at the event.

"This is just the latest blow to the multi-million dollar cockfighting industry, which perpetuates animal cruelty and other crimes such as interstate gambling and drug dealing," says John Goodwin, deputy manager for animal fighting issues with The HSUS. "The message is clear that law enforcement is no longer willing to turn a blind eye to the barbaric practice of animal fighting and the crimes that come with it."

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

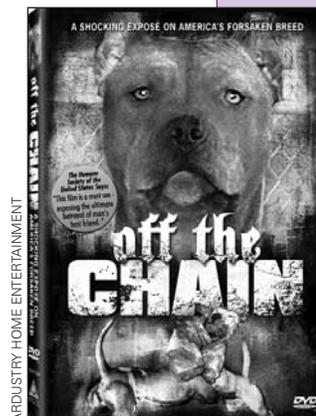
President Theodore Roosevelt owned one. So did Helen Keller. This breed of dog was the trademark of Buster Brown shoes and RCA Victor. Petey was the canine star of television's "Our Gang." And Stubby was the most decorated dog in American history, having received numerous medals and the honorary rank 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 generously 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](http://www.offthechainproductions.com/store) and use the redemption code: HSUSOTC.



# Director's Report



**By Laura Bevan**  
*Director of the Southeast Regional Office*

## More Goodbyes

In my last newsletter I wrote about all the changes that SERO had experienced in past months, and the hope that things would quiet down a bit. Well, that didn't happen, and more changes, both good and sad, took place.

In April, SERO Regional Coordinator Sandy Christiansen resigned to become executive director of the Spartanburg Humane Society in South Carolina. It was a blow to our small office, with two employees new to the job since January. Nancy and Jen, the new staff, have jumped in feet first and done excellent work, but we still miss Sandy and his expertise in dealing with cruelty cases and animal fighting issues.

In May, the night of the gala kickoff for the Florida Animal Friend license plate, my dog Pepper, whom I adopted after Hurricane Andrew, passed away. I left her that morning with the traditional doggie biscuit and instructions to eat it in her bed. She trotted off happy, and that is where she was found later. It was a shock for me, but a peaceful passing for Pepper, who was 15. We traveled a long

road together since 1992. She had a great life, but it is still hard to believe she is gone.

A happier goodbye came with the adoption of a little dog I fostered from Levy County Animal Control in central Florida. A smooth-coated Jack Russell terrier, Lily had a severe skin condition due to untreated allergies. Her back and tail were raw from chewing and scratching, but her charisma showed through. With foster papers in hand, she came back to Tallahassee with me.

Because of my extensive travel schedule, I haven't done much fostering. In fact, the companion animals at my house all arrived with the thought of finding them a new home—supposedly somewhere else. That came close to happening with Lily also. As her back healed and regained hair, her overall health improved, and she became the fun-loving, perky personality we suspected she would be. Visiting the office daily, she would make rounds of other staff, then settle in her bed for a well deserved rest. When I traveled, Nancy or Jen took her home. She adjusted to each new place like it was her own.

From the beginning, we posted her photo on the Internet, but her health problems prohibited a quick adoption. Just about the time I had convinced myself that Lily was destined to be mine, fate intervened. During a cursory visit to an adoption booth she found her new family. The man had been looking for months for the perfect dog as a companion, and Lily was it. She would now be an only dog (she never cared for my other dogs, and they weren't fond of the competition), with walks in the park and lots of personal couch time. Another goodbye, one mixed with some sadness, some happiness, and some envy that Lily would spend the rest of her life with someone else.

Goodbyes are hard. I am happy for Sandy and Lily. And I'm happy that Pepper was at peace in her own bed when her time came. But I miss them all in my daily life. You



Laura Bevan/HSUS

**Laura Bevan's mom holds Lily before she went to her adoptive home.**

would think that in 45 years, 18 of them with The HSUS, goodbyes would get easier. They don't. But if I never knew those people and animals, how much poorer my life would have been. So, as they say, let's not say "goodbye," but "until we meet again."

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