

## 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 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

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**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

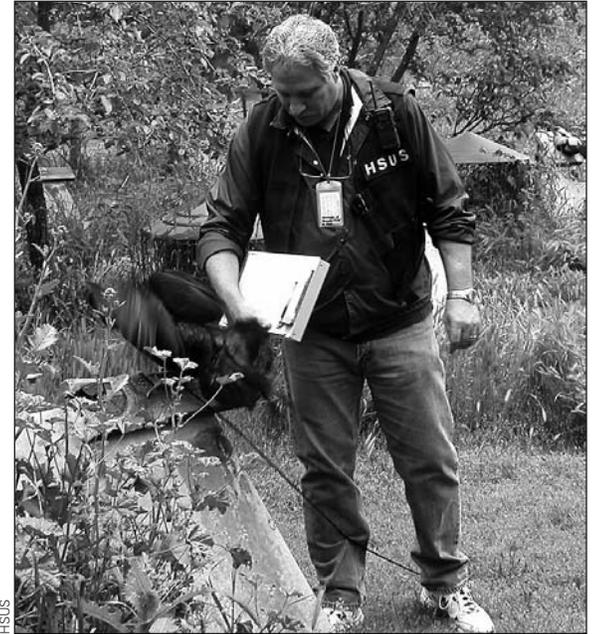
## Amador County Cockfighting Farm Shut Down

They allegedly showed up for a Sunday cockfight near Fiddletown, California, but instead of participating in bloodsports and gambling, 28 people were arrested by Amador County Sheriff's deputies, who caught some of them climbing down from trees where they had attempted to hide. The May 15 bust followed a year-long investigation into illegal cockfighting activities at the California Game Farm, a 10-acre property located near the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Among those arrested was the property's owner, Richard Warren Bohn.

"In addition to finding hundreds of razor-sharp slashers (knife-like implements designed to be attached to the birds' legs), officers discovered three bloodstained cockfighting arenas at the scene, along with firearms, drugs, and thousands of dollars in cash," said HSUS West Coast Regional Director Eric Sakach, who was present to assist deputies during the raid. "One suspect reportedly dropped \$4,000 as he attempted to flee," he said.

All the individuals arrested were charged with attending an animal fight. Some were also charged with possession of fighting cocks and cockfighting implements. About 30 others fled into the surrounding area.

WCRO was instrumental in the formation of an ad hoc task force to help investigate Bohn's alleged cockfighting operation and assist with the handling and documentation of animals during the raid. Authorities seized and removed 58 roosters, including birds



**WCRO Director Eric Sakach with one of hundreds of birds rescued from the California Game Farm.**

who had been brought to the location and a representative sampling of the more than 350 gamecocks found on Bohn's property. All of the remaining gamecocks were tagged, photographed, and impounded on the property by HSUS staff and personnel from Amador County Animal Control, with assistance from police and animal control officers from Stanislaus, El Dorado, Placer, Merced, Yolo, Tehama, and Sacramento counties, as well as the cities of Galt, Sacramento, and Lathrop. The HSUS also provided an emergency grant to Amador County's small, cash-strapped animal control facility to help defray the costs of sheltering and caring for the seized roosters pending trial.

Formal charges have since been filed against Richard Warren Bohn by the Amador *continued on page 4*



**Pai (now Kaya) with new owner Tessa Hall.**

## Pai in the Sky

**H**SUS's Rural Area Veterinary Services (RAVS) program helps thousands of animals around the country (and the world) by providing free spay/neuter surgeries, vaccinations, and veterinary care in some of the most impoverished places imaginable. While all these animals are

“special,” sometimes a case comes along that demands even more extraordinary care.

At only 10 weeks old, an adorable Australian shepherd mix had already given up. She was admitted to the RAVS Walker River Paiute tribe clinic in Schurz, Nevada, with bloody diarrhea, fleas, ticks, and little hope for a happy ending. Besides her physical problems, she was also homeless, and seemed to have resigned herself to a lonely, miserable end.

University of Missouri veterinary student volunteers Meredith Hall, Sonya Weissbach, and Amy Crowder had a different ending in mind. They wanted to nurse the pup they called Pai back to health and find her a home. But they had a big problem. Pai was too sick to fly, and they were returning home in two days.

Enter WCRO Program Coordinator Paul Bruce. Paul's heart went out to the pup (and the pleading students), and he agreed to take Pai with him back to Sacramento, get her the veterinary help she needed, then send her on to Missouri when her health

allowed.

Upon his return to Sacramento, Paul's friends at Loomis Basin Veterinary Clinic agreed to take her in. Over the next few weeks, the caring staff at Loomis healed her ailing body and began the even harder task of mending her broken spirit. After being hospitalized for nearly three weeks, Pai was finally ready for the long journey to her foster home in St. Louis.

Meredith Hall's mother, Denise, and younger sister, Tessa, agreed to foster Pai until her “forever” home could be found. But the “foster” part vanished almost instantly when they met Pai. Tessa and Kaya, as she is now known, formed an instant bond and have been inseparable ever since. Kaya will be enrolled in agility training later this year. “She is very smart,” said Meredith. “She seems destined to succeed on the agility course. We all love her very much.”

Our heartfelt thanks go out to the Hall family; Sonya; Amy; RAVS Director Eric Davis; Drs. Cherrstrom, Frye, Hess, Vellutini and Liu at Loomis Basin Veterinary Clinic; and all the other folks along the way who contributed to this happy ending.

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

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 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.

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 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



PAUL TURNER/HSUS

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

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.

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

## Preparing for Disaster

**D**isaster preparedness is an ongoing priority for our office. To that end, WCRO's Curt Ransom and Paul Bruce helped organize and participate in a well-attended and highly successful HSUS/DART (Disaster Animal Response Team) training workshop held June 25–26 in Orange County, California. The course attracted 79 attendees from northern and southern California, and included animal sheltering, human and animal safety, legal issues, field communications, media relations, damage assessment, small and large animal handling, and much more. A mock disaster scenario using live dogs and miniature horses gave participants hands-on experience.

Special thanks goes to local Huntington Beach volunteer Susan Keyes-Huegle, who acquired locations, speakers, pre-registrations, and equipment for the animal handling portions of the training.

DART training will again be held in southern California in 2006, and we are also looking for venues in northern California. For more about disaster training and preparedness, please visit [www.hsus.org/disaster](http://www.hsus.org/disaster).

## Tiger Abuser Finally Sentenced

**O**n July 18th, John H. Weinhart, former owner of Tiger Rescue, was sentenced to two years in county jail and five years of probation for his February 22, 2005, conviction of 56 counts of animal cruelty, which included 14 felonies. He is also to receive psychological counseling and attend anger management and parenting classes. Mr. Weinhart had been in custody since February. The conviction is a result of an animal saga that began on April 22, 2003, when more than 90

animals were discovered on Weinhart's property, including 70 tigers. Over the past two years all the tigers were relocated to several sanctuaries in California, Colorado, and Texas. During this time, the Fund for Animals (now merged with The HSUS) was instrumental in caring for adults and cubs alike, and raising money to create a suitable, permanent home for the cats.

"We were pleased that some jail time was included," said Michael Markarian, executive vice president of The HSUS. "It sends a strong message that if you abuse animals, you don't get a slap on the wrist; you go to jail." Judge Taylor also ordered that Weinhart not own, possess, care for, or volunteer in a place with animals, and that he stay 50 yards away from exotic cats.

For more about this amazing story of law enforcement and animal agency cooperation, as well as video showing how the tigers are doing, go to [www.hsus.org](http://www.hsus.org) and the PAWS (Performing Animal Welfare Society) Web site at [www.pawsweb.org](http://www.pawsweb.org).



JANICE CLARK/PERFORMING ANIMAL WELFARE SOCIETY

*One of the tigers rescued in the Weinhart case now enjoys life at a specially created sanctuary operated by Performing Animal Welfare Society.*

## 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.**

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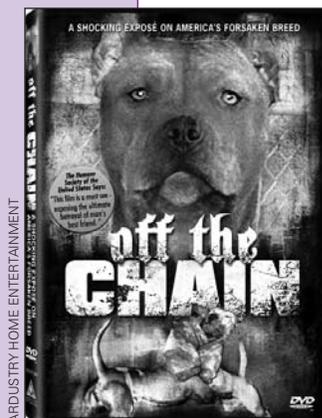
## “Off the Chain” Reveals Betrayal of Man’s Best Friend

**P**resident 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. WCRO Director 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.



## Is Your Cat Safe at Home?

**S**core it a double, as HSUS and the Sacramento River Cats teamed up with local animal care agencies for the second year to promote The HSUS's Safe Cats campaign, aimed at getting cat owners to keep their furry friends “safe at home.”

The promotion began with Sacramento Mayor Heather Fargo pronouncing March Safe Cats month, and culminated with a game between the Sacramento River Cats and the Colorado Sky Sox in June. Members of nine local animal care agencies were in attendance.



WCRO Director Eric Sakach (center) joins Sacramento River Cats mascot Dinger as he autographs a Safe Cats T-shirt for a young fan.

WCRO had a booth at the game and provided T-shirts and brochures informing baseball fans about the dangers of allowing their feline friends to roam free. Besides brochures, WCRO provided cat toys, magnets, and an autograph session with Dinger, the River Cats feline mascot. Kids, including a number of Girl Scouts, lined up for autographs and a chance to meet their favorite feline.

WCRO Program Coordinator Paul Bruce spent the fourth and fifth innings being interviewed by the voice of the River Cats, Johnny Doskow, during the radio broadcast of the game. Bruce and Doskow dispelled some of the myths about free-roaming cats and outlined many of the reasons why a safe cat is a happy cat.

*continued from “Cockfighting,” page 1*

County District Attorney's Office, listing Gina May Bohn and Robert Edward Wendell as co-defendants. They each face one felony charge of alleged conspiracy to engage in cockfighting. According to Amador County District Attorney Todd Riebe, the conspiracy charge was based on the alleged commission of five overt acts related to cockfighting: communicating to others that there would be a cockfight on the property, collecting admission fees, admitting other fighting birds to the property, weighing and tagging birds with numbered bands, and drafting a fighting schedule board displaying the weight and band numbers of the birds.

The trio was arraigned June 15 in Amador Superior Court.

“WCRO will continue to work with the Amador County Sheriff's Department and District Attorney's Office to ensure that Bohn is prosecuted to the full extent of the law,” noted Sakach.

Other charges filed against the Bohns and Robert Wendell include misdemeanor possession or training of fighting animals, possession of cockfighting implements, and possession of a bird or animal for fighting. Richard and Gina Bohn are further charged with felony counts of maintaining a place for wagering and three counts of contributing to the delinquency of a minor.

Sakach believes the felony charges are a good sign. California, he explained, “has become a bit of a refuge for cockfighting” because the crime is only a misdemeanor in the state. As a result, “cockfighters often locate in California rather than in neighboring states, all of which have made cockfighting a felony.”

But a new bill, S.B. 156, sponsored by state Sen. Nell Soto, seeks to remedy this situation. If passed, the legislation will allow felony charges for specified second or subsequent offenses related to cockfighting. S.B. 156 passed the Senate on May 31, and is now under consideration in the Assembly.

# Legislative Update

For up-to-date reports of proposed legislation in California, Hawaii, and Nevada, go to WCRO's Web page at [www.hsus.org/wcro](http://www.hsus.org/wcro). Click on the "Legislative Activities" link and then on your state.

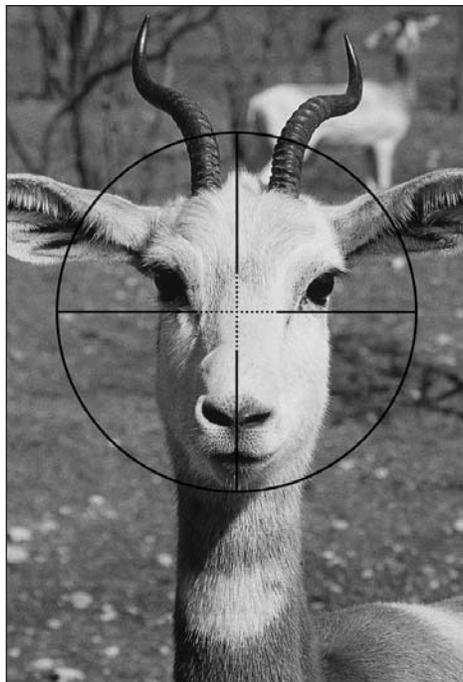
## California

■ **Felony provisions for animal fighting.** Our regional office sponsored S.B. 156, which increases the penalty for a second or subsequent violation of the animal fighting statute from a misdemeanor to an offense that can be prosecuted either as a felony or a misdemeanor. S.B. 156, authored by Sen. Nell Soto, passed the Senate, and just when we thought everything was a go, the Assembly Appropriations Committee deleted the felony provisions. We hope to add felony provisions back in in 2006. Let your local legislator know that only a felony deterrent will help curb these acts of violence.

■ **Breed specifics for dangerous dogs.** S.B. 861 was amended by Sen. Jackie Speier in response to a series of pit bull attacks in northern California, one resulting in the death of a 13-year-old boy in San Francisco. Originally this bill was about a completely different subject matter, but it was amended when it got to the Assembly and now authorizes cities and counties to pass breed-specific laws on spay/neuter and breeding. Those implementing such programs must compile quarterly information on dog bites. Contrary to concerns expressed by some people, S.B. 861 does not allow an entire breed to be declared potentially dangerous or vicious. In its new amended form S.B. 861 passed the Assembly, went to the Senate, and was rereferred back to the Assembly Committee on Local Government.

■ **Internet hunting deleted.** Awaiting Gov. Schwarzenegger's signature, S.B. 1028 makes it unlawful:

- for any person subject to the jurisdiction of the state to take birds or mammals, located both in and out of state, by means of computer-assisted remote hunting;
- to establish or operate a computer-assisted remote hunting site in the state for the purpose of permitting the taking



of any bird or mammal;

- to possess or confine any bird or mammal in furtherance of an activity prohibited by the bill; and
- to import or export any bird or mammal, or any part thereof, taken by computer-assisted remote hunting.

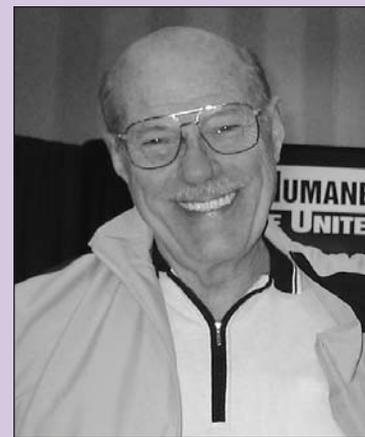
## Hawaii

■ **Pet trusts.** H.B. 1453, which establishes the right to establish a pet trust in a written will, is the only specific law to pass the Hawaii Legislature this session that directly affects animals.

Several animal bills that failed or died in legislative committees would have established felony provisions for animal cruelty, prohibited inhumane trapping, Internet hunting, dog breed discrimination, and the killing of dogs and cats for sale of their meat.

## Nevada

■ **Cruelty to service animals in training prohibited.** S.B. 36 prohibits a person from allowing any animal he or she controls to interfere with a service animal or service animal in training. The law requires a court to order that certain restitution be made to the victim in addition to criminal penalties. S.B. 36 was signed into law on May 31.



## In Memorium: Frantz Dantzer, 1938–2005

Frantz L. Dantzer, whose career with The HSUS spanned 43 years, died in a South Bend, Indiana, hospital on June 18, 2005, after an accidental fall at his home. Dantzer's professional progress mirrored the evolution of The HSUS itself.

He worked at two HSUS state branch affiliates, in Colorado and Utah, and served as a regional director in three different locations including the West Coast Regional Office. Dantzer spent nearly 10 years in Washington, DC, as the head of The HSUS's field services and investigations division, and in the last stage of his career, supported ongoing investigations by managing video-tape evidence and maintaining equipment used by colleagues all over the United States. Dantzer dedicated his life to protecting animals long before the issues he advocated became part of mainstream American values. In July, a memorial service for Dantzer was held on the grounds at The HSUS offices in Gaithersburg, Maryland, where a tree has been planted in his memory.

For more about the life and accomplishments of Frantz Dantzer, please go to [hsus.org](http://hsus.org) and enter "Dantzer" in the search engine.

# Director's Report



**By Eric Sakach**  
*Director of the West Coast  
Regional Office*

## Actions Speak Louder Than Words

In May, a seven-month investigation by the U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) concluded that the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR), mistreated and neglected research animals. The federal agency cited the school for 46 federal animal welfare violations between May 2004 and March 2005. Violations included repeatedly leaving 10 pigs with inadequate water and housing, poor sanitation at animal care facilities, lack of veterinary care, and failure to investigate complaints of animal neglect.

University officials agreed to pay a \$11,400 fine to settle the case, but said they disagreed with some of the agency's findings.

University President John Lilley was quoted as saying that the school has addressed the USDA's concerns and is "firmly committed to the appropriate treatment of animals under our care."

The investigation began last summer after UNR associate professor Hussein S. Hussein, an internationally known animal nutrition researcher, complained to the USDA that research animals were being abused and that dozens of sheep had died as a result.

Despite months of front-page

investigative reporting by "Reno Gazette-Journal" reporter Frank Mullen, university officials continually denied that any research animals were mistreated and claimed the case stemmed from false claims made by a disgruntled faculty member. The university accused Hussein of violating research protocols by asking an independent veterinarian to examine pigs he believed were being abused.

Hussein noted that the USDA report revealed that the university animal oversight committee had failed to investigate his complaints and follow other rules. A UNR hearing officer and review panel has since declared the charges against Hussein to be groundless and recommended that they be dismissed.

Hussein has filed two lawsuits in federal court against the university, Lilley, and other administrators accusing them of seeking reprisals and trying to fire him because he complained. Both lawsuits are pending.

This whole shameful and embarrassing matter won't be put to rest unless university officials are completely honest and sincerely contrite for their roles in allowing animals to suffer needlessly.

I'm betting that Nevadans who care about animals and how they are treated won't rest either until that happens.

## Expo Is Goin' to Disneyland!

Join us in Anaheim, California, March 8-11, 2006, at the Disneyland Hotel for the excellent workshops and networking Animal Care Expo is known for. Visit [www.animalsheltering.org/expo](http://www.animalsheltering.org/expo) for details.



## Call on 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 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. We'll send them to the company to show that their consumers care about the welfare of laying hens. Send receipts to: The Humane Society of the U.S., Factory Farming Campaign, 2100 L Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20037.

The *WCRO Regional News* is a publication of The Humane Society of the United States, West Coast Regional Office, P.O. Box 417220, Sacramento, CA 95841-7220; 916-344-1710. Eric Sakach, director. The office is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and is closed on federal holidays. © 2005 by The Humane Society of the United States. All rights reserved. A COPY OF THE LATEST REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION FILED BY THE HSUS MAY BE OBTAINED BY CONTACTING THE HSUS, OFFICE OF THE TREASURER, 2100 L ST., NW, WASHINGTON, DC 20037, 202-452-1100. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT. Printed on recycled paper.

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