

AWI

Quarterly

Summer 2005 Volume 54 Number 3





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ABOUT THE COVER

The Toklat wolves of Alaska's Denali National Park are among the most-studied and well-known animals around the world (photo by Daniel J. Cox). Unfortunately, they have endured horrific tragedies in recent months, with the deaths of several pack members due to trapping and hunting occurring in close proximity. These beautiful creatures deserve a safe haven (see story, page 7).

The Society for Animal Protective Legislation has fought for improved laws for wolves and other animals in the wild since it was formed half a century ago. Banning steel-jaw leghold traps and lobbying for protection of species threatened with extinction are two of the Society's main efforts. In the last issue, the Animal Welfare Institute reported on the problem of aerial or land-and-shoot hunting of wolves, as well as the threat to animals from potential drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (*AWI Quarterly*, Spring 2005). We hope Alaska's wolves will receive needed security before it is too late, as they are much maligned and endangered in the rest of the United States.

House Helps Horses: Representatives vote against horse slaughter

American horses may soon be safe from slaughter, thanks to two recent landmark votes in Congress. The first prohibits the use of taxpayer dollars to fund the slaughter of wild horses, and the second goes even further by stopping the use of these funds to slaughter any horse in the United States. Sponsored by Congressmen John Sweeney (R-NY), Nick Rahall (D-WV), Ed Whitfield (R-KY) and John Spratt (D-SC), these requirements—attached to appropriation bills—will go into effect for one year at the beginning of the fiscal year in October, if adopted in the Senate and signed into law by the President.

The Society for Animal Protective Legislation (SAPL) and the Doris Day Animal League embarked on a campaign to end the butchering of horses over four years ago, with support from horse industry groups, the humane community and Members of Congress. Compassionate celebrities such as Willie Nelson, Whoopi Goldberg, Toby Keith, Shania Twain, Tony Curtis and Bo Derek have aided our lobbying efforts by giving their names and time to the cause. Thanks to the financial support of an anonymous donor, we were able to publicize our fight with a half-page ad in the May 6, 2005 *New York Times*. Beth Stewart and Todd Landaker generously donated their time and considerable talents in designing the ad.

These latest votes are a tremendous stride in the right direction. It is critical for us to work together to maintain the pressure on Congress right now. We will continue pursuing all possible avenues to achieve a permanent end to the slaughter of all horses for human consumption, and we encourage you to continue pressing both of your Senators and your Representative on the issue.

You may wish to remind your legislators of the misery endured by horses during transport and slaughter. The potential of horse theft for sale to slaughter as a source of easy money is yet another concern. They might be interested to know that our taxpayer dollars must pay for US Department of Agriculture employees to work at these foreign-owned slaughter plants; banning horse slaughter would result in significant savings. Please send us copies of any responses you receive to assist us in our lobbying efforts. 🐾



Animal Welfare Institute

QUARTERLY

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courtesy of Tami Drake

All aboard the whale bus! AWI teamed up with other US groups to spread the word about the threats whales face (see story, pages 4-5).



Amazon Conservation Team

This *Osteocephalus buckleyi* frog is threatened by habitat destruction in Colombia (see story, page 9).



John Sainz

Pigeons in research facilities typically live in single-bird housing (see story, pages 14-15).

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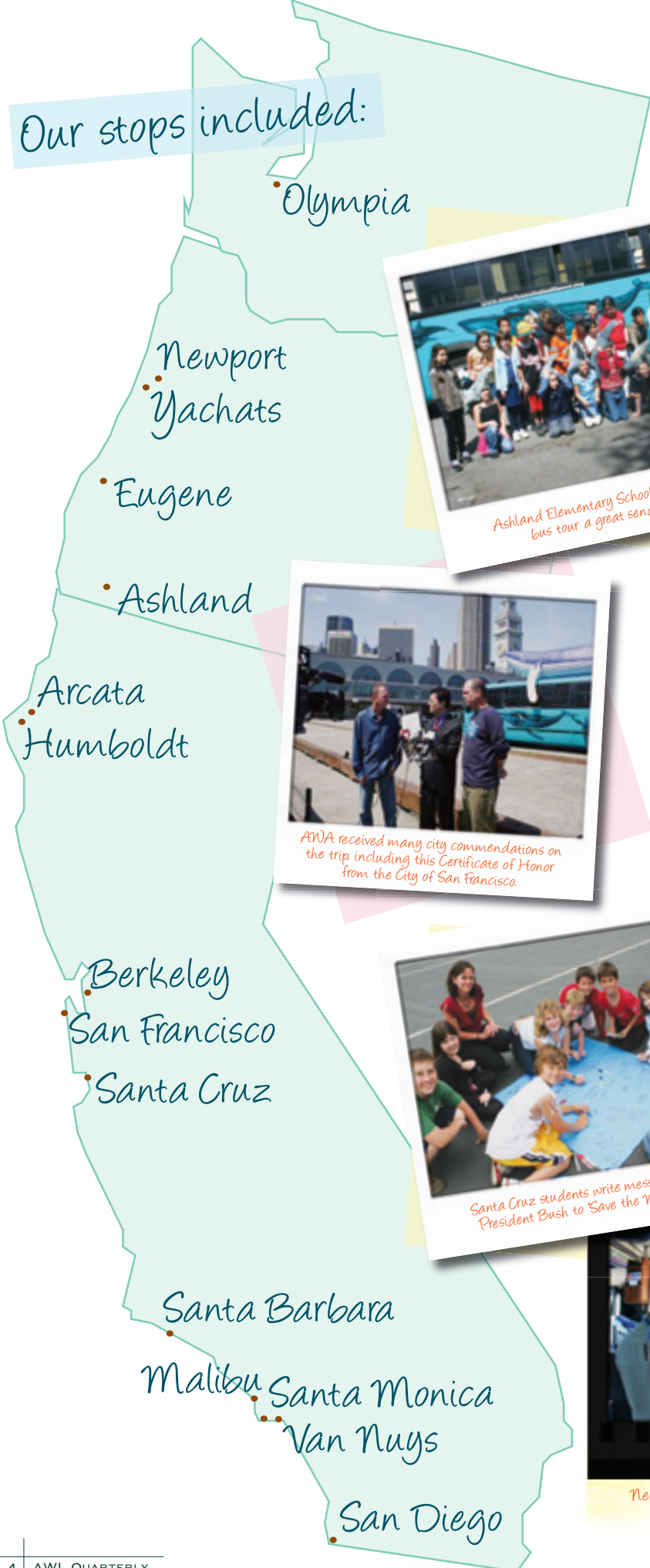
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America's Whale Alliance Tours the West Coast

Our stops included:



Ashland Elementary School gives the bus tour a great send off.



AWA received many city commendations on the trip including this Certificate of Honor from the City of San Francisco.



Santa Cruz students write messages to President Bush to 'Save the Whales.'



News crews and kids alike were interested in the AWA film documentaries.

The Animal Welfare Institute (AWI) is proud to be a supporting member of America's Whale Alliance (AWA). This coalition of over 80 US groups was founded by Ocean Defense International in response to the apparent change of direction of the US government regarding its opposition to the resumption of commercial whaling. *AWI Quarterly* readers may remember that although the US delegation to the International Whaling Commission (IWC) claims it opposes commercial whaling, it is actively negotiating the completion of the Revised Management Scheme (RMS), the rules for commercial whaling. We maintain that one cannot oppose commercial whaling while actively negotiating the rules for its resumption.

In February, AWA decided to hit the streets to spread the message that "The Whales are not Saved" and the US government has a pivotal role in ensuring the animals' survival. The result was the unprecedented "Stop Whaling!" bus tour, which garnered incredible support from West Coast residents in April. A 35-ft. long California municipal bus was transformed into a whale bus by dedicated volunteers who worked tirelessly for weeks. It was converted to run on bio-diesel and looked splendid when topped off with AWA's inflatable whale, the granddaughter of the original "Flo" of "Save the Whales" fame, provided by our good friend, John Perry.

The bus became a traveling exhibit, decked out with audio-visual equip-

ment showing short films provided by the Whaleman Foundation, and playing whale songs courtesy of the Cetacean Society International. Posters describing whale species and the threats they face lined the internal walls. A mobile kid's station included touchable models of the great whales and crafting equipment to encourage the children's creativity. The all-volunteer crew included a staff teacher to lead the children's programs and dedicated whale enthusiasts on hand at all the events to answer questions about whales and the threats they face. Various literature was distributed, including an anti-whaling leaflet and a postcard for concerned citizens to complete and send to President Bush.

The tour kicked off at Walker Elementary School in Ashland, Ore., where Mayor John Morrison presented a proclamation opposing the adoption of the RMS and supporting the continuation of the moratorium on commercial whaling. The tour purposefully coincided with Earth Day events, including WorldFest in Van Nuys and celebrations in Berkeley and Santa Monica, Calif. At each stop, the bus and Flo were very successful—thousands of people toured the exhibits, signing postcards and a petition against the adoption of the RMS.

City leaders also gave their support. In Santa Monica, AWA was presented with a Certificate of Commendation from city council member Kevin McKeown. In Santa Cruz,

Mayor Mike Rotkin proclaimed April 22 as "Whale Conservation Day," and presented yet another proclamation against the resumption of commercial whaling to the team. AWA visited numerous schools, including Westlake Elementary School, Arcata Elementary School and Garfield Elementary School. Students at Humboldt University heard about the tour and invited the team to come to a whale rally. In Newport, Ore., the group marched in a city parade. Media coverage was great, with interviews and spots on various local television stations and newspapers.

The IWC meeting is held June 20-24 in Ulsan, South Korea. The future of the Commission as a whale conservation organization may rest on its outcome, and we will provide a full report in the fall issue of the *AWI Quarterly*. Whatever the result, AWA is planning a cross-country trip, followed by an East Coast bus tour next spring. Please contact AWA if you would like to receive postcards for yourself, family and friends to send to President Bush calling upon the US government to withdraw its support for the RMS, and urging the use of all applicable domestic laws to enforce the existing moratorium. If you would like to participate at one of the bus tour events planned for next year, please contact us and we will try and make a stop in your town or school. 🐾



The whale bus was a hit at WorldFest in Van Nuys, Calif.



The 'Save the Whales' brochure and postcard feature this wonderful image of a breaching humpback, photographed by Jeff Pantukhoff of Whaleman Foundation.



Educational posters about whales and whaling adorned the inside of the bus.

photos courtesy of Tami Drake, Campaign Director, AWA

AWI Releases “Dolphins are Dying to Amuse You”



Several years ago, the Animal Welfare Institute’s Ben White co-founded the Cetacean Freedom Network, an email-based assembly of individuals and groups concerned about marine mammals in captivity. Last year, the group acknowledged the tragedy of dolphin swim-with programs, in light of their increasing popularity among dolphin lovers who are unaware of the story behind the fun. In response, we recently produced a brochure entitled “Dolphins are Dying to Amuse You,” revealing the cruelty of many of the dolphin swim-with programs springing up around the world, particularly in the Caribbean and Central America. Priscilla Cubero Pardo, of the Costa Rican group



Fundación Promar, provided a Spanish translation for the brochure, and a French version is planned for the fall. If you or anyone you know is planning a vacation in an area that hosts swim-with programs, contact us and we will send you a copy. Please encourage your local compassionate travel agent to obtain copies of the brochure as well. We are certain those with a real love for dolphins would rather leave them be than contribute to this industry. 🐾

Endangered Species Handbook Goes Online



We are proud to announce that an updated version of our *Endangered Species Handbook* is available on the Internet. Since its last printing in 1990, countless unique species of animals and plants have become endangered; some are even extinct. Updates to the long-awaited online edition will be made on a regular basis. This wonderful resource also now features searchable text and beautiful new illustrations. Adults and children alike will gain knowledge about species in habitats ranging from lush rainforests to the deep seas, as well as their needless destruction, too-often caused by the actions of humans. For more information, please visit the site at www.endangeredspecieshandbook.org. 🐾

Fate of Famous Alaskan Wolf Pack is Seriously Threatened

Although wolves are considered an endangered species throughout the United States, they number in the thousands in Alaska—where it remains legal to hunt them. April 30, 2005 marked the end of Alaska’s most recent hunting season, but it did not come and go without a price. Three members of the famous Toklat wolf pack were killed.

This family of wolves residing in Alaska’s Denali National Park is often touted as the most studied, viewed and photographed group of wolves in the world. The pack has been observed for more than six decades, providing scientists with a unique stream of longitudinal research and insight into the wolves’ biology, mating habits and hunting techniques.

On April 17, a hunter shot and killed the Toklat pack’s alpha male after the wolf ventured outside of the protected boundaries of the park. According to Dr. Gordon Haber, a biologist who has studied the Toklat family for over 40 years, the wolf was behaving erratically and wandered to an area just outside the park where two female members of the Toklat family had been killed in traps over the previous several weeks. One of the females was his mate. Now only six young Toklat wolves remain in the area, without an experienced alpha male or female to guide them.

While a 55-sq. mile buffer zone in the northeast corner of the park was established several years ago, this area needs to be expanded to protect

Daniel J. Cox/naturexposures.com



The well-known Toklat wolves need updated protections from hunters and trappers.

ranging park wolves from hunters and trappers. However, the Alaska Board of Game has refused to expand the buffer zone, maintaining that wolves in Alaska are managed for population, not for their safety and livelihood. 🐾

Three Among the Wolves

A couple and their dog live a year with wolves in the wild

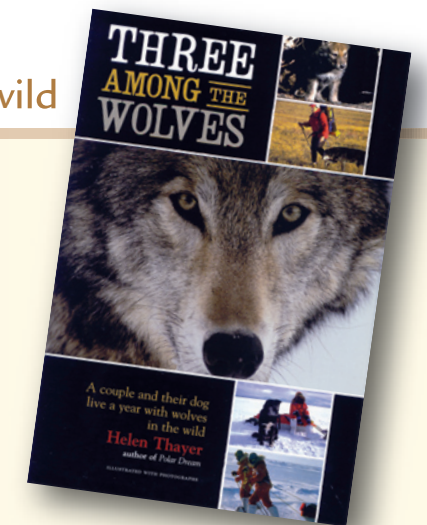
By Helen Thayer
Sasquatch Books, 2004
ISBN: 1570613982
Hardcover, 238 pages; \$22.95

It sounds too unbelievable to be true, but Helen and Bill Thayer actually lived alongside a pack of wolves for an entire year. With the motivation of studying the animals outside of captivity, within a natural habitat in Canada, the adventuresome couple set out on an expedition with their dog Charlie—albeit with mixed expectations. The result was a successful study, transformed into an exciting tale by Thayer, whose casual prose is captivating and easy to read.

Charlie quickly takes a central role in the book, acting as a bridge between his owners and the wolves. Thayer offers accounts of how the dog’s instincts offered them protection, and how his ancestral

line allowed him to earn the pack’s trust. The author and her husband use his behavior as a model of how to act amidst the wolves, gaining insights other researchers might have missed. After slowly moving closer to the wolves for the first half of the year, the humans and their dog are able to live in harmony with a pack of the wild animals for another six enlightening months.

In one memorable scene that reveals their bond with the wolves, the Thayers observe a new wolf pack. The stranger wolves try to attack Charlie, but Alpha, a member of the pack the humans and their dog befriended, recognizes Charlie is in danger and steps in to protect him from the other wolves. “His desire to protect his family’s territory, and especially his defense of Charlie, made us feel even closer to this wild pack,” Thayer said of the experience.



Readers will enjoy learning about wolves in this sometimes emotional, sometimes humorous tale. Thayer spins valuable information into an entertaining read, showing the true sophistication of animal communication. *Three Among Wolves* offers new perspectives on wolves in the wild, detailing the way they interact with each other and their environment. 🐾

—by Catherine Carroll

Behind the Roadless Green Curtain

insider's perspective by TIM HERMACH
PRESIDENT, NATIVE FOREST COUNCIL

A pseudo-environmental political campaign was concocted back in 1997 to “protect” nearly 60 million acres of unroaded backcountry in national forests. Launched with great fanfare and expensive publicity, President Clinton put the protection into effect during the very last days of his tenure in 2000. He could have implemented it at least 91 days before his term ended, but because he did not, it was left open for reversal by the incoming President Bush.

Although it was poor forest protection, even this “roadless rule” that failed to impede logging was too protective for the Bush Administration. This past month, on top of all the many other destructive things it has done to reward its corporate owners and harm nature, the administration repealed Clinton’s national forest protection and replaced it with a rule that opens the gates ever wider to industry control and manipulation.

For the people, fish, wildlife and all other life forms depending on nature, it’s a sad time. It is also a sad time because of the plague of morally and spiritually impoverished behavior inside the Beltway, such as politically compromised defenders of nature who have cynically decided the best way to protect nature is to focus on getting Democrats elected no matter how weak or timid they may be. If you looked behind the green curtain of all too many environmental campaigns, you would find the political players from big funders and compromising environmental groups and political lapdogs who are aiding and abetting by allowing extractive industries to continue to pillage, desecrate and



This Oregon landscape in Mt. Hood National Forest lost nearly 85 percent of its trees because of weak protection for America’s forests.

destroy still more of our publicly owned forests and watersheds.

But not in the national forests’ roadless areas—at least not in most of them, at least not in most cases, at least not until the grandfather clauses ran out of time. As constructed, this campaign was a politically clever and diversionary red herring in which *not one tree* and *not one acre* was truly protected, because of the loopholes and exceptions—such as the exclusion of uninventoried roadless areas, grandfather clauses for the Tongass and all uncut sales in the pipeline, roads to prevent insect infestations and fire and disease. It’s as if they were putting up stop signs to protect people where there were no roads, while refusing to even discuss the need for stop signs on the roads and intersections where all the deaths were occurring.

At one point, President Clinton seriously embarrassed the campaign by admitting the roadless rule would

not reduce logging one iota—that the implementation of this policy would affect less than 2 percent of the projected logging, and logging the already roaded areas where the biggest and most valuable trees were located would be increased to compensate. As if our priceless and irreplaceable forests, watersheds, fish and wildlife had not been dishonestly trashed enough already!

Since the time of Plato, humanity has been warned that environmental harm and destruction has occurred. Again, just last month, the “Millennium Ecosystem Assessment,” an incredible report by 1,300 respected international scientists from 95 countries, stated in the strongest terms that we have destroyed too much of our earth and its soil, air and water, and that we are approaching dark times for humanity. With life on earth hanging in the balance, further compromise is simply unethical, immoral and wrong. 🐾

“The nation that destroys its soil destroys itself.”
—Franklin D. Roosevelt

Preserving Cultures

ACT helps the keepers of the forest keep the forest

Saving Amazon rainforests is the goal of many environmental groups around the world, but the Amazon Conservation Team (ACT) differs from most of its fellow organizations in its motivations. “The agenda we have is driven by the Indians,” said Executive Director Liliana Madrigal. ACT strives to work with indigenous people to preserve their cultures, as well as the plants and animals living in their midst. Founded in 1995 by Madrigal and noted author and conservationist Mark Plotkin, the group has paired Western conservationists with shamans, tribal elders and local authorities from about 30 tribes in several countries to preserve the traditional medicine and land of the indigenous people in the Amazon.

ACT has helped map over 30 million acres of rainforest; currently its members and partner tribes are plotting land in Brazil, Suriname and Colombia using GPS technology. Western-trained cartographers are working with the Indians to compose

these maps. One of the results is better protection from extractive industries, and from encroachment by miners and settlers that may environmentally compromise the Indians’ native land.

Yet the group’s work goes beyond just saving the environment—its Shamans and Apprentices Program provides young men and women in partner tribes with small stipends so they can learn knowledge of medicinal plants and practices from their elders. Like many indigenous cultures around the world, people native to the Amazon have been heavily influenced by Western culture in recent years, often with strongly adverse effects on the cohesion of their communities and the continuity of their traditions.

This is true of both the men and women in Indian tribes. However, ACT faced an additional obstacle in working with indigenous women. “We recognized the role women played, but it was very hard to get to work with them,” Madrigal explained. The traditional Indian societies required ACT to earn the trust of male tribal leaders and shaman before they could interact with the women. “It literally took five years before we were able to even think about developing something,” she said. In 2004, ACT finally began a women’s program in Colombia at the request of male healers.

Many of the practices of women healers already seem antiquated to Indian women in their 30s and 40s, Madrigal said. Because of the increased acculturation in the communities, as well as the declining health of the most knowledgeable female healers, the indigenous communities ACT works with in the Colombian piedmont are in danger of losing much of their traditional knowledge. Tribal leaders helped assemble the most knowledgeable elder women in six Colombian tribes in Feb. 2004; the team lived in a house together



The Amazon rainforest is home to millions of different species; many are found nowhere else on earth. Yet in this precious milieu, habitat destruction and the actions of humans constantly harm both animals and plants.

In the Americas, 39 percent of amphibians are threatened or endangered—particularly in an area of Colombia where ACT works. Countless birds and even large mammals may also some day be extinct because of deforestation and over-hunting. A preservation of indigenous cultures and habitats is crucial to the survival of the spectacular species living in this region.

for a week, cooking and sharing stories about the future and the past, as well as discussing traditional medicines.

In early June, this progress was highlighted in another gathering of 40 women healers, with 11 new “health promoters” who serve as a bridge between the elder healers, their apprentices and the formal health services to help empower them to pass their knowledge to other women in their communities and to assist in the attainment of the rights enumerated in the Colombian Constitution. Hard work lies ahead for Madrigal and her team, but having the opportunity to improve the lives of many by preserving a culture and its land for future generations more than compensates ACT’s ongoing effort. 🐾



A Shaman meets with apprentices in Kwamalasamutu, Suriname.

photos: Amazon Conservation Team

SOCIETY FOR ANIMAL PROTECTIVE LEGISLATION:

50 Years of Growing a Movement

In our nation's capital, there are lobbyists for every industry imaginable—agriculture, energy, tobacco, defense—but what about the animals? Who lobbies for them? Fifty years ago, it was illegal for non-profit tax-exempt organizations to engage in such activities. “We couldn’t do any substantial amount of lobbying and keep our tax-exempt status,” explained Animal Welfare Institute (AWI) founder Christine Stevens several years ago. Her solution? To form an organization that didn’t require a tax-exempt



Christine Stevens testifies in support of the Improved Standards for Laboratory Animals amendment to the Animal Welfare Act.

status, one that would inform Senators, Representatives and the public about animal issues and work to pass laws to protect them.

The year was 1955 and the Society for Animal Protective Legislation (SAPL) was the first of its kind. It wasn’t long before SAPL developed an extraordinary reputation. If Senators wanted to know more about issues pertaining to humane slaughter, leghold traps or endangered species, they simply contacted the organization.

On these two pages you’ll

find brief summaries of some of the most important animal-related laws passed by our public servants over the last 50 years. SAPL not only supported these legislative efforts and others, but also fought hard for strong regulations for their enforcement, for substantial funding of the programs and, of course, to stop bad bills. “Almost every animal welfare law on the books is owing to SAPL’s leadership,” said AWI President Cathy Liss.

John Gleiber offers our readers a unique vantage point. From 1958 to 2003 he held various positions, as executive secretary (later secretary) of SAPL and then as assistant to the officers of AWI. In 2003, when SAPL merged with AWI, he joined the AWI Board. Over the years, he has been a careful observer of the animal movement. He has nourished it and watched it grow. On this special anniversary, John recalls the early days of lobbying on Capitol Hill with fondness and a dash of humor.



Cathy Liss, then research assistant, demonstrates the brutal force of the steel-jaw leghold trap at a 1985 Congressional hearing.



Endangered Species Act 1973

More than 30 species, from the Bald eagle to the American alligator, have survived thanks in part to this key law. Tragically, it is currently under attack by some legislators.

Marine Mammal Protection Act 1972

Prohibits killing, taking or harassing any marine mammal without a permit, and bans the importation of any part or product of nursing marine mammals or their mothers. Strengthened by a 1976 amendment.

The Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act 1971

Protects, manages and controls wild horses and burros. Based on Congress’ policy that equines should be “protected from capture, branding, harassment, or death,” and they are an integral part of the public land ecosystem.

Horse Protection Act 1970

Prohibits the soring of Tennessee Walking Horses for show purposes. Strengthened by a 1976 amendment.

Laboratory Animal Welfare Act 1966

Heralded by AWI founder Christine Stevens, this landmark law sets minimum standards of care and housing for dogs, cats, primates, rabbits, hamsters and guinea pigs for animal dealers and laboratories. Later called the Animal Welfare Act; strengthened and broadened by amendments passed in 1970, 1976, 1985 and 1990.

Humane Slaughter Act 1958

Requires humane slaughter of livestock to prevent suffering. Significantly improved by a 1978 amendment. However, as slaughter lines have sped up in recent years, suffering has increased dramatically. As a result, USDA inspectors are needed to enforce humane handling and slaughter of animals around-the-clock at every plant.

Dolphin Protection Consumer Information Act 1990

Sets standards for labeling canned tuna, ensuring the term “Dolphin Safe” only applies to tuna caught using methods not harmful to dolphins.

Wild Bird Conservation Act 1992

Places an import ban on the ten bird species threatened most severely by capture for the commercial pet trade and restricts import of all other threatened bird species.

The Great Ape Conservation Act 2000

Establishes a \$5 million conservation fund to assist in global projects to conserve great ape populations, including gorillas, orangutans, bonobos, chimpanzees and gibbons.

Remembering the Acorn

I think of SAPL as the mighty Oak tree that grew from an acorn. When Christine Stevens realized a lobbying organization independent of AWI was necessary, the fact that she lived and worked in Manhattan didn’t faze her for a minute. She and her young daughter Christabel would get up early and work long hours to bring their messages to a bemused Congress in one-day visits, courtesy of planes and trains from New York to Washington, D.C. Christine held the secret of successful lobbying—know your subject, know the staff and never give up.

Sue Hunt, who once worked for SAPL during the summer months, remembers her aunt, Helen Mayer, speaking of powerful Committee Chairs and Senators darting into the men’s room whenever they spied the two women hovering in sight. The Senators came to value and listen to—and sometimes fear—Christine’s relentless pursuit of her goals. But if they were on the opposite side of Christine’s legislation, flight was the better part of valor.

Early on, Christine sensed the intricacies of the power structure in Washington. She co-opted Ceci Carusi, a legendary and beautiful hostess, to open doors and make appointments

on the highest possible political and social levels. Ceci had another valuable attribute as a master mover of traffic cones to make parking places. Few tough Capitol Hill policemen would want to face up to this assured, determined woman. Ah, the good old days—today she would probably be checked out as a terrorist!

Finally, Christine’s husband Roger came to Washington to embark on a remarkable cultural career at the Kennedy Center, at the behest of President Kennedy himself. This meant Christine was only 15 minutes from Congress, and SAPL now had an office in the AWI quarters. Marjorie Cooke, an awesomely efficient and dedicated power machine, relieved Christine of office management for the organizations, and remains a loyal friend to SAPL staffers to this day.

Gradually, SAPL’s work became more professional and more pressured. Each new employee brought a higher degree of skill, academic background and commitment. The atmosphere grew to resemble a think tank, and SAPL prospered. But I will always cherish those modest fly-by-the-seat-of-your-pants days; I shall never forget that original acorn.

—John Gleiber



The Chimpanzee Health Improvement, Maintenance, and Protection Act 2000

Establishes a national sanctuary system for chimpanzees no longer used in experimentation.

Captive Wildlife Safety Act 2005

Prohibits the interstate transport of exotic big cats, such as tigers, lions, leopards, cheetahs, jaguars or cougars, for private ownership as pets.

Changes in tax laws now permit AWI to engage in substantive lobbying activities. As a result, SAPL became a division of AWI in 2003. Thus, contributions made out to AWI are tax-deductible and ensure SAPL’s legislative work on behalf of animals continues. Please note that donations earmarked for SAPL or legislation are not deductible. Most importantly, write your Members of Congress regarding animal-related bills. For information to use in writing these letters, join SAPL by signing up at www.saplonline.org or by sending us a note.

Drilling in Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge May Be Imminent

On April 28th, the House and the Senate both approved the final annual budget resolution conference report, which effectively permits potentially devastating activity on the coastal plain of Alaska's Arctic National Refuge. According to the House Budget Committee Minority Leader, Representative John Spratt (D-SC), "Although the budget resolution conference report does not explicitly assume revenues from drilling in the Arctic Refuge, this policy could be accommodated in a reconcili-

ation bill under the terms of the budget resolution." The resolution passed narrowly, as the House approved the plan by a vote of 214-211, and the Senate approved it by a vote of 52-47. The House and the Senate must still reconcile the two resolutions and agree on a final version, which is expected to reach President Bush's desk for his signature by September. However, there is still time for legislators to oppose any measure that opens this pristine environment to oil drilling. 🐾

CAFTA: A Catastrophe for Animals

Remaining true to the message personified by the turtle costumes we created for the 1999 World Trade Organization (WTO) protest in Seattle, the Animal Welfare Institute (AWI) remains vehemently opposed to the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA)—and any other agreement that puts big business ahead of animals, the environment and even human rights. This proposed trade pact between the United States and the Central American nations of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua would create a trade and investment bloc between these nations, furthering the corporate globalization model.

In addition to the US-based non-governmental organizations joining us in opposition of CAFTA, virtually every environmental, humane and human rights organization in Central America opposes it as well. Even the region's Catholic Bishops are against the agreement. Some opponents have paid for their outspokenness with their lives, as the governments of El Salvador and Guatemala resort to lethal force to repress anti-CAFTA demonstrations.

We have no doubt that CAFTA was designed deliberately and expressly to sweep away already fragile barriers to the takeover of agriculture, and the destruction of small family farms by American corporations. Obstacles to environmental devastation promise to be effaced as well. Costa Rican environmentalists note one of the first impacts of the agreement will be to overturn laws en-



AWI's Ben White protests the WTO in Seattle; the Institute maintains its unwavering opposition to corporate-driven trade policy that undermines animal welfare and the environment.

Jan Rinick/AWI

joining pit mining in national parks and offshore oil drilling by American interests. The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), by according deference to investor's rights over environmental protection, has been a calamity for wildlife; CAFTA promises to be an equally disastrous cousin.

Displacement of family farmers by agribusiness corporations has not only been an environmental and social disaster—it has been accompanied by abuse of farm animals on an unprecedented scale and degree in human history. AWI is deeply involved in defending traditional, humane family farmers in the United States and Central Europe from the malignant invasion of the corporate giants, both for their sake and the sake of the animals. Years of on-the-ground

struggle have convinced us industrial methods of "producing meat" have not "succeeded." Hundreds of American farmers are doing very well raising pigs according to our humane criteria, the only true standards ensuring the welfare of animals raised for food. Political corruption is an indispensable element of agribusiness success.

Proponents of CAFTA are pushing hard to garner favorable votes in Congress including back door deals in exchange for much-needed votes. The Senate just approved the trade agreement, and the House of Representatives is expected to vote on it soon. Your prompt action is critical to ensure the measure is rejected. 🐾

OPPOSE CAFTA

Stop the Flow of Illegally Acquired Pets to Laboratories

SUPPORT S. 451

Illegally acquired animals, poor records and failure to provide needed veterinary care and essentials, such as decent food and fresh water, are the modus operandi of random source dealers. Licensed as "Class B" by the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), they profit from selling companion animals to laboratories for experimentation.

Increasing numbers of research facilities are opting to discontinue this archaic and irresponsible practice, but not all. Some carry on using random source dealers despite knowledge of the inherent problems. To our horror, the University of Missouri continued to purchase animals from notorious dealer C. C. Baird for over a year after USDA seized more than 100 animals from his premises and filed a complaint regarding hundreds of apparent violations of the Animal Welfare Act.

Fortunately, Senator Daniel Akaka (D-HI) has reintroduced the Pet Safety and Protection Act, S. 451, to stop the sale of dogs and cats to research facilities by random source dealers. Akaka explained that the



If adopted, S. 451 will ensure that no one's beloved companion animal ends up in an experimental laboratory.

measure will end fraudulent practices associated with this trade and reduce the unnecessary suffering of animals without impeding research. 🐾

A PAWS-itive Step to Protect Dogs and Cats in the Pet Trade

SUPPORT S. 1139/H.R. 2669

Many puppies and kittens are sold over the Internet and through newspaper advertisements, and consumers are misled to believe the seller is a small hobby breeder raising animals at home—when in fact they are buying from a large-scale commercial operation. Unfortunately, the operations that sell the animals they breed directly to the public are exempt from federal oversight. Many young animals and adults used for breeding are thus subject to appalling conditions and

callous treatment, and there has been little recourse for improving their situation.

However, there is hope. Senators Rick Santorum (R-PA) and Richard Durbin (D-IL) introduced S. 1139, the Pet Animal Welfare Statute (PAWS), to extend the protections under the Animal Welfare Act to these huge breeding operations. Congressional Representatives Jim Gerlach (R-PA) and Sam Farr (D-CA) introduced an identical bill, H.R. 2669, in the House of Representatives. 🐾

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Please urge your Senators and Representative to oppose any measure to open the Arctic Refuge to oil drilling.

A vote on CAFTA by the House of Representatives is imminent. Contact your Representative to urge opposition to CAFTA.

Also send letters to your Senators, asking them to cosponsor S. 451, the Pet Safety and Protection Act, and letters to your Senators and Representative, asking them to cosponsor S. 1139 and H.R. 2669, the Pet Animal Welfare Statute.

- Address Senators: The Honorable (full name) US Senate Washington, DC 20510
- Address Representatives: The Honorable (full name) US House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515

Call us or visit www.saplonline.org for names of your Members of Congress and for updates on animal-related legislation, and please send us news of any correspondence you receive from your legislators!

Pigeons Used in Research: From barren single-housing to an enriched environment

by ANITA CONTE
COLLEGE OF STATEN ISLAND

Due to a 2002 amendment to the Animal Welfare Act, millions of birds used in experimentation each year in the United States are no longer defined as “animals,” and are denied this federal oversight as a result. The conditions under which they are held are therefore open to interpretation. Researchers and institutions often afford them only the most basic welfare requirements. Most rely on tradition or manufacturer specifications when choosing caging for birds.

The pigeons in our research facility have a propensity to be long-lived, and unfortunately, they tend to be recycled from one experiment to another—even eventually ending their careers as subjects in an Experimental Psychology Learning and Behavior class. Although we keep our pigeons clean, healthy and ready to serve the researchers, in reality we

do patronize them and use them to serve our interests. However, I realized we could take better care of them.

Many of our birds had developed repetitive stereotypies after years of enforced inactivity and social deprivation in small, barren cages. These pathological behavior patterns are incessant and disturbing, but in my opinion, they also reflect a serious emotional imbalance in the individual animal. Other pigeons became listless—they ate and drank, but seemed disconnected. They appeared to have lost the edge their counterparts had in the wild.



Photos: John Sainz

Research pigeons in the Psychology Department vivarium live in small, single-bird cages.

Had our pigeons become “institutionalized?” Were they suffering such distress from boredom and inactivity that they were responding inappropriately to their surroundings, or directing that behavior onto themselves? This is a major concern because the release of corticosterone and other stress-sensitive hormones has effects that could confound data and the analysis of experimental results.

Thanks to an Animal Welfare Enhancement Award provided by the Animal Welfare Institute and the Johns Hopkins Center for Alternatives to Animal Testing, I was able to test for stress, as well as try to alleviate some of the distress of a group of white carneau pigeons who had been in the facility for 10 or more years. I took fecal samples from them in their home cages to assess their stress status from the analysis of their corticosterone levels.

My coworkers and I built a flight pen considerably larger than the standard home cage, and I amassed quite a collection of bird toys. I bought two plastic shelters as escape points for any pigeons who felt threatened. The big day finally arrived, and the birds were transferred from their old single-bird



These pigeons now live together as a group in the large, enriched flight cage.

cages into the new pen. Each chose a spot and stayed put; the pigeons were alert, but none wanted any contact with the others.

Eventually, they relaxed. We first saw locomotion, a considerable amount of wing stretching and even some running. Within a day I witnessed actual contact between birds. There was jostling, wing boxing and some half-hearted attempts to wrangle with one another. The pigeons glanced at the balls, bells and mirrors we provided, but completely ignored the standard “bird toys.” I tried to be more creative, adding live wheatgrass, driftwood, foliage and ladders, but was again disappointed at the lackluster response.

I knew I had to observe pigeons outdoors to see exactly what they would be doing naturally. I saw that they were flying and walking around, scratching

the dirt, jumping in puddles, and obviously *not* playing with manufactured bird toys! I removed all the enrichment devices and purchased a 25-lb. bag of large aquarium stones that I shaped into a mound. Rather than scattering the hay, I put whole bales in the cage. Wild pigeons are very interested in water, so I made them a “pigeon pool.” I kept the shelters, however, because they were often used as secluded resting sites.

The birds were returned to the flight cage, and the bath was introduced. It was filled with warm water and pigeon salts. They approached it cautiously, yet all six pigeons finally obliged us by jumping in. There was barely enough room for all of them, but everyone got a turn. They splashed and played in the water for an entire hour. We had hit a home run!

Our pigeons were undoubtedly more interested in the natural items than

the bird toys. I laced the stone mound with grain, and they foraged and picked through it for hours until the mound was flattened. The hay bales were good platforms to stand on, and amusing to pull apart. The shelters were excellent places for napping. The pigeons seemed to prize each other’s company above all else—they spent much of their time sitting side by side.

Fecal samples will soon show if the working theory is correct: that the stress levels of our pigeons are indeed lower in the flight cage environment. These samples are in the process of being assayed, and we await the results with great expectations. In the meantime, however, we are proud to note that the pigeons’ former stereotypic behaviors seem to have disappeared, likely due to their engagement in species-specific activities and the companionship of others. 🐾

Chimpanzees Used in Research: Voluntary blood samples differ from anesthetized samples

by STEVEN J. SCHAPIRO, PH.D.
MICHAEL E. KEELING CENTER FOR COMPARATIVE MEDICINE AND RESEARCH

Our group at the University of Texas has pursued techniques to refine the handling and management of non-human primates in the laboratory for several years now, with the direct goal of enhancing their welfare. We also try to improve the manner in which the research is done on the animals, because we feel animals with enhanced welfare are better research subjects, as they are less likely to be adversely affected by stress. We study both the behavioral and physiological effects of psychological factors related to the management and research use of nonhuman primates, including how training chimpanzees to cooperate with biological

sampling procedures can make research with chimpanzees better.

Training techniques, especially those focusing on positive reinforcement procedures, provide captive primates with some control over what happens to them—a part of their natural existence typically difficult to provide in captivity. Our project aimed to determine whether voluntary participation in blood collection procedures affected physiological values in the blood of chimpanzees.

Preliminary analyses of older data indicated the technique used to collect blood from the animals affected a number of physiological values. We found the values obtained when subjects



Margaret Whitaker

A chimpanzee places his arm in a blood sleeve in preparation for a conscious blood sample.

voluntarily presented themselves for an anesthetic injection appeared to indicate they were less stressed than in the samples obtained when the anesthetic injection was non-voluntary (in most cases this meant the anesthetic was administered using a dart gun). The latest project was designed to directly address whether blood collection procedures influence these values.

Our subjects were seven adult chimpanzees living in different-sized social groups. All were trained to provide a voluntary, unanesthetized blood sample using a blood sleeve device (simply a plastic tube for an animal to put an arm in). The tube had a handle at the far end for an animal to grip, and the cut-out portion on its top provided safe access to a vein in the arm. A chimpanzee would place an arm in the sleeve, hold it still and allow us to draw a blood sample. When he or she cooperated with the procedure, the chimpanzee would be rewarded with food.

Voluntary blood samples were obtained two or three days before the collection of an anesthetized blood sample, and the physiological values were compared across the two samples per subject. Although we were really trying to compare unrestrained (voluntary) to restrained (anesthetized) samples, the way our experiment was designed made it difficult to make this comparison in the absence of the effects of the anesthesia—so another way to look at the study is as a comparison of unanesthetized to anesthetized samples. Our study demonstrates it is possible to train multiple chimpanzees to voluntarily provide a conscious blood sample, and our findings show the technique used to



Another chimpanzee prepares for a conscious blood sample.

use of cortisol as a measure of stress in nonhuman primates, yet we are in the process of analyzing cortisol and some other relevant factors from the samples that we have collected. These results should considerably enhance our ability to interpret our findings.

acquire the blood sample affects many important physiological values.

Incidentally, we hope you are wondering why stress-related hormones such as cortisol have not been mentioned. We are somewhat uncomfortable with the

This study is important in our continuing quest to refine the techniques we use when working with nonhuman primates, especially chimpanzees. We still need to do more, but we assume voluntary sampling techniques using animals trained with positive reinforcement techniques are better for the animals and better for science. We always try to demonstrate studies will more directly address experimental hypotheses when more refined techniques are used to handle and work with the animals; better data obtained from subjects trained to cooperate with research procedures should accomplish this goal. 🐾

The Animal Welfare Institute was pleased to provide its 2004 Refinement Award for this project to reduce the stress typically endured by non-human primates during veterinary and research procedures.



A chimpanzee presents his thigh for a voluntary injection.

Susan Lambeth

Bequests to AWI

If you would like to help assure the Animal Welfare Institute's future through a provision in your will, this general form of bequest is suggested:

I give, devise and bequeath to the Animal Welfare Institute, located in Washington, D.C., the sum of \$_____ and/or (specifically described property).

Donations to AWI, a not-for-profit corporation exempt under Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3), are tax deductible.

We welcome any inquiries you may have. In cases where you have specific wishes about the disposition of your bequest, we suggest you discuss such provisions with your attorney.

Foie Gras Cruelty Halted in Israel

After a period of phasing out the force-feeding of ducks and geese to produce foie gras, this horrific practice has finally ended in Israel. The Israeli Supreme Court ruled almost two years ago that force-feeding is a violation of the Animal Welfare Act, and would not be permitted in Israel after April 1, 2005. The country was the fourth largest producer of foie gras at the time of the ban.

To produce foie gras, which literally means "fat liver" in French, male ducks and geese are typically force-fed large amounts of corn through the long metal tubes inserted into their throats each day. This causes their livers to become enlarged up to 10 times their normal size because of an illness known as hepatic steatosis. Birds are breathless and experience diarrhea after the feeding, and those who survive this cruelty can suffer from intense pain due to lesions in their throats. Often, the birds' engorged livers make walking impossible by the time they are slaughtered.

This inhumane food marketed as a gourmet treat is already prohibited in many countries, and Israel has set a wonderful example for others still involved in its production, including the United States. Recently in New York, Hudson Valley, the state's only foie gras producer,



Ducks and geese are force-fed corn through metal tubes to make the "delicacy" known as foie gras.

succeeded in having legislation introduced and packaged as a humane measure. The bill would exempt Hudson Valley from existing anti-cruelty laws, and specifically allow it to remain in business for at least another 11 years. We hope the truth behind this pro-foie gras legislation will be recognized, ensuring its defeat. 🐾

Rosebud's Struggle

The Animal Welfare Institute previously reported on the Rosebud Sioux Tribe's struggle to extricate itself from an economically and culturally disadvantageous lease arrangement with Sun Prairie and Bell Farms to create the world's third largest hog factory (*AWI Quarterly*, Spring 2003). After the US Supreme Court refused to hear its appeal of an earlier court ruling favoring the Bureau of Indian Affairs and hog factory opponents, Sun Prairie

sued the Bureau and the Tribe in South Dakota Federal District Court, demanding financial damages. Inexplicably, Judge Richard Battey agreed with Sun Prairie and ordered the parties to negotiate a settlement.

Tribe members who fought the hog factory did not favor settling. Jim Dougherty, attorney for the opponents, pointed out Sun Prairie had no defensible grounds on which to sue for damages. However, a newly-elected Tribal Council was in place. Sun Prairie's new owner appeared before the Council and claimed Rosebud would be liable for millions of dollars. Assistant US Attorney General Tom Sansonetti put further pressure on the Council to settle the case.

On April 27, 2005, the Council voted to accept the settlement offer the government negotiated with Sun Prairie, and on May 19, Judge Battey approved it. Under the settlement's terms, no new hog facilities may be built, but the existing sites, which annually produce about 192,000 hogs, may operate for 20 years. Sun Prairie must pay rent and water use, including past water use. The settlement still does not guarantee environmental justice, safe and fair conditions for workers or safe and humane conditions for the pigs who have received shockingly cruel treatment for years (*AWI Quarterly*, Fall 2004). Several Tribe members say they wish to contest the settlement.

Please visit www.awionline.org/farm/rosebud.htm to learn more about this story. 🐾



Subjected to harsh living conditions at Sun Prairie's Bell Farms, these pigs responded by cannibalizing weaker pigs at the facility.

Humane Farming Association

Live Transport: Another Source of Suffering

Are we there yet? In the confines of your comfortable car, how often has someone asked just that? Now imagine traveling for hundreds of miles in a bleak, overcrowded space with no temperature control, little or no food or water and few stops, if any. You have likely seen such transport en route, because every year, billions of farm animals travel this way.

Our country has moved from many farms and slaughterhouses to fewer farms crowded with more animals and an even smaller number of slaughterhouses, which means animals are increasingly transported further and further distances. Most beef cattle, for example, are transported from the range to a stockyard or auction. From there, some are hauled directly to slaughter and some are sent to a feedlot and then transported to slaughter. Others may be trucked to grazing land, then moved to a feedlot and eventually transported to

the slaughterhouse. A single trip may be hundreds or even thousands of miles.

Regulations for farm animal transportation are weak to nonexistent; animals often arrive at their destination stressed, thirsty, hungry, injured or dead. Practical and humane transport regulations would establish food and water requirements, rest periods, reasonable temperatures, timely veterinary inspections, euthanasia for sick and injured animals and maximum journey length.

The only US law addressing the subject allows the transport of animals across state lines without food, water or rest for up to 28 hours. Although some industrialized countries have adopted stronger regulations, universally enforceable laws are needed desperately. Seeking to initiate such change is Animals' Angels, a European group devoted solely to raising awareness of the issue and bringing relief to animals in transport.

OIE Releases First Global Standards for Transport and Slaughter of Live Animals

Animals around the world are a step closer to receiving the humane conditions they deserve, after delegates from all 167 member countries of the World Animal Health Organization (OIE) adopted live transport and slaughter standards in May.

The guidelines cover sea and land transport, as well as slaughter for human consumption and humane killing for purposes of disease control. They provide "a framework within which exists the potential to improve the welfare of the billions of farm animals," according to a statement by Compassion in World Farming.

While the standards are voluntary and not legally binding, they are important because they demonstrate clear global agreement that animal welfare is an important issue. Hopefully they will initiate the adoption of humane enforceable laws in countries that currently have little or no legislation addressing farm animal transport and slaughter.

"It is a significant step forward for the OIE and the international community at large," said OIE Director General Bernard Vallat. "We reaffirm the essential link between the health and welfare of animals."

This action is a follow-up to the historic Global Conference on Animal Welfare, held in Paris in Feb. 2004 (*AWI Quarterly*, Spring 2004). The OIE will next establish production standards for farm animals. 🐾



Photos: Animals' Angels

During transport, farm animals are typically overcrowded and forced to stand without bedding, food or water for over 24 hours.

The organization routinely trails livestock trucks, and upon witnessing infractions of local law, contacts officials with the authority to stop and inspect the vehicles. In a recent investigation, the group documented an eight-day-long pig transport route from Canada to Hawaii. The route is used each week, and the pigs are deprived of food and water during the 28-hour segment of the trip from Alberta to California. For more information about this investigation and the group, please visit www.animals-angels.de.

The Animal Welfare Institute advocates the transport of meat rather than live animals, and encourages consumers to buy locally raised and processed animal products. Each time an animal is transported, there is the potential for pain and fear. Think about that on your next trip. 🐾



Often farm animals are transported in vehicles lacking temperature controls, resulting in heat-induced stress, hypothermia and death.

Pork Company Sells Expired Meat

After shocking revelations of unsanitary practices at one of its plants, the world's largest pork producer has sent in a team of experts to save its image and its investments. US-owned Smithfield Foods Inc. shut down Constar, its major Polish meatpacking plant, for 11 days because the national media recently revealed its system of scraping mold off of expired sausages and sending them back to its retailers.

In April, the major Polish daily newspaper and the biggest private television channel caught workers at the Constar plant on hidden cameras, debating whether expired products sent back by stores should be thrown out or cleaned up and sent out again.

"The director [of Constar] has been suspended from performing his duties... and production has been halted until the matter is cleared up," said Lidia Zalewska, a spokesperson for Animex, Smithfield's Polish unit and the owner of Constar. In addition to an investigation by government food safety inspectors, the company launched an internal audit.

Smithfield said it is hiring a third party, Poland's former top veterinarian, to oversee an investigation of the incident and the inspection of the Constar plant. The European Commission is awaiting the results of the Polish investigation before deciding whether to take any action.

This scandal proves large, high-tech slaughterhouses do not make a safer food supply. According to Robert F. Kennedy Jr., the closure of small slaughterhouses in the United States

and in England coincided with an increase of meat-borne diseases by 300 percent and 500 percent respectively. This is because big, centralized slaughterhouses force pork production onto factory farms where disease is rampant, and because long transport distances stress the animals and spread disease. Furthermore, technologies that increase line speed inside the slaughterhouse multiply worker errors and make proper inspections impossible.

"Large, high-tech slaughterhouses do not make a safer food supply."

Constar was built in the 1970s by the US plant architectural firm Epstein Engineering, and before it was taken over by both Animex and Smithfield—and then Smithfield alone in 1999—the plant had already introduced a Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) programme in 1996.

In the United States, the health situation of the big slaughterhouses was immeasurably worsened in 1998, when the US Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), yielding to industry wishes, introduced a system of HACCP that allows companies to devise their own methods of guaranteeing food safety through self-regulation, said the Animal Welfare Institute's Tom Garrett.

The practical effect of HACCP has been to remove the previously already

scarce number of inspectors from the line. The same problem also appeared recently at Constar; the inspectors never visited the part of plant where workers scraped mold from sausages.

The Virginia-based Smithfield, which processes 20 million hogs annually, has unfortunately been bent on expansion since 1999, when it acquired Animex and all its brands, including the famous Krakus. Last year, it acquired Morliny, giving the company Poland's two most-recognized meat brands. It also boasts two subsidiaries in Romania. However, Smithfield Foods' reputation in the region is now under heavy fire, as the Constar scandal is just the latest in a series to rock the corporation's activities in Poland.

"We are making very much of an effort to improve our communication with local communities, to improve our communication with the citizens of Poland in a manner that we hope will result in them recognizing that we are a good company who is out for the good of Poland and not some sort of a threat to them," said Dennis H. Treacy, Smithfield's vice president for environmental, community and government affairs to a Polish newspaper.

However, thanks to Kennedy's visit to Poland in 2003, Polish public opinion already has very little doubt about what to expect from Smithfield—and obviously one of the major issues of this year's Parliamentary elections campaign in the Polish Countryside will be animal welfare and the health and environmental problems caused by Smithfield's operations in the heart of Europe. 🐾

In Memory of Mieczyslaw Gorny

Mieczyslaw Gorny, a conservationist and organic farming and animal welfare activist who used his position as one of the leading environmental experts in Poland to promote humane farming and animal protection measures, died May 15 in Warsaw, Poland at the age of 76.

In 1989, Professor Gorny founded the Ekoland, the first Polish organization of organic farmers. Over the years, he

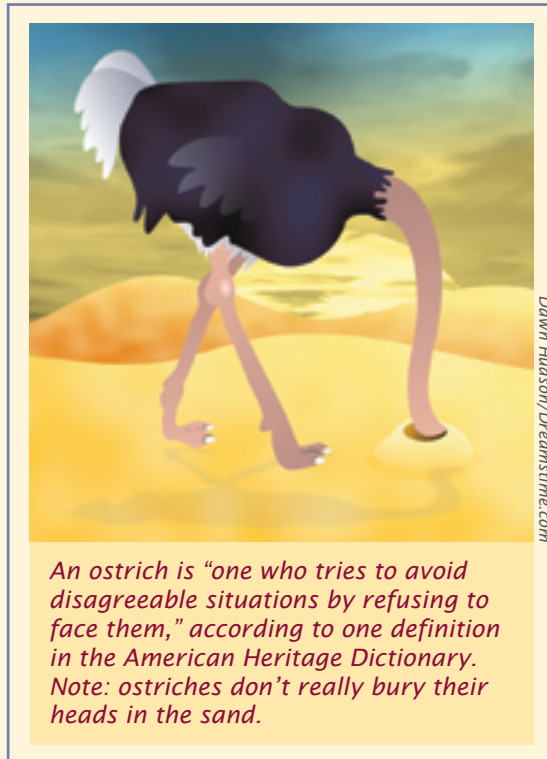
also became known for fighting what he considered the routine cruelty to laboratory animals.

Gorny, a scientist himself, said scientists are perfecting systems of "torture camps for animals," in discussing factory farming systems. He was one of the biggest supporters of the Animal Welfare Institute's work in Poland, as well as a friend of Tom Garrett and Marek Kryda. 🐾

After 42 Years, AVMA Bans AWI

Since 1963, the Animal Welfare Institute (AWI) has exhibited at the annual meeting of the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) 21 times, providing information on the humane treatment of animals. In December 2004, AWI submitted an application for exhibit space at the AVMA's July 2005 convention. More than five months later, on June 10, 2005, we received a rejection letter—nine days after the Association announced a new policy addressing “contentious exhibitors that may be detrimental to the attendee experience.” The policy permits the exclusion of exhibitors with “messages espousing philosophies or practices contrary to policies and position statements of the AVMA.”

True, the Institute supports an end to horse slaughter for human consumption—which, by the way, the Republican-controlled House of Representatives overwhelmingly voted in favor of recently. The AVMA, on the other hand, continues to oppose this humane legislation. However, the impetus behind the Association's refusal to allow AWI to exhibit at this year's convention is undoubtedly based on our exhibit at the 2004 convention, which was described by an AVMA representative as “very contentious.”



An ostrich is “one who tries to avoid disagreeable situations by refusing to face them,” according to one definition in the American Heritage Dictionary. Note: ostriches don't really bury their heads in the sand.

Our exhibit, which focused on the housing of sows, displayed a life-sized cloth pig in a real gestation crate. Approximately 70 percent of pregnant sows are confined to gestation crates for the duration of each of their nearly 4-month long pregnancies. We sought to inform veterinarians about the sow gestation crate, as well as alternatives that provide sufficient space and permit sows to engage in key natural behaviors, such as grazing, rooting and socializing. We even had a farmer, one of hundreds whom we work with, discuss in detail the practicality and improved welfare of alternative systems. A slew of conference attendees engaged in thoughtful discussion with us and said they appreciated our presence.

At present, the AVMA is reconsidering its policy endorsing use of the gestation crate. Clearly, by keeping AWI from displaying the crate at this year's convention, the Association plans to maintain its support for this cramped, barren stall. Just as it eventually withdrew its endorsement of the barbaric steel-jaw leghold trap, we trust the AVMA will someday also retract support for the gestation crate in honor of animal welfare. 🐾



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