

DIRECT ACTION for ANIMALS

Winter, 1996

Publication of: WEST MICHIGAN FOR ANIMALS, 139 Langdon NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503; E-Mail: kimvndlaan@aol.com

LET'S GET FURIOUS THIS WINTER

Source: KALL to Action, Jane Parent

Winter has arrived, and with it comes not only snow and ice, but also fur coats. Let's remember where those fur coats came from. The animals might have bled to death in excruciating pain while in a leghold trap, or possibly suffered the horrors of life on a fur ranch. Animals raised on fur ranches often live in dirty, crowded cages that are not suited to their natural environment. They may go insane from the confinement. These pain-and-pleasure-feeling animals are then killed by gassing, suffocation, or anal electrocution.

As animal activists, we are having an impact. Half of all U.S. furriers have closed in the past five years. Kalamazoo's former furrier, Three Rivers Furs, closed last March after being in business for over 100 years. Together we are creating peace for all creatures.

We who are opposed to fur have a responsibility to get focused on this issue and get our anti-fur message out to the community. Each person has an opportunity to create awareness using their own style. DO IT YOUR WAY!!!

Wear an anti-fur button.

Put an anti-fur bumper sticker on your vehicle and give people something to read on the way to work.

Place anti-fur literature on bulletin boards, in [birthday or greeting] cards, in your mail, in your favorite restaurants or coffee joints.

Get dressed! Wear a fake fur coat splashed with red paint, or one that has a message shaved or painted on the back.

LEGHOLD-TRAPPED FUR BANNED IN HOLLAND

THE HAGUE, Jan 11 (Reuters) - The Dutch government said on Thursday it had banned on January 1st the import of all furs from animals caught in leghold traps.

The European Union said in 1991 it would bring in the ban this year, but last month the European Commission decided on a 12-month delay to allow humane trapping standards to be agreed internationally.

The Commission left the way open for individual members to adopt the measure and the Dutch decided not to wait. "We didn't feel like postponing the ban," said the spokesman.

Leghold traps are condemned by animal welfare activists as one of the most inhumane ways of snaring animals such as the beaver, otter & lynx.

COMPASSIONATE SHOPPING

We would like to make this a regular column in our newsletter, if we can get the information to pass along. Please tell us what cruelty-free (not tested on animals) products you buy and how they work. Or share with us the environmentally-friendly things you buy and places you shop so we can spread the word. OUR JOB IS TO HELP THE ANIMALS AND THE ENVIRONMENT BY EDUCATING CONSUMERS! PLEASE HELP US.

If you shop at Hudson's or Jacobson's, don't be afraid to tell a clerk, manager, or the customer service department what you think of them selling furs. YOUR OPINION COUNTS!

Chapstick is tested on animals, as well as Proctor and Gamble and Gillette products. Try something else, and call the toll-free number listed on their items to complain about the outdated and inhumane testing they perform on live animals. Don't be afraid to ask if a product is tested on animals or contains animal by-products. There is no need for animal tests.

Animal testing (vivisection) has been found to be painful and redundant, but a very big business that does not want to change even though alternatives exist. The tests performed include: applying substances to a raw wound, putting products in rabbit's eyes (Draize test), feeding animals the product to see how much induces a 50% death ratio (Lethal Dose 50 or LD50 test), or forcing animals to inhale a substance to monitor effects. During these painful tests, the animals are often immobilized and provided with no anesthesia. Death is the only relief. These tests do not assure that the product or medicine will be safe for human use or consumption. Even if a test is required (by law), ask yourself, shouldn't the animal be given pain relief just as a human would?

There is no need for animal testing. More accurate, reliable and humane methods have been developed like computers, skin and tissue cultures, and models based on archived data.

So what can you do? COMPLAIN! Write or call the company (try their toll-free number listed on the product) and ask about product testing and tell them you don't approve of these old-fashioned methods. Don't buy products that are tested on animals. Send back coupons with a message of protest or return samples or empty containers with your message that you are boycotting animal abusers.



OUR NEW MEETING SPOT

We are now meeting in the offices of The Institute for Global Education on the 1st Sunday of the Month at 6 PM, with a chance for new members to learn more about WMFA at 5:30 PM. WMFA is a member of IGE, which supports the non-violent resolution of conflicts and the pursuit of justice as the best way to achieve a true and lasting peace through conscientious individual and group education and action. They are located on Richard Terrace, next to the Pizza Hut, at 1400-B Lake Drive SE. Their phone number is 454-1642.

UPCOMING EVENTS

We always need volunteers. If you are interested in any of the following events, please call 459-1982 for details.

Feb 10, 11 - KALAMAZOO RODEO (AGAIN!), Sat - 7:30pm, Sun - 1:15 pm: We will picket at Wings Stadium. Carpooling from Grand Rapids.

Feb 14 - PROCTOR AND GAMBLE PROTEST: In Defense of Animals is planning to hang a banner from Proctor & Gambles headquarters. Any volunteers for picketing a P&G retailer?

Feb 14 - HAPPY VALENTINES DAY: WMFA will be collecting fur coats or collars to donate to West Michigan Wildlife Refuge (our own Kim) to help injured or abandoned animals recuperate. Call to arrange pickup.

Feb 15 - HUMAN RIGHTS/ANIMAL RIGHTS, 7 PM: An informal discussion hosted by IGE with area guest panelists discussing their views of similarities in the Human Rights/Animal Rights movements, at Institute for Global Education, 1400-B Lake Drive. Public welcome.

March 3 - NEXT MEETING: 6pm, IGE Office, 1400-B Lake Drive SE (next to Pizza Hut).

March 18 - SHRINE CIRCUS AT STADIUM ARENA: Volunteers needed all week to hold signs and inform the public that the circus life is no real life for animals. We need people to cover as many performances as possible.

March 17 - MEAT OUT DAY: A MARDI GRAS BANQUET: 6 PM. Dinner at Three Crowns Restaurant, downtown, Monroe Center & Ionia. The dinner would be vegan, and we have Eileen Liska (Heal-Pac) as the speaker. Cost is \$10 per person.

March 21 - NATIONAL MEAT OUT DAY, sponsored by F.A.R.M.

April 6 - EASTER HAM PROTEST



CITIZENS UNITED for BEARS (C.U.B.)

The black bear is one of North America's exceptional resources. Every other year, a mature female gives birth to two tiny cubs. Emerging from the security of the den in May, she will continue to nurse her cubs until late August. But what kind of future will those cubs have?

Hunting over bait

Under current Michigan laws, it is legal to set out bait buckets containing pizza and doughnuts to train bears to feed at designated locations. Then, on the first day of hunting season, shoot the bears at point-blank range when they come to feed.

Hunting with dogs

It is also permissible to hunt bears using dogs with radio transmitters on their collars. The dog packs chase the terrified bear for hours - while the hunter monitors the signal - until the exhausted bear climbs a tree. When the signal is emitted from a stationary point, the hunter converges on the bear and shoots it out of the tree.

Halt Unsportsmanlike and Inhumane Bear Hunting Practices

If you believe that these practices should be stopped, then help to change the hunting laws. Citizens United for Bears (C.U.B.) is a Michigan based, grassroots coalition of environmentalists, sportsmen, animal advocates and concerned citizens who want to eliminate the practice of hunting bears over bait and dogs. Citizens coalitions have been successful in changing similar laws in Oregon and Colorado. Michigan is the current battleground. Our goal is to let the people of the State of Michigan decide how bears should be hunted - not special interest groups, not even CUB. But to do so, we must get our cause on the ballot in 1996, and that means qualifying through a petition drive of over 250,000 signatures of registered Michigan voters. And the bears need your help!

Please give the black bears a chance by helping CUB - and the citizens of Michigan - to eliminate these inhumane and unsportsmanlike hunting practices.

For more information, contact:

Citizens United for Bears (C.U.B.)
4990 Northwind Dr. Ste. 215
P.O. Box 1393
East Lansing, MI 48826
or Call 1-800-887-4200
E-mail: rbrv98b@prodigy.com

CUB Post Script:

This is an election petition to put this question on the November 1996 ballot. The deadline is July, 1996 and CUB can only use petitions signed during a six month period of gathering the names of registered voters. Petitions are available from WMFA or CUB.

Any registered voter can circulate a petition, as long as s/he witnesses the signatures of other registered voters, all living in the same county. If you sign a petition, sign your legal name as it appears on your voter's registration card. Include the address where you are registered, and the date. Check to make sure that the county listed for that petition is the county in which you live. Otherwise, your name will be considered valid. Election officials do check petitions to determine the number of valid signatures. Not enough signatures means we can't vote on this in the November 1996 general election.

HELP PROTECT WILDLIFE PROTECTION LAWS!

With the current U.S. House and Senate, all environmental and animal protection laws are at risk. This past November 8th, Americans elected to office the most conservative U.S. Congress we have seen since before the original Earth Day, more than two decades ago!

Fueled and funded by big timber, mining, ranching, and development industries; anti-wildlife legislators such as Representative Don Young (R-AK), have moved into positions of real power. As the new Chairman of the House Resources Committee, Rep. Young - co-chair of the anti-wildlife Congressional Sportsman's Caucus and henchman of the trophy hunting Safari Club International; the man who waved a club at U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Mollie Beattie and verbally harassed her during a public Committee meeting; the man who accused The Fund for Animals' President Cleveland Amory of breaking a fox's leg and staging a trapping video - will be in full control of America's wildlife and wild lands. In a December 30, 1994 publication of the Bureau of National Affairs, Inc., Rep. Young had this to say regarding environmentalists and his agenda:

...environmentalists - the self-centered bunch. The waffle stomping, Harvard-graduating, intellectual bunch of idiots that don't understand that they're leading this country into environmental disaster. . . I don't have any use for them. They are one of the most self-serving individual groups I've ever run into in my life. . . Number one will be a revision of the Endangered Species Act. . . Intent will be explained again and put into law what the Endangered Species Act was meant to be. That will be done. . . within six months."

If Rep. Young has his way, Congress will vote on the Endangered Species Act by early June. This means we must start fighting to save wildlife today!

PLEASE CALL AND WRITE EVERY LEGISLATOR AND LET THEM KNOW:

(1) THEIR CONSTITUENTS SUPPORT
WILDLIFE PROTECTION LAWS.

Government was established to benefit the common person - me, not just those industries that destroy our lands for profit. We need them to protect wild lands and wildlife.

(2) THE CRISIS OF EXTINCTION

AS NOT LEFT US.

Twenty-one years ago Congress passed the Endangered Species Act so that future generations could experience our country's natural world. The crisis that influenced that passage has not yet left us. Currently (a) one quarter of the world's species could be lost over the next 50 years; (b) up to 100 species per day will become extinct worldwide by the year 2000; and (c) 480 plants and animals on the North American continent have become extinct since the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

(3) THERE IS NO REAL

PRIVATE PROPERTY CONFLICT.

Using permits, the ESA provides for the consideration of economic concerns throughout the entire recovery process. And, no federal court has ever found that the implementation of the ESA has taken private property in violation of the Fifth Amendment.

(4) BIODIVERSITY SAVES HUMAN LIVES AND WILD ECOSYSTEMS.

Over forty percent of all pharmaceutical medicines used today are derived or synthesized from natural substances. We can't afford to lose species before we are aware of their value to our health and the health of all ecosystems.

ASK SENATORS TO SIGN-ON TO THE
"DON'T UNDERMINE ESA PROTECTION"
LETTER ADDRESSED TO SENATE MAJORITY
LEADER DOLE AND MINORITY LEADER
DASCHLE!

We need to cement support for imperiled wildlife in the Senate. The Senate must be the "fire-wall" against any destructive language that the House is able to pass.

Please contact your Senators and Representatives immediately and repeatedly. If you need any assistance in drafting letters or organizing meetings with elected officials, please contact The Fund for Animals at (301) 585-2591. We can also give you detailed information about your officials and where they stand regarding wildlife protection.

GETTYSBURG NATIONAL PARK SEEKS PUBLIC INPUT ON DEER HUNTING!

The Gettysburg National Military Park has asked for public comments and suggestions regarding what the Park should do about its growing deer population.

The Park is considering five possible courses of action:

1. Deer contraception.
2. A live capture and release program.
3. Opening more hunting in areas surrounding the Park.
4. Allowing sharpshooters in the Park.
5. Opening the Park to hunting.

All National Military Parks in the country are managed without any hunting whatsoever, but sport hunting special interest groups such as the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus are pushing to open more of our National Park Service lands to hunting. If the Gettysburg National Military Park is opened to hunting, it would set a disastrous precedent for National Military Parks across the country.

Please write in support of a deer contraceptive program to:

Gettysburg National Military Park
R.D. #1
Gettysburg, PA 17325

The Park has a Draft Environmental Impact Statement available. If you would like to learn more about this issue, you can request a copy of the Draft EIS from the address above. Feel free to contact The Fund for Animals at (301) 585-2591 for our deer information packet.

LETTER WRITING: A VOICE FOR THE ANIMALS

Writing letters can be a very effective way of spreading the message about animal rights. By writing to newspapers, magazines, other media, to legislators, and to businesses, we can educate others and even influence policy. For example, when the state of Virginia was considering implementing a bounty on coyotes, the governor received so much mail asking that the bounty not be enacted that he vetoed the bill.

ALL LETTERS

To make a good impression, you should type your letters, if possible. Otherwise, print legibly. If no one can read your letter, you have wasted your time writing it. Be sure to use correct grammar and spelling, and proofread your letter before mailing it. If possible, ask someone else to look it over too. Before writing, do your homework. Make sure you get facts and figures right, and use the library as a resource, if necessary. Do not use flowery or decorated stationery. Letters should be direct; state your purpose early on. Don't include personal anecdotes unless you have a specific reason to do so (for example, when writing about a bill to ban the steel-jaw leghold trap after your dog has been caught in one). Keep personal grudges and name-calling out of letters; they will destroy your credibility. Opt for a letter over a postcard, but by all means send a postcard rather than nothing at all.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

When writing a letter to the editor of a newspaper or magazine, be sure to follow the publication's instructions with regards to length, personal information that must be included, etc. Newspapers often ask for a telephone number so that their staff can call to verify that you're the author of the letter before they print it. Letters in response to articles or other letters to the editor should be written soon, within a day or two, if possible. Not only is the paper more likely to print your response, but readers will remember the original item better.

In rebuttals, it is best to focus on one or two points and bring them out clearly. Try to tell readers something they are not likely aware of, such as how chickens are raised to produce eggs, and [try to] encourage them to take action (such as limiting their consumption of eggs).

Letters don't have to be rebuttals; they can express concern about any issue. Keep letters short, generally to one typed page or about 300 words. Add humor if possible and appropriate, but don't sacrifice the tone of a strong, serious letter just to add a punch line.

You can also write (or call) television and

radio stations to protest any expression of animal abuse, or to compliment them on a program that supports animal rights.

LEGISLATIVE LETTERS

Like letters to publications, letters to legislators should be brief and to the point. Discuss only one or possibly two bills per letter. Don't ask the legislator just to support animal rights bills; very few members of Congress vote in favor of all animal protection bills because different issues are at stake with each one. Never be threatening or insulting in a letter to a legislator. Just as the legislators need your vote, the animals need their votes in Congress.

Address members of the U.S. Congress as The Honorable (name), U.S. Senate (or U.S. House of Representatives), Washington, D.C. 20510 (20515 for the House).

LETTERS TO BUSINESSES

Use your clout as a consumer by writing to companies that exploit animals, especially companies whose products you have used. For instance, tell cosmetics manufacturers whose products are tested on animals that you will purchase another brand of cosmetics until the company finds a more humane method of safety testing. Don't be threatening or angry in your letter; simply point out what you are protesting and why, and suggest options, if appropriate. If a business holds a contest in which the prize is a fur coat, say why you object to furs and ask the sponsor to offer a prize that does not represent animal exploitation, such as a trip or jewelry.

Letter writing can be an important part of animal rights work, and the more informed you are about the issues, the more convincing your letters will be.

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals
P.O. Box 42516, Washington, DC 20015
301-770-PETA

WINTER PET TIPS

Many animals are attracted to the sweet smell and taste of antifreeze. But did you know it can be deadly to dogs, cats, wild animals, and children. Make sure your antifreeze is not leaking and purchase one of the new animal-friendly antifreeze products (Sierra, for example) which are less harmful to children, companion animals and wildlife.

If your car is not parked in a garage overnight, check under the hood before starting it. Cats will often curl up next to a warm engine. If you start the car while a cat is there, it may be torn up by the belts.

Many house plants are poisonous to animals (and children) if ingested. Keep plants out of your animal's reach. Why take a chance?

Do not let your pet get into the trash. Garbage (especially food) can build up toxic levels of bacteria very quickly (even when outside). This can be harmful, even fatal, to animals who eat it. Carefully secure your outdoor garbage cans to avoid endangering the health of local wildlife.

Beware of leghold and other traps which trappers set in the winter. These traps are often baited to attract animals. Thousands of wild and domestic animals die or suffer crippling injuries each year because of these traps.

Keep your companion animal inside as much as possible, especially on bad weather days. Animals can get frostbite and hypothermia just as people do. Older animals especially could

suffer a broken leg if they slip on the ice.

[When] you let your pet go outside, use good judgment and limit the time spent outdoors. Also consider installing a dog or cat door so that your animal can come back inside easily.

When your pet comes back inside, have a towel handy to dry and warm him/her. Be sure to wipe off any road salt from his/her paws because it can be harmful if ingested.

Keep hair trimmed between the pads on your pet's feet to avoid the formation of ice balls.

If your pet stays outside for prolonged periods of time, make sure there is a shelter (insulated, with the entrance facing away from the wind) available with clean, dry bedding and water (kept clear of ice). The shelter should be just big enough for the animal to lie down. This will contain the body heat generated by him/her. You may also want to increase the amount of dog (or cat) food you feed, as the animal will use more calories to keep warm.

Remember that very young, geriatric, or chronically ill animals do not have the same tolerance to the cold as mature adults. A sweater may be useful for animals in this category as well as for short-haired breeds.

For more information on how you can protect your companion animal and all animals, please write to: WSPA, PO Box 190, Boston, MA 02130; or call: 800-883-WSPA.

UPDATE ON "BAILEY"

Featured in last month's newsletter, Bailey is a miniature cocker spaniel that was spoiled and loved all her life. Her companions had a human baby so there was no more time for their first baby. Bailey was thrown in a cold hard cemented cage at the Allegan County Pound. She spent eight days waiting for her family to come back for her. Kelinda from the Wayland foster care home got her out and tried to work with her for ten days. Kelinda then called me for help as she fosters several dogs at once. Bailey was going downhill, she was depressed, not eating and the vet could find nothing wrong physically. She needed one on one attention and I thought I could help, so I went to get her. She was skin and bones, walking around with her head hung down. I figured she was hurting and missing her family, so I took her in with my three dogs, but she would have nothing to do with the others. She would not eat, just sat in a corner staring at nothing. Then one morning was gone... she died in her sleep. I think she died of a broken heart, abandoned by her family, cast off to strangers, this sensitive, loyal pet had nothing to live for.

This made me cry, I hurt just like she must have, and then I got angry; sick and tired of people treating animals like disposable material. It made me want to quit the adoption business, but, I know that few will help the animals crying for a good home, so I continue.

K-9 Kompanions has dogs and pups for adoption to responsible homes. These dogs need fenced yards/inside homes. We check vet references and screen families. We also work with someone who adopts out cats and kittens. Please call: Cyndee at 363-0209.

Remember, if you already have a pet that is not spayed or neutered, call 1-800-248-SPAY and get a low-cost certificate to get your companion fixed soon.

WOMEN SHOULD KNOW: PREMARIN IS HORSE URINE

Washington, DC -- Results of a survey released [recently] of 54,000 U.S. pharmacies indicate that 70% of responding pharmacists agree that women should know that the main ingredient of the estrogen-replacement therapy (ERT) drug Premarin is pregnant mares' urine (PMU). Premarin is manufactured by Wyeth-Ayerst, a division of American Home Products.

Taken by an estimated 8 million women worldwide, Premarin is the only ERT drug made from animal waste. Other drug companies produce ERT drugs from plant sources that more naturally mimic the estrogens found in the human ovary.

Each year, tens of thousands of pregnant mares are tied in stalls so small they cannot turn around or comfortably lie down. Irritating rubber sacks are strapped to the mares' haunches so their urine can be collected to make Premarin, and the horses are denied free access to water so their urine will yield a more concentrated estrogen. The foals resulting from these pregnancies are considered unwanted industry "byproducts" and will be sold to slaughter.

The survey also indicates that 68% of responding pharmacists would be willing to let customers know that alternative ERT drugs are available that are just as effective as Premarin.

"Pharmacists have the power to help women make informed decisions about their personal care," says PETA's Jean Rodgers. "Women should know that other ERT drugs--that don't involve cruelty to animals--are available."

More information about alternatives to Premarin is available by calling PETA's hotline, 1-800-KNOW-PMU.

CATS NEED HOMES

We urgently need responsible indoor homes for some neglected cats. These animals have never seen a vet and have always lived outside. Those that are friendly enough to adapt to indoor family life are being offered for adoption. Please call: 459-1982 to help.

RAINBOW BRIDGE

(Dedicated to everyone who lost a companion animal last year...)

Just this side of heaven is a beautiful place called Rainbow Bridge.

When an animal who has been especially close to someone here on Earth dies, that animal goes to Rainbow Bridge. There are meadows and hills for all our special animal friends so they can run and play together. There is plenty of food and water and sunshine, and they are warm and comfortable. Those who had been ill and old are restored to health and vigor; those who were hurt or maimed are made whole and strong again, just as we remember them in our dreams of days and times gone by. They feel no pain or suffering, only comfort.

The animals are happy and content but for one small thing: they miss someone very special to them who had to be left behind.

They all run and play together, but the day comes when one suddenly stops and looks anxiously into the distance. The bright eyes are intent; the eager body quivers. Suddenly he begins to break away from the group, flying over the green grass, his legs carrying him faster and faster. YOU have been spotted, and when you and your special friend finally join, you cling together in joyous reunion, never to be parted again. The happy kisses rain upon your face; your hands again caress the beloved head, and you look once more into the trusting eyes of your animal friend, so long and painfully gone from your life, but never ever absent from your heart.

THEN YOU CROSS THE BRIDGE TO HEAVEN TOGETHER. . . to live together in peace, and joy and love forever.

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PLEASE JOIN US IN THE FIGHT FOR ANIMAL PROTECTION.....

Would you like to:

Hold a sign in a peaceful demonstration? Make telephone calls? Write letters? Participate in planning? Distribute the newsletter?
Sell ads? Work at fundraisers? Hand out literature? Investigate alleged animal abuse or law violations? Do office work?
Make a donation? If you answered YES to any of these questions, we want to hear from you!

West Michigan for Animals is a local, nonprofit corporation that has been battling animal abuses right here in the Grand Rapids/West Michigan area for years. We need your help. Please join or send a contribution to: West Michigan For Animals, 139 Langdon NE, Grand Rapids MI 49503.

Name: _____ Address: _____
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