

TRACS

*The Responsible
Animal Care Society*

PO Box 26097
Westbank, BC
Canada V4T 2G3
250-768-4803
tracs@shaw.ca
www.tracs-bc.ca

Spring 2005

aim

**animal issues
magazine**



**Canada's Shame
The Seal Hunt**



DIRECTORS

President

Sinikka
Crosland

Vice-President

Linda Janicki

Treasurer

Lauren Gaglardi

Secretary

Louise Adams

Director of Nutrition & Food Animal Issues

Brenda Davis

Director of Youth Programs

Cory Davis

Newsletter Editor

Sandi Janicki

President's Message

By: Sinikka Crosland

Spring has emerged, surprising me once again with its capriciousness: winter's breath still swirling around new flowers as they attempt to unfurl. Always a month of turbulence and promise, March 2005 has left an additional imprint that will never be forgotten, both on a global and personal level.

The horror of the annual Canadian commercial seal hunt has ignited an outpouring of resentment this year, resulting in measures taken internationally. Unprecedented in its solidarity, global resolve to end the brutal yearly massacres culminated recently in protests throughout the world, in over 50 communities, March 12th-March 15th. Citizens of many nations continue to lobby the Canadian government about this issue, and a boycott of seafood from Canada, beginning with the clubbing of the first seal on March 29th, has been launched by international forces.

Having expressed my own opposition to the seal hunt for decades, this year I find myself grieving even more than usual over the cruelty of a slaughter that should have been banned long ago. Defenseless seal pups, 12 days to 12 weeks old, comprise the majority of the hunt's victims. Resting peacefully in their icy nurseries, many of these youngsters have not even eaten their first meal of solid food at the point when the hunters descend. They are bludgeoned or shot, hooked, dragged, and often skinned while alive and conscious. In March 2001, a team of independent veterinarians (not associated with government or industry) verified, through observations of the hunt as well as post-mortem examination of carcasses, that up to 42% of the seals killed were likely to have been alive at the time of

skinning. When shot by hunters, wounded seals have been reported to slip beneath the surface of the ice, never to be recovered. The agony suffered by these innocent animals, still babies, is difficult for compassionate people to fathom.

Yet industry and government take suffering in stride. They refer to the seals as a "valuable natural resource", and call the hunt "humane". They claim that, since newborn "whitecoats" are not being killed, the seals "harvested" are not babies. They promote the wearing of fur, and tout the health benefits of Omega-3 fatty acids in seal oil, while downplaying the fact that humanely-procured flaxseed oil is also high in essential fats. They appear to be oblivious to reports about marine oils being laced with toxins such as PCBs. They blame seals, not poor fisheries management, for "depleting cod supplies", and refuse to acknowledge that seals eat mainly the predators of cod--squid, for instance. They ignore warnings from experts that massive seal culls could actually further damage cod populations.

In my opinion, the commercial seal hunt is another example of humanity at its very worst. The slaughter of baby seals who cannot defend themselves has resulted in not only unspeakable cruelty, but in greed, callousness, and a tangled web of deceit--all propagated by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the sealing and fur industries.

It remains to be seen whether Canada will suffer financially because of our government's stubborn refusal to end the hunt. Let the force behind the international humane movement be the deciding factor...and our nation may have no choice but to bend to the will of the world.

Local Protest Against Seal Hunt Atrocities

Considered the largest massacre of marine mammals in the world, the Canadian commercial seal hunt claimed almost 366,000 lives in 2004, and has officially opened again as of March 2005. Recently, animal advocates came together in an international effort to end the hunt: protests against the barbaric slaughter were staged simultaneously in over 50 cities throughout the world, with approximately 3000 people participating.

Organized by YAAA (Youth Against Animal Abuse) and supported by wildlife protectionist Anthony Marr (from Vancouver), as well as TRACS, the events in Kelowna were multi-faceted, and will continue to unfold into the spring.

1) On March 11, 2005, 14-year-old Carmen Crosland, YAAA President, met with her MP, the Hon. Mr. Stockwell Day, for a good half hour. She showed him still images of the seal hunt, stated her concerns about the inhumanity of the hunt, and handed him a video to take with him for viewing. Mr. Day asked many questions, expressed dismay at both the pictures and what she had to say about the hunt's cruelty, and promised to research the issue in Ottawa. He seemed to be very interested in pursuing alternatives to seal hunting, and stated that he was not in favour of cruelty to animals.

In stark contrast to Mr. Day's willingness to discuss this issue promptly, MP Werner Schmidt had not (as of the third week in March) responded to a request from YAAA to meet. YAAA plans further action in order to bring the concerns forth to Mr. Schmidt.

2) YAAA, supported by Anthony Marr and members of TRACS, put together a 7 km. March for the Seals on March 12, 2005. 20 people participated in this march, and media included: CBC radio, CHBC TV, castanet.net (online news), the Daily Courier, and Penticton Herald. Carmen's letters to the editor had previously been published in both Kelowna newspapers, The Daily Courier and the Capital News. Spokespeople for the event included 17-year-old Cory Davis, Carmen Crosland, and Anthony Marr. Marchers handed out literature during the walk, as well as anti-seal-hunt postcards to be mailed to the federal government. Following the March, five vehicles bearing anti-seal hunt slogans and banners drove from Kelowna to Westbank in a motorcade for the seals.

Although the International Day of Action is ended, concerned Okanagan citizens are continuing to phone, e-mail, and fax legislators about the seal hunt. Further actions are planned throughout the spring. YAAA anticipates feedback from MP Stockwell Day in the near future.

Hate the Seal Hunt? Let the Prime Minister of Canada Know How Much!
Phone: 1-866-599-4999 (toll-free)

or PM Paul Martin's constituency office: 1-613-992-4211

Further contact information for the PM:

**Prime Minister's Office
Right Honourable Paul Martin
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington St.
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada
K1A 0A2
Fax: 613-941-6900
E-mail: pm@pm.gc.ca**



International Day of Action Against the Seal Hunt: Protest in Kelowna, B.C.

or Geoff Regan's office (the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans) 1-613-992-3474

Journal Entry by Rebecca Aldworth of the HSUS

THE GULF OF ST. LAWRENCE, March 29, 2005 - Today was the first day of the commercial seal hunt in Canada. And despite gale force winds, sleet, and rain, The HSUS Seal Watch team was there on the ice floes to bear witness to this slaughter and document the cruelty.

Tonight, after several hours on the ice observing the hunt, I sit here, trying to do the impossible—to find words that would come close to describing what we have seen. What we witnessed was unconscionable, and I can think of no way to adequately capture the fear, misery, and betrayal we saw in all directions.

And that is why I find myself writing mostly about one baby seal. One who endured unimaginable suffering so her skin could be turned into a fur coat. One who wanted to live so badly that she fought for more than an hour as blood oozed from her mouth and nose. One who desperately needed help that we had no way of providing.

And one who has come to symbolize for me all the reasons why this hunt should be stopped for good.



Walking on Thin Ice

I wake up in the dark at 5 a.m. Our helicopters must fly as soon as possible, because the sealers begin killing in one hour. As is always the case out here, I have not slept much. Our team scrambles to dress in our survival suits, and we race to the airport in record time.

It is not an easy flight. Our helicopters are bouncing through driving rain and snow and high winds. We have almost no visibility. But we know that if we do not make it to the ice floes today, this slaughter will occur without witnesses. The sealers themselves are saying they will kill 90,000 pups in just three days. And so we press on.

I scan the horizon for sealing boats, but can barely make out anything through the snow. Finally, I spot a black dot on the horizon and, out of nowhere, dozens more. I begin to count, realizing with horror there are at least 70 sealing boats operating out here.

And then I notice the blood. Spreading across the ice in crimson stains as far as I can see. The scale of this slaughter, just two hours after it has started, is overwhelming. From the air I can see the carcasses, thousands of them left to rot on the ice floes.

We land our helicopter on the most solid-looking ice we can find. I do my best to navigate my group across the ice, but it is difficult. Rain over the past days has made the ice slick, and we have problems crossing thin areas where I can see through to the ocean beneath.

Directly in front of us, about 30 seal pups are stranded on small ice pans. We move towards them, knowing the sealers will come in this direction. As we reach the seals, I see that several have already been clubbed, their bodies left on the ice. The sealers will return to skin them later.

Journal Entry by Rebecca Aldworth of the HSUS (Continued)

A movement catches my eye, and I realize with horror that a clubbed baby seal is still conscious. She is writhing around on the ice in pain, moving her flippers. She lies next to another seal who has been killed, vacant eyes staring up, blood already frozen in the ice under her mouth. It is a macabre scene—the dead and the dying huddled together here in the rain.

There is nothing I can do to help this baby seal. Despite her struggle to survive, she has been too badly injured, and the only humane thing would be to put her out of her misery. But we have no way to euthanize her, and as is almost always the case, there isn't an enforcement officer in sight.

I kneel beside her and find myself whispering softly, telling her to go to sleep. I am begging her to die quickly. Because the sealers will come back soon. The dozens of live seal pups just feet away from us will prove too tempting for them, despite the presence of our cameras. And when the sealers arrive, this baby seal will endure a fate far worse than death.

Our group moves on to the next pile of seal carcasses. Across the ice floes, I hear panicked voices—there are more clubbed seals who are conscious and in agony. I run over to them, and see seals writhing around, breathing, and lifting their heads.

The wind blows mercilessly and the rain pelts down on these suffering animals. The few survivors, just three to four weeks old, are left to move through the blood and carcasses. I cannot begin to imagine the terror and confusion that these babies experience as they see this slaughter unfold around them. And I am deeply ashamed to be human as I watch these helpless infants staring around in panic, not knowing what to do to avoid the clubs raining down on their skulls.

What just days ago I described as heaven has become a hell.

The Final Blow

I return to the first seal. She is trying to crawl, and making anguished sounds. I cannot stop crying. She is trying so hard to live, and I know there is no hope for her. She has her eyes tightly shut, as if to keep out the sight of the dead seals around her. My heart is breaking.

Without warning, we hear the mechanical sounds of the sealers' snowmobiles racing at us across the ice floes. By law, we must stand ten meters away from the sealers, and we watch in disbelief as they slaughter all of these seals.

The suffering baby seal is not spared. A heavy metal hakapik hammers through her skull. It is a strange world up here, where an act of such violence brings the only relief available—death.

As I always do, I find myself apologizing to the seals—for being a part of a species that could ever consider inflicting so much violence on such gentle, trusting creatures. For living in a country whose government has the audacity to call this brutal slaughter 98% humane.

Out here on the ice, far out to sea in the middle of this hunt, there is little that makes sense. This is an alternate universe where laws exist only to protect sealers. Where rescuing a wounded seal can be defined as "harassment" by the authorities. And where the brutal clubbing of baby seals is called a "harvest."

I have been to this place seven years in a row. But it never gets easier to watch.

Just days ago, I stood on these same ice floes, watching as seal pups nursed contentedly from their mothers in the sun. Today, the hunters shattered that world. And everything that was perfect has been ruined.

Costco Peddles Cruel Foie Gras

Costco, one of Canada's largest retailers, is promoting the cruel and violent foie gras industry by allowing the Aux Champs d'Élisé foie gras company to peddle its products over the coming weeks.

Foie gras, which is French for "fatty liver," is made from the grotesquely enlarged livers of male ducks and geese. The birds have up to three pounds of food per day pumped into their stomachs through long metal pipes that are shoved down their throats. The cruel ordeal often causes severe injuries that make it painful or even impossible for the birds to drink. Those who survive the feedings suffer from a painful illness that causes their livers to swell to 10 times their normal size. Many become too sick to walk and are reduced to pushing themselves across their cages with their wings. When the birds are slaughtered, their livers are sold for foie gras. Watch the video http://www.petatv.com/tvpopup/Prefs.asp?video=delicacy_despair to see the cruelty for yourself.

We need your help! Please call or send a polite letter to Costco's Senior Vice President Louise Wendling asking Costco to cancel events involving the promotion of foie gras.

Louise Wendling, Senior Vice-President & Country Manager,
Costco Wholesale Canada Limited
415 West Hunt Club Road
Ottawa, ON K2E 1C5
613-221-2000
613 221-2001 (fax)



**Vegetarian
Restaurant** Health for your life

101-3013 Pandosy St., Kelowna, BC

Tel: (250) 860-1588

Must adopt to loving home:
Ginger tabby cat, spayed female, 10 yrs. old. Very
"talkative". Food and litter will be supplied for a time.
Please phone Rayne at: 250-861-8356





*On Feb. 12,
25 protesters in Kelowna
participated in National
Anti-Fur Day.*

China Parks Will Curb Throwing Horses to Lions

Safari parks in China have agreed to stop feeding their lions and tigers large live animals such as horses – at least in public.

The gory eating habits could lead visitors to believe that animals, both hunter and prey, were only human playthings, Xinhua news agency on Wednesday quoted Xie Youxin, the deputy general manager of the Wild Animal World in Chengdu, as saying. “The bloody scene could also have implanted violent tendencies in youngsters,” he said. Chengdu is the capital of southwestern Sichuan province.

Managers of 22 of 30 safari parks nationwide who signed an agreement last week said they acknowledged that wild animals had the same sense of “agony, terror and annoyance” as human beings.

Animal rights activists have criticised the state of China’s zoos and the mistreatment of wild animals captured for their fur, or in the case of bears, for the healing power of their bile.

But the safari park agreement only restricts the release of large domestic animals, such as oxen and horses, during the presence of visitors, the agency said. “Feeding when the park is not open is permitted. Parks are allowed to continue to sell small birds for visitors to feed the wild beasts.”



Okanagan Health Forum

April 9 – 10/05

Can your food choices save your life?
How powerful is the connection
between diet and disease?

**Find out. Be
there.**

Presenting:

Dr. Caldwell Esselstyn Jr: Becoming Heart-Attack Proof

Vesanto Melina, RD: Food Allergy Survival

Dr. Colin Campbell: The China Study
– startling findings on cancer

Brenda Davis, RD: Eating for Life...constructing
the optimal diet

KELOWNA: Rotary Centre for the Arts: April 9, 9 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

PENTICTON: Penticton Lakeside Resort: April 10, 9 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Tickets (\$5 for daytime events) available beginning March 1st at
Nature's Fare (Kelowna, Vernon and Penticton), **Whole Foods
Market** (Penticton) or through the website.

“Eating” Documentary + Panel Discussion (all four speakers)

Kelowna only: April 9, 7:00 p.m. Tickets \$5 at the door

www.okanaganhealthforum.com

Don't miss this event!!!

These internationally acclaimed authors and speakers will challenge many of the most commonly held beliefs about diet and nutrition. They will inspire you to make choices that are not only protective for human health, but are among the most powerful choices you can make for the planet, and all the creatures with whom we share it

Okanagan Health Forum Speakers

T. Colin Campbell, Ph.D.

T. Colin Campbell, Ph.D., the Jacob Gould Schurman Professor of nutritional biochemistry at Cornell University, is the author of the landmark China-Cornell-Oxford Project, which the New York Times called "the most comprehensive large study ever undertaken of the relationship between diet and the risk of developing disease". Dr. Campbell trained at M.I.T. and Cornell in toxicology and nutritional biochemistry and is one of the world's leading experts on the nutritional causes of cancer. He has authored over 350 publications, has participated in numerous deliberations on state, national, and international policy matters, and has lectured extensively on consumer nutritional information and food policy. Dr. Campbell's new book, The China Study, is based on the China-Cornell-Oxford Project, which the New York Times called "*the most comprehensive large study ever undertaken of the relationship between diet and the risk of developing disease*".

Brenda Davis, R.D.

Recognized as a leader in her field, registered dietitian and nutritionist Brenda Davis is an author of 5 bestselling books-- Becoming Vegetarian, Becoming Vegan, The New Becoming Vegetarian, Dairy-free and Delicious, and most recently Defeating Diabetes. She is past chair of the Vegetarian Dietetic Practice Group of the American Dietetic Association and has been a featured speaker at National Nutrition Conferences in England and Belgium, has lectured at the International Congress on Vegetarian Nutrition at Loma Linda University, and recently completed an 8 month speaking tour covering 42 US states.

Caldwell B. Esselstyn, MD

Dr. Caldwell B. Esselstyn, MD, was Chairman and Program Director of the 2nd National Conference on Lipids in the Elimination and Prevention of Coronary Artery Disease where he presided at a gathering of over 500 physicians and health care workers. He edited the Proceedings of this International Conference as a Supplement to the American Journal of Cardiology in 1998. He is a former Chairman of the American Association of Endocrine Surgeons and an Olympic Gold Medal winner. His ongoing research at the Cleveland Clinic indicates that a healthy lowfat vegetarian diet should be used to help achieve the profound reduction in cholesterol needed to prevent or reverse heart disease.

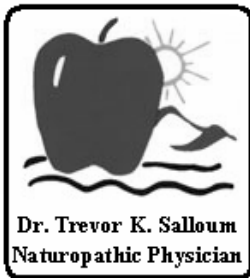
Vesanto Melina, M.S., R.D.

Vesanto Melina is a registered dietitian and co-author of the nutrition classics The New Becoming Vegetarian, Becoming Vegetarian, Becoming Vegan, Raising Vegetarian Children, Healthy Eating for Life to Prevent and Treat Cancer, and most recently the Food Allergy Survival Guide: Surviving and Thriving With Food Allergies and Sensitivities. This internationally known speaker co-authored the American Dietetic Association and Dietitians of Canada's Position on Vegetarian Diets (2003) and Manual of Clinical Dietetics, 6th edition, 2000. From her Canadian west coast office, Ms. Melina is a nutrition consultant to major food manufacturers and various levels of government, and she helps patients and clients all over North America.

Okanagan Health Forum Sponsors

The Okanagan Health Forum executive committee extends its deepest gratitude to the generous sponsors of these events. This forum is the result of your commitment to health, and your kind spirit.

Platinum Sponsors



Gold Sponsors



Supporters

Mike Anderson – Producer of “Eating” DVD
Okanagan Integrative Healing Info Centre
Lake Tai Vegetarian Restaurant
Veggie Village Vegetarian Restaurant
Rebar
Rod Penfold Photography
Purified Water Store
Mailboxes etc.

Time To Get Dogs Back In The Doghouse

From *Prince George this week* – Sunday, January 30, 2005

LOCAL GROUP SPREADS AWARENESS FOR SHELTERING PETS

By Josh Hammerstedt

Dogs may have fur coats (with the exception of those funny ones that look like rodents), but that does not mean that they are impervious to cold. A lot of people do not realize that most dogs only have the same tolerance for cold as we do. This is exactly the message that new Prince George group In the Doghouse wants to give the community.

“We decided to get concerned people together and raise awareness” said member Shiloh Durkee. “Annie came up with the idea of making doghouses.”

Dr. Annie Booth, another founding member, heard about popular programs in the United States where groups make and give away free doghouses to teach pet owners about the importance of proper shelter for animals. By helping to solve the problems as well as raising awareness, In the Doghouse hopes people will be more inclined to make a difference themselves.

“It’s a way of giving back to the community,” Booth said.

Durkee and Booth, along with third member, Cindy Buker, are currently still in the planning stages. As a new advocacy group in Prince George, In the Doghouse still has to develop links to other groups, companies and people in the community to get the message out there. For now they are looking for materials, labour and funding to create their free doghouses. Once the group gets going, they see the program snowballing as more and more people find out what In the Doghouse is doing and jump on board.

“A group is stronger if it forms linkages to other groups”, Durkee said. “The most obvious way to let people know we’re here right now is by word-of-mouth, so we’re sending our message out to the community.”

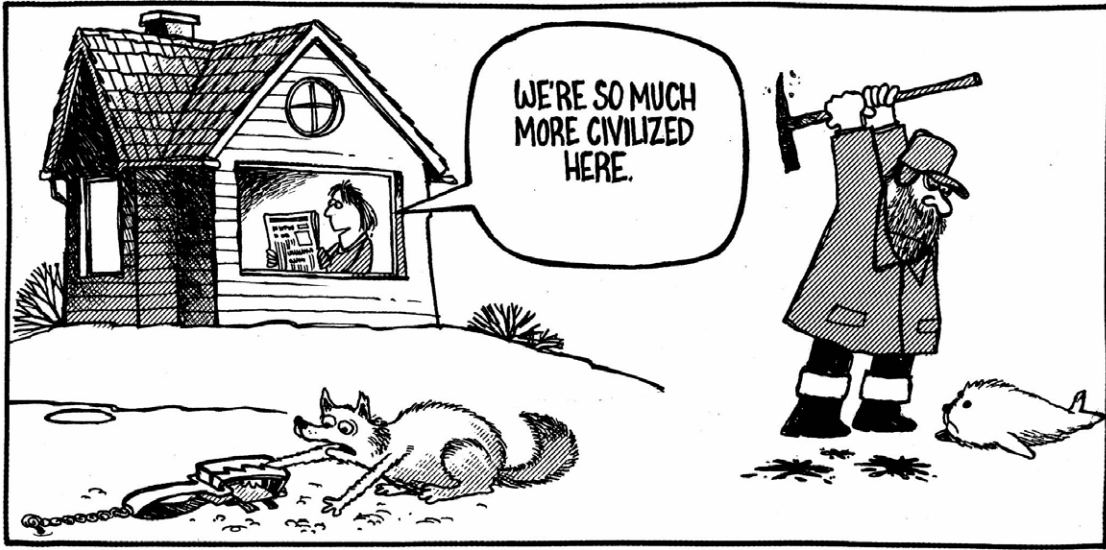
Creating and distributing doghouse is not the final step, however. Next comes getting dogs off backyard chains and into the house in cold weather. Dogs like people are vulnerable to frostbite and other cold related injuries, and need attention and care to maintain good health.

“Animals need shelter. They’re living creatures too,” said Booth. “Dogs do not just need physical care, but emotional and social, too. Dogs are very social animals.”

Above all else, the In the Doghouse campaign is about education. Many people do not mean to mistreat their dogs, they just do not know that they are doing anything wrong. Even people without pets of their own can make a difference, if they are made aware that animals need help.

“We want to decrease apathy,” added Durkee. “We want to not only educate owners, but to educate the entire community.”

For more information or to help In the Doghouse, email inthedoghousepg@yahoo.com.



Courtesy of Adrian Raeside

Join TRACS...

Help TRACS continue its work - become a member and receive our quarterly

newsletter



Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

Prov: _____

Postal Code: _____

Phone: (_____) _____

I am enclosing the following: (please check)

\$15 for Individual Membership

\$20 for Family Membership

Donation \$ _____

Return to:
TRACS PO Box 26097 Westbank, BC V4T 2G3