

HUMANE REVIEW

nyshumane.org

The Newsletter of the New York State Humane Association



The Tragedy of Puppy, Kitten, and Rabbit Mills

Finally - we have an exciting chance in NY State to make a difference in the lives of misery endured by animals imprisoned in puppy, kitten, and rabbit mills.

In what are essentially factories, females are confined to small cages and forced to produce litters as often as possible. Hundreds of dogs at a typical puppy mill live in wire cages often stacked upon each other, metal grids cutting into their feet, subject to urine and feces falling on them from the cages above. Most are never treated for diseases and wounds, never leave their cages until they are abandoned or killed, and never receive a kind word or loving contact. In addition, the puppies from these breeders, sold in pet stores, flea markets, or on the internet, often are subject to illnesses, physical problems, and/or socialization issues.

Estimates are that there are about 10,000 puppy mills in operation, with 500,000 dogs producing about 2.6 million puppies sold mostly in pet shops. The USDA is assigned the task of regulating these facilities and ensuring they meet some kind of minimum standards, but the agency rarely if ever enforces these regulations, with little or no punishment even for repeat violations. Apparently, the Animal Welfare Act does little if anything to help animals in puppy mills, restrained their entire lives in crates only inches bigger than their bodies. They can be denied social contact with other animals, bred as many times as they enter heat, then killed and dumped whenever their uterus shrivels.

Kitten mills are a carbon copy of all the negative aspects of puppy mills. Breeding cats live in small, cramped quarters, also in wire cages that damage legs and feet, covered in matted fur, and sleeping in overflowing litter boxes. Mothers are bred until they drop. Kittens are sick and dirty. They are kept in feces-stained pens, with no physical or mental stimulation, no view of the outside world, and no



hope of ever leaving their enclosures. These poor cats suffer from infections, deformations, starvation and parasites.

In rabbit mills, rabbits suffer the same atrocious conditions and high rates of disease. Most rabbits sold in pet stores are babies, only 3 months old, and almost half of them die from diseases or lack of care during the transport from the breeder to the pet shop.

Currently, there is a bill pending in NY State to prohibit the retail sale of dogs, cats, and rabbits acquired from these animal factories – A.4283 and S.1130. It would allow pet shops to make space for adoptions from not-for-profit animal shelters and rescue groups instead. Both puppy and kitten mills contribute to dog and cat homelessness, overpopulation, and death. Beautiful, adoring and adorable companion animals languish in shelters in the hopes of finding a loving home. This legislation would give them the chance.

While the bill wouldn't end these horrific breeding factories throughout the country, it would eliminate a major market in New York State and reduce the incentive for puppy, kitten, and rabbit mills to continue elsewhere. More than 300 cities and counties nationwide have passed similar laws, as well as two states. With this kind of momentum, we can end this misery once and for all.

What you can do to end this cruelty: *Please* ask your NY legislators to support this valuable bill – A.4283 and S.1130. (Find your legislators at nyshumane.org; click on Legislation on menu bar.)

President's Message

Our lead story focuses on the miserable lives of factory-farmed companion animals who are kept in horrific conditions in pet mills. During this session of the NYS Legislature, we have an opportunity to stop the sale of pet-mill-raised dogs, cats, and rabbits in pet stores. It almost happened before – the Senate bill designed to stop such sales passed, but the companion Assembly bill did not. Let's not let that happen again. Be a lobbyist for animals; urge your legislators to pass A.4283/S.1130 that prohibits pet stores from selling factory-farmed dogs, cats, and rabbits, and authorizes collaboration with animal shelters and rescue organizations to use store space to feature and adopt animals in need of homes. If New York joins California and Maryland, where such laws already exist, such actions would soon sound the death knell for immoral pet mills.

Another scourge on our society is the exploitation of horses by the racing industry. And to add insult to literal injury, it turns out that revenue from the gaming machines located in racinos in the state – money that should be coming into state coffers to fund education and other services – instead is subsidizing the horse racing industry.

What? Yes, it's true. Not only has an investigation conducted by a coalition of diverse groups come to that conclusion, a parallel investigation by the Albany-based *Times Union* newspaper has as well. The paper recently published a series of articles on horse racing, one detailing how monies from racino gaming are being channeled to the failing racing industry. I am certain that none of us wants income intended to support education to instead subsidize an abhorrent industry. There are bills in the legislature to end this chicanery and they need your support. Please ask your legislators to support A.8468 to end subsidies and A.7745/S.7260 to end tax exemptions on sales of expensive racehorses.

To see the informative *Times Union* articles, please go to our website: www.nyshumane.org. Also, you can find the bills referenced above in a Legislation chart by clicking on Legislation on the menu bar.

Please be kind to animals,

Patricia Valusek, President

Our Voices in Albany

Let's first celebrate our legislative victories in the last session! Wow! The Governor signed the following animal protection bills into law:

First, the bill to protect racehorses from going to slaughter finally passed. Our hard-working team in Albany lobbied for this legislation for years, and at last it happened. This law also stops the truckloads of no-longer-profitable racehorses from being transported through New York on their way to Canada to be slaughtered for the European table. Next we have to work to insure that other horses used commercially receive the same protection.

Another victory was the veterinarian mandatory reporting bill. There was already a law in place that permitted veterinarians to report cruelty when they observed signs of it, but now the new law

mandates that they must. Often, animal abuse is a sign of possible human abuse in a family as well, so this bill is a double win.

Also signed into law was a bill that requires that animals no longer be treated like furniture in a divorce case. Now if disputes arise about the custody of a companion animal, judges must decide what is in the best interest of the animal involved – a major step toward recognizing that animals are sentient creatures, not just another piece of property.

You can see the text of these bills, as well as the animal protection legislation we are supporting this session, on NYSHA's website – nyshumane.org. Click on Our Voices in Albany on the homepage to get to a Legislation Chart. Please look the bills over and contact your own legislators to indicate your support.

Romance is in the Air

Springtime is the time when lots of animals become pregnant, so please make sure yours are spayed or neutered, educate others about the need to, and support and spread the word about low-cost spay/neuter programs in your community.

Your Will Can Be Your Way...

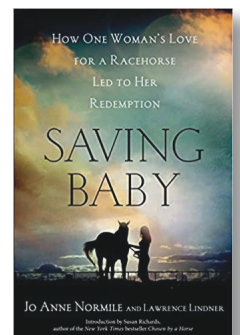
Your will can be your way to continue helping animals after your lifetime. We are grateful that many of you have given NYSHA generous donations. If you also wish to remember NYSHA in your will, please ask your attorney to specify our official name and address as follows: New York State Humane Association, Inc., PO Box 3068, Kingston, NY 12402. Federal ID Number 22-2238112. Please call NYSHA at 845-336-4514 if you need further information. Thank you.

The Book Corner – “Saving Baby”

Jo Anne Normile and Lawrence Lindner

All of us who live with animals know how profoundly they affect us and add to our lives. In many cases they substantially change who we are and what we do. “Saving Baby” is Jo Anne Normile's account of transitioning from being a willing and almost innocent participant in the horse racing industry to becoming a formidable opponent and champion of its victims.

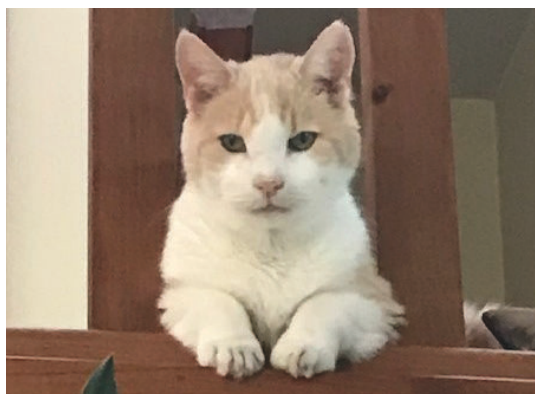
A story of heartbreak and determination, the author recounts her personal journey to awareness and establishment of a well-respected equine rescue. She has now joined forces with Horseracing Wrongs to further strengthen her efforts, and is an excellent example of hope – that it's never too late to change and make a difference. (Macmillan Publishers)



The Vet Is In – Aging Cats

Warning: Kitties can be addictive! Many clients tell me they have no intention of getting a new cat after the passing of their previous companion because they can't face another heartbreak, yet they return later with a new feline with whom they are in love.

There is no magic way to prolong your beloved cat's lifespan by estimating his/her age based on dentition and bone growth, but by diagnosing health/weight/hormonal problems early and feeding your cat appropriately, you can better your odds of having a long relationship with your new friend.



Tomasino, at "94," enjoys lots of love and TLC.

While aging, cats mature very rapidly initially, then slow down by their 3rd year, equivalent to approximately 29 years old for a human. At one year of age, your cat is the equivalent of 14.5 human years and able to reproduce (one reason spay/neuter is essential by now), at 10, he/she is equivalent to 57 human years, and at 17 years, he/she is 85. Your cat should have a physical and oral exam with your veterinarian yearly, increasing to twice annually once he/she is ten years of age or older.

Because cats evolved to be superb at hiding symptoms of illness, trauma, and organ damage, these senior exams are essential. You should become adept at reporting signs of kidney failure or infection with abnormally excessive thirst and urine production; diabetes with its excessive weight drop, drinking, and urination; also hyperthyroidism with its rapid heart rate, increased appetite, and dramatic weight loss. Watch your elderly kitty's gait: as his/her joints become stiffer, there may be lameness, but often the patient does not show a limp, but rather is simply less flexible in the limbs and slower.

With two annual visits for the geriatric kitty, your veterinarian can detect

abnormal health concerns more rapidly and initiate treatment ASAP, whether it be weight loss for the diabetic cat, prescription diets for intestinal, kidney, or GI diets, or joint support for the early arthritic patient. With the earlier detection and treatment of problems, the better the chances are for improvement in your kitty's health in the sunset years.

Please note: When your cat's age and diagnosis indicate that he/she has come to the end of the line, some owners give "palliative care" in order to keep the patient comfortable at home while the body fails. Such care includes fluid therapy

daily, syringe-feeding liquefied baby food, administering pain medications as needed, keeping the cat's coat gently brushed or clipped to prevent the build-up of painful mats, and always being aware of the quality of life. Be strong and loving enough to let your veterinarian end your cat's life before his/her condition declines sufficiently to create suffering.

If the patient is brought to the veterinarian exhibiting minimal responses, anorexia, dulled awareness, and severe dehydration, then, sadly, they have gone well beyond palliative care, and suffering has been introduced (inadvertently) into the final goodbye. The separation becomes painful, not peaceful. Please listen to your veterinarian who may recognize your companion's suffering when you are not yet ready to do so. And of course, never place your cat in a so-called hospice or shelter outside your home, when familiar family and surroundings are crucial to a gentle passing.

Holly Cheever, DVM

The World Around Us – A Hopeful Spring



Amanda Panda, Unsplash

Last year, thousands of New York's white tail deer were infected with Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease in late summer and fall. Sadly, EHD in white tail deer is almost always fatal. EHD deaths among New York's deer were found in more than 30 counties. It's suspected that thousands of deaths have gone unreported.

This viral disease is transmitted by bites from midges, small insects we often call gnats, or, no-see-ums, that are believed to have been brought to New York by hurricanes in the south. Unfortunately, last year's dry summer in the state served as an ideal breeding ground for these insects.

Once bitten, a deer will become symptomatic within seven to ten days. EHD causes deer to hemorrhage internally. Outward symptoms include confusion, foaming at the mouth, lameness, high fever, and swollen head, neck, and tongue. Deer succumb to the disease in as little as 8 to 36 hours after symptoms appear.

EHD cannot be transmitted from deer to deer, to other animals, or to humans.

Though our deer have been hard hit by this disease, we can begin the equinox knowing that insects carrying EHD will have been long dead with the first frost, leaving deer, and us, ever more hopeful of spring and rejuvenation.

SPOTLIGHT: Patrick Battuello, Founder and President, and Nicole Arciello, Executive Director of Horseracing Wrongs

“Horseracing in NYS, horseracing in America, has run its course – horseracing must end.” Patrick Battuello was direct when he testified before a New York State Senate committee about the cruelties inherent in the horseracing industry. “Horseracing is unremitting confinement and isolation. The typical horse used in the racing industry is kept locked – alone – in a tiny 12x12 stall for over 23 hours a day. Horseracing is control and subjugation – it is lip tattoos, cribbing collars, nose chains, tongue ties, mouth bits, and whips.”

Patrick and Nicole became animal rights advocates while protesting performances of the Ringling Bros. Circus. In 2009, they launched the first animal-rights blog for a mainstream newspaper, Albany’s *Times Union*.

While doing research on horse racing for the blog, two things jumped out: First there was an absolute dearth of information – no one knew how many horses were dying at American tracks, let alone the circumstances. No one group was solely focused on the industry. They decided to step into that void and founded Horseracing Wrongs (HW) in 2013.

HW’S mission is to end the horse racing industry in the U. S., primarily through a hearts and minds campaign – educating the public on its inherent cruelty and deadliness. Their group pursues legislation to outlaw horse racing throughout the country. They produce materials – banners, signs, leaflets and most excitingly, mobile billboards – which were visible at all three Triple Crown races last year, as well as at the Saratoga Race Course and the Breeders Cup in California. To date, they have sponsored protests at 25 tracks in 20 states. In conjunction with local advocates, they fought back new track proposals in Massachusetts and Georgia and their protests played a part in the closure of Portland Meadows in Oregon.

Through FOIA requests to state racing commissions, HW has documented – with names, dates, locations, and details – over 8,000 deaths at U.S. tracks just since 2014; they estimate that over 2,000 horses are killed racing or training across America every year.

With roughly 100,000 horses used in racing in the U.S. at any given time, and some 20,000 new Thoroughbreds registered with the

Jockey Club each year, Patrick explained that, “The typical horse is thrust into intensive training at 18 months. Their bones are not done growing, plates are not done fusing until six years of age. They are raced at two. A two-year-old horse is the rough equivalent of a six-year-old child. Four, three and two-year-old horses are dying with chronic conditions like osteoarthritis and degenerative joint disease – clear evidence of the incessant pounding these pubescent bodies are forced to absorb.

“And just to be clear, death at the track is neither clean nor tranquil. Death at the track is cardiovascular collapse, pulmonary hemorrhage – or bleeding out from the lungs, blunt-force head trauma from collisions with other horses, broken necks, severed spines, ruptured ligaments, and shattered legs. Hundreds more die back in their stalls from things like colic, a painful abdominal affliction; laminitis, excruciating inflammation in the feet; respiratory infections; neurological disorders; parasitic infestations; or as often seen in the FOIA documents, ‘found dead in the morning.’”

Equally upsetting, to compound the misery in their lives, 10 to 20,000 are transported to and slaughtered in Canadian and Mexican slaughterhouses annually.

Asked about their biggest challenge, their answer is clear, “Getting the public and media to stop thinking of horse racing as a sport. Horse racing is simple animal cruelty.” They are motivated to continue by the horses who desperately need them. “We are their voice. Our goals are to educate and shut down racing, track by track, and change the laws, state by state, to make horseracing illegal.”

Nicole urged individuals who care about horses abused in the racing industry to **join or organize a protest at a track near them, support legislation that would end state subsidies to the horse racing industry, write letters to the editor, and join Horseracing Wrongs!** Follow HW on Facebook. Website: www.horseracingwrongs.org Contact: patrickjbattuello@gmail.com or nicole@horseracingwrongs.com



Patrick and Nicole of Horseracing Wrongs at event enlightening the public.

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Editors: Laura-Ann Cammisa, Sondra Woodvine, Pat Valusek

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