

Monkeys leave circus Circus accused of abuse

Damning allegations on TV3's *Campbell Live* current affairs programme accused Ministry of Agriculture animal welfare officers of failing to properly investigate a complaint of serious neglect at a New Zealand-based circus that ultimately resulted in the death of a monkey. SAFE subsequently called for an independent investigation into why government animal welfare officials failed in their duties.

SAFE campaign director Hans Kriek, who was interviewed on the programme, said, "We believe the recent death of a young monkey at Whirling Brothers Circus was preventable. SAFE made a complaint to MAF about concerns we had for the monkey's well-being and a week later the poor creature was dead. Had MAF officials properly

followed up on this complaint, as they are legally required to do, the young monkey would probably still be alive.

"The evidence suggests the circus ignored minimum animal welfare standards and that MAF, despite being given prior warning, failed to prevent the animal's death. It illustrates that circus animals are not adequately protected and breaches of the animal welfare legislation go unpunished. This incompetence is not an isolated case and SAFE is appalled that MAF continues to fail in its duty of care towards animals in New Zealand," said Hans.

Shortly after the damning exposé on *Campbell Live*, the circus sold its three remaining



monkeys to Pakuratahi Sanctuary in Upper Hutt, where they can now look forward to a much brighter future. SAFE is now only three lions and one elephant away from achieving its goal of ending the use of exotic animals in circuses in New Zealand.

Protests against Whirling Brothers Circus have continued in many centres throughout the

year. SAFE campaigners in Palmerston North collected over a thousand signatures on a petition calling on the council to ban circuses from using ratepayer property.



Rodeo cruelty: Nelson

Nelson SAFE activists continue their fight to stop the annual rodeo in Richmond. Rather than targeting the great unwashed that attends the rodeo, the focus has been to encourage rodeo sponsors to stop supporting animal cruelty. This approach has met with some success and the rodeo is finding it harder than ever to remain financially viable.



Summit Real Estate supports cruelty

One company, Summit Real Estate, sponsors events in the annual Richmond Rodeo. They have been fully informed of the cruelty they are supporting, but remain defiant.

"If you are a Nelson resident and are approached for a free market appraisal by Summit Real Estate, please tell them that you will not use their services until they stop sponsoring the rodeo," says Pat Butler from SAFE Nelson.

TAKE ACTION

Contact the General Manager, Allister Nalder: allister.nalder@summit.co.nz or 03 547 2476. If you can help with this campaign contact Pat at: butler1@clear.net.nz

Croatia aims to be circus animal-free

Twenty-three Croatian towns have banned circuses with animal acts on their territory. Rudolf Klennert, the mayor of



the first town in Croatia to impose a ban, has appealed to other Croatian mayors to make the same ethical decision. He writes: "Cities that are following the path of today's ethical tendencies are cities of the future, because not only do they show respect to animals, but they also respect the desire of their citizens and accurately develop the culture and reputation of their town." Animal Friends Croatia continues to publicly campaign to convince Croatia's capital, Zagreb, to follow suit.

Cheetahs for hire!

SAFE recently challenged Wellington Zoo, claiming it is making a fast buck from its cheetahs at the expense of animal welfare and safety. For \$2500, keepers will bring the zoo's two juvenile cheetahs, Charlie and Delta, to an event. The zoo has been running the scheme since late last year and so far the cheetahs have been to private functions, a pet store opening, university lectures, and an A & P show.

The zoo came under scrutiny after the *Sunday Star-Times* reported SAFE's opposition. SAFE campaign director Hans Kriek believes that exploiting cheetahs in this manner is unethical and potentially dangerous for the animals and the people attending these events.

"To use these magnificent animals as cheap revenue earners is abhorrent and would

needlessly endanger lives if anything caused these animals to attack while attending a party. The animals could be stressed by unforeseen factors and as they are kept on a leash, they would have no opportunity to remove themselves from this stress. All they could do would be to attack and this could have disastrous results," says Hans.

SAFE received widespread media interest and used the opportunity to urge Wellington Zoo to re-think this ill-conceived fundraiser.



TAKE ACTION

Please write to the Wellington Zoo to demonstrate your opposition: Email: alison.lash@wellingtonzoo.com or post to Wellington Zoo, 200 Daniell St, Newtown, Wellington. Further info at: www.safe.org.nz/circusandzoos.php

