

Letters

The following letter was received from Tom Krause, pictures of whom appeared in the last *AWI Quarterly*, Vol 41, No. 4. It is reprinted in full below, as requested by Mr. Krause.



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2-1-93

Dear Ms. Liss:

I regret that you authorized an unsigned editorial in the Fall, 1992, publication from the Animal Welfare Institute (page 18) in a blatant attempt to discredit me. Your use of copyrighted photographs of myself are a breach of etiquette as well as copyright law, and the purpose to harm my ability to serve as chair of the Technical Advisory Group is an affront to the dignity of the committee of US experts.

If you wish to prevent further damages from occurring, I expect this letter to be printed in a conspicuous manner in the next AWI magazine without editing or other editorial commentary. Failure to do so will result in an action.

Ms. Liss, as a 12 plus year member of the National Trappers Association, surely you are aware we change photographs of officers regularly. Recent changes to photographs of my regular column head reflect only a recently adopted NTA dress code, and are approved before printing by the NTA Publications Committee.

As chair of the US Technical Advisory Group (TAG), it is my duty to report the decisions of the TAG regardless of my personal wishes. I cannot speak to an issue without relinquishing the chair, and I have no opportunity to vote except in the event I determine to break a tie vote. As TAG Chair, my duty is to represent the United States, and certainly not the best interests of trappers or any other interest group.

In a blatant attempt to damage my credibility, your report mentions I am a trapper who uses the steel jaw trap. Yes I do, for certain species and in addition to other types of trapping equipment. You should know there is ample evidence steel jaw traps are needed and can be used humanely both as restraining devices and in humane killing systems.

The critical mention of the "Injury Scale" is an abuse of your readers. You must recall the Injury Scale was rejected at the meeting of participating ISO countries in the June, 1992, Brussels meeting, and that a committee studying the problems of measuring trapping experiences has yet to report its findings and recommendations.

You err in allowing the statement "The trappers have been busy discussing how much injury a "humane" trap can inflict." That leads your readers to believe that trappers have the ability to determine acceptable levels of injury in a humane trap standard. That is a totally false and misleading perception.

The current make-up of TAG includes 18 members. Their primary responsibilities include assignments as 1 impartial chairman, 4 research scientists, 4 game managers, 4 federal government representatives, 2 manufacturers, 2 trappers, 2 veterinarians, and 2 animal welfare representatives. (Several members assume 2 responsibilities). List enclosed.

Ms. Liss, I must ask you to consider whether you want to continue as a TAG member. If you cannot act positively in a process to discover betterment and more humaneness in the trapping of animals in the world community, then I must ask you to refrain from attempts to discredit honorable and significant scientific progress.

As a current TAG member, you certainly have a responsibility to the integrity of the committee and its charge. If it is against your agenda to respect the differing views of these honorable experts, then you should certainly consider whether your resignation is appropriate.

Sincerely,
Tom Krause, Chair US TAG

A First-Hand Report on the Agony of a Cherished Pet

To: Animal Welfare Institute, October 25, 1992

From: Marce Parrish-Hanson

On August 18, Sheba disappeared. She seldom wandered far from home, so each night that followed brought tremendous apprehension and haunting fears of what might have happened.

The night of September 6 brought a burst of short-lived joy. The surprise came when my dad opened the front door to let their dog wander out to his favorite bush. While standing on the porch, dad heard faint meows and when he looked closer through the darkness by nearby shrubs, he saw Sheba's two frightened eyes peering from beneath a branch. He immediately scooped up the tiny cat and rushed her into the house, thrilled to be able to present the furry package to my mom.

Once inside the lightened living room, the delight of the reunion turned to horror. The once fluffy cat resembled a striped skeleton and her struggle to walk brought tears to everyone's eyes. All that remained of Sheba's left hind leg were three bones protruding grotesquely above where her paw had been. In her effort to escape from a steel-jawed trap, she had been forced to

chew through her own flesh--an escape filled with more pain-racked hours and days than I can bear to imagine. God only knows how she managed to crawl home.

Medical wizardry could not undo the savage damage done to Sheba's small frame. Maggots had infested the gaping wound and the effect of starvation and the elements had taken their toll. Surgery was not feasible and at 8:53 am on that Sunday morning lit by golden rays that filtered through windows and warmed rugs for luckier cats, Sheba drew her last breath. A lethal injection ended her suffering.

The next time you hear about traps being used to capture animals for their fur or wildlife unfortunate enough to venture into populated areas, think about the grim reality of this act. Better yet, go outside and slam a car door on your arm. Then wait and pray for someone to free you from pain. Once you've escaped, please realize the power you have to make a difference. No living thing should be forced to suffer this way. We can be more than the jury. We can be the judge. Write some letters or take a few moments to make a call to let your feelings be known. There's no defense for this one.