“Turkey Olympics”

CANCELED

By Inn; Based On Protests

“Opposition to the Turkey Invitational was in large part coordinated by a non-profit group based in Maryland called United Poultry Concerns, which protests the domestication of poultry and the treatment of the birds by commercial agriculture.”

— Litchfield County Times
November 21, 1997

United Poultry Concerns Launched Campaign, Breaks News

On November 17th, 1997, United Poultry Concerns got a call from a newspaper reporter in Connecticut to say that the Inn at Lake Waramaug in New Preston, CT cancelled the turkey olympics this year. Just two months earlier the Inn had told UPC president Karen Davis that the 1997 turkey olympics was scheduled for Sunday, November 23rd, and that the show – an annual event for 17 years – would go on “as always.”

The turkey olympics was a derisive entertainment in which turkeys were forced to wear costumes emphasizing sex and violence. The costumed turkeys were made to perform “athletics” so spectators could laugh at them. This event, which was represented as wholesome Thanksgiving entertainment, was nothing more than an excuse for machismo, obscenity, violence, animal cruelty, alcohol, and cheap news-media coverage. It had little support from the local community.

continued on page 5
BACKGROUND

United Poultry Concerns (UPC) and the Association of Veterinarians for Animal Rights (AVAR) have initiated a campaign to stop the forced molting of laying hens. (See PoultryPress Vol. 7, No. 3). Forced molting – the deliberate starvation of laying hens for 5 to 14 days straight – is used by the U.S. egg industry to control egg supplies and prices. Abruptly deprived of all food, the hens go into physiologic shock, lose their feathers, and stop laying eggs for about two months. Many die. If a person starved his or her dog or cat for days or weeks, that person would be charged with cruelty. Yet each year the egg industry intentionally deprives millions of hens of food for up to 10 or more days under the protective cover of “standard agricultural practice.”

For a more complete description of forced molting, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to UPC requesting our 2-sided fact sheet Starving Poultry for Profit.

Last summer, UPC and the AVAR wrote letters to the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) asking them to change their current position, which endorses forced molting as “an acceptable management practice, when done under careful supervision and control.” We asked the AVMA to review their position at their November 1997 Animal Welfare Committee meeting and to adopt a policy completely opposing the practice.

THE AVMA ANIMAL WELFARE COMMITTEE MEETING

Disappointingly, the Committee did not vote to revise the current AVMA position statement which endorses forced molting but, instead, focused its attention on the number of days that could be deemed “acceptable” to deprive an animal of food.

What Can I Do?

The American Veterinary Medical Association Animal Welfare Committee meets again in April 1998. Please write a brief letter urging the AVMA to oppose forced molting altogether and request a written reply. Tell the AVMA Animal Welfare Committee to stand up for the birds instead of an industry that profits from their misery. Please do not be persuaded that forced molting is “a rest for the hen’s own good.” Forced molting is a commercially-motivated practice. The only “good” is profit: whatever can be squeezed from the hen, minus expenses, such as feeding.

Contact:
American Veterinary Medical Association:
Attention: Dr. David Granstrom
1931 North Meacham Road, Suite 100
Schaumburg, IL 60173

United Poultry Concerns would like to thank everyone who signed and circulated the Petition to Stop the Forced Molting of Laying Hens. We are pleased to have received thousands of signatures thus far. United Poultry Concerns and the Association of Veterinarians for Animal Rights will be mailing photocopies of each petition to the two major egg industry trade groups, United Egg Producers and U.S. Poultry & Egg Association, in January. Please continue to circulate the Petition. All signed Petitions will be sent to the trade groups as we receive them. Thank you!
On April 11, 1997, a gang of seniors at Horizon High School in Phoenix, Arizona conducted a pitiless assault on 40 to 50 hens whom they purchased for "fun" from a local egg farm. (See PoultryPress Vol. 7, No. 2 & Vol. 7, No. 3.) In response, United Poultry Concerns instigated a massive letter-writing protest to the high school principal, John Stollar, followed by a blaring protest rally in front of the high school on August 14th, the opening day of classes. UPC president Karen Davis afterwards met with Mr. Stollar and offered to draft a policy statement against animal abuse, stating that:

(a) Animals may not be used in pranks or otherwise for amusement or ceremony in connection with any school function or activity. Violation of this policy or any other abuse of animals shall be grounds for disciplinary action including, but not restricted to, suspension, expulsion, and exclusion from the graduation ceremony. (b) For purposes of this policy, the term "animal" includes any wild or domesticated, warm-blooded or cold-blooded animal.

Upon receiving this, Mr. Stollar graciously wrote to UPC: "I am forwarding your letter to my Assistant Principal for Discipline so that your policy statement can be incorporated into our standard disciplinary handbook which is distributed to all students at the beginning of the year and is edited in the spring of the preceding year. My intention is that a similar statement will be incorporated into our student policy handbook for the '98-99 school year. Thank you for giving me a solid suggestion for how to word that statement."

United Poultry Concerns wishes to thank everyone who protested vigorously against the Horizon Hen Massacre. UPC will continue to monitor the school to ensure that this horrible episode is not repeated.
E Magazine:

"Karen Davis gives consumers everything they wanted to know but were afraid to ask in her latest book, Prisioned Chickens, Poisoned Eggs: An Inside Look at the Modern Poultry Industry, which details everything from salmonella outbreaks to rampant chemical abuse."

Library Journal:

"The author does a good job of drawing from a wide variety of poultry science, animal-rights and other literature to make her case."

Choice:

"Prisioned Chickens, Poisoned Eggs – Well-written, well-researched, well-argued."

Vegetarian Voice:

"Davis covers it all, from early history to the beginning of the modern factory farm; birth and family life; the battery hen; the broiler chicken; slaughter; and her wish for a 'new beginning.' "

Call 1-800-695-2241

Order Prisioned Chickens, Poisoned Eggs for yourself, a friend, your local library. Call The Book Publishing Company at 1-800-695-2241.

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OLYMPICS, from page 1

United Poultry Concerns developed the national campaign to stop the turkey olympics. (See PoultryPress, Vol. 5, No. 1; Vol. 6, No. 3; & Vol. 6, No. 4). Our Winter/Spring 1995 issue of PoultryPress placed the issue before animal activists throughout the world for the first time. In addition to our press releases, we launched a major letter-writing campaign to the Inn at Lake Waramaug, the local Chamber of Commerce, The Hartford Courant, and The Litchfield County Times. A batch of protest letters from UPC members was printed in The Litchfield County Times on March 31, 1995 and again on December 13, 1996. Inn manager Arnold Villarreal told the Associated Press that the inn received more than 2,000 protest letters (AP, Greenwich Time Nov. 26, 1997).

The Litchfield County Times featured a front-page article on UPC’s protest on November 18, 1994. On May 6, 1995, The Hartford Courant published an editorial, Show some respect for turkeys, condemning the turkey olympics as “sophomoric.” The editors quoted UPC president, Karen Davis, and UPC member, Linda Fleming of San Francisco, at length, and stated “That so many people rally to the cause of a bird bred for roasts, casseroles and clubs is nothing short of amazing.”

Our successful campaign to end the turkey olympics combined the talents, hard work, and strategies of a national organization, United Poultry Concerns, and grassroots activists. Matt Kelly’s photographs and report in 1994 enabled UPC to launch the campaign. The spectacular on-site demonstration and civil disobedience staged on November 24, 1996 by more than 50 Northeast activists, organized by Pam Ferdin and Jerry Vlasak, received huge publicity. The Litchfield County Times observed November 29, 1997, “The furor surrounding the event has grown over the past three years as it has become targeted by national animal rights groups, particularly United Poultry Concerns.”

Activists wishing to thank the Inn should send a short, polite thank-you letter (no lectures or hostility, please) to The Inn at Lake Waramaug, 107 North Shore Road, New Preston, CT 06777.

United Poultry Concerns gratefully thanks everyone who joined our effort to eliminate the turkey olympics. This is a major victory for turkeys and for entertainment that is based on the voluntary consent and understanding of all participants. Thank you!

---

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Nellie and Ellie Can Stay!
Eviction Overruled

Nellie and Ellie are two happy Rhode Island Red hens. Thomas and Sabine Buehler of Holmes Beach, Florida gave Nellie and Ellie a home two years ago after a neighbor left them behind. Suddenly last summer, anonymous complaints arose from a city ordinance that prohibits residents from "raising fowl and farm-type animals." But the mayor visited the Buehler home, met Nellie and Ellie, and concluded they were pets and could stay.

Then, however, political furor broke out. The city commission chairman said Nellie and Ellie must go. He accepted the city attorney's suggested definition of "pet" to exclude "fowl," and asked the mayor to enforce it. Ominously, a newspaper article announced in October, "Chickens out, new definition of pet in."

But Sabine Buehler said No. She fought to keep Nellie and Ellie. She hired a lawyer, got public and news-media support, and at the hearing on November 14th, she won!

UPC president Karen Davis was happy to write a letter to the Holmes Beach Code Enforcement Board on behalf of Sabine Buehler, Nellie and Ellie. She said that with so many millions of homeless and unwanted animals in the world, why wreck an intact household in which two nice hens have found a permanent home. Happy New Year, Nellie and Ellie!

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(20% discount for orders of 5 or more.)
United Poultry Concerns was honored with a feature on the front page of The Washington Times on Thanksgiving Day this year (Nov. 27, 1997). The following is an excerpt from “Living at Thanksgiving,” the cover story in The Washington Times Washington Weekend by Bradley R. Marshall about United Poultry Concerns.

Thanksgiving. The word conjures up many images, including a turkey on the table at home.

“Not to Karen Davis, president of United Poultry Concerns (UPC), a domestic fowl sanctuary in Germantown. The group’s ‘All-Vegetarian Gourmet Potluck Feast’ the Saturday before Thanksgiving serves up a wheat-based simulation of the traditional bird (the ‘Great Gluten Turkey,’ Ms. Davis calls it) for some 250 local vegetarians and animal lovers – as the living birds look on.

“Chickens and turkeys are earthy, enchanting creatures, interested in everything they’re doing. To me, they are the epitome of the vulnerable life that we all share,” Ms. Davis says as she describes UPC’s departure from Thanksgiving’s meaty tradition.

“United Poultry Concerns, incorporated in Maryland in 1990, is a nationwide organization, with more than 7,000 members in all 50 states, Canada and Mexico. Its pre-Thanksgiving feast is not the only one in the Washington area . . . but it is the only animal sanctuary in the United States that harbors domestic fowl exclusively.

“A visit to Ms. Davis’ sanctuary, on a winding, semi-dirt, pock-marked road, makes it clear that to her, all fowls are fair . . . She opens the door to the coop and the birds come out fluttering, crowing and cackling – to bathe in the sun and rollick in the dust.

‘Their whole body moves and shakes in a charming rhythm as they scratch in the ground,’ Ms. Davis says in obvious admiration. ‘They are searchers.’

“She . . . points to a proud hen named Minna. ‘They’re great animals. Some of their most appealing characteristics are that they’re homey birds, yet very zesty and independent. They respond to their names – but it doesn’t mean they’re going to come running when you call them!’ . . .

continued on page 9
"Ms. Davis has written several books, including a children's book ('A Home For Henny') and a cookbook ('Instead of Chicken, Instead of Turkey'). Her most recent work... may be the most important. 'Prisoned Chickens, Poisoned Eggs: An Inside Look at the Modern Poultry Industry' (Book Publishing Company of Summertown, Tenn.) takes an uncompromising look at factory animal production.

"She pursues her goals single-mindedly, but it's not as if she's working alone. Even today, she's joined at the farm by UPC member Lynn Halpern and Ms. Halpern's adopted turkey, Abigail, one more bird saved from a truck spill.

"It's hard to know how long this can go on. Only a short drive past Ms. Davis' house, suburbia encroaches..."

"It's just a matter of time until it's re-zoned from agricultural to residential,' she says with a sigh. 'But we're looking for a piece of land within 75 miles of D.C. for our tax-deductible organization. We need a chicken sanctuary, including the crowing of roosters, where I can continue to do my educational work. We'd like to be able to expand our sanctuary and accommodate about 150 chickens.

United Poultry Concerns wishes most gratefully to thank the writer of the article, Bradley R. Marshall; Washington Weekend Editor of The Washington Times, Cathryn Donohoe; and Washington Times photographer, Barbara Davidson, for this wonderful story.
Campaigns to Outlaw Cockfighting in Arizona, Missouri

Ballot Initiative Sought to Ban Blood Sport in Both States

Arizona

In 1996, Citizens Against Cockfighting launched a ballot initiative campaign to ban cockfighting in 1998, after 22 frustrated attempts to move the state legislature to action. As of November, 73,530 signatures have been collected. A total of 158,000 signatures are needed by July 2, 1998, with a 40% cushion. Happily, the effort to ban cockfighting in Arizona has the support of the state's biggest newspaper, The Arizona Republic (as well as others), and the sheriffs in 10 out of 15 counties.

Please Help


Missouri

Missourians Against Cockfighting have launched an all-out campaign to put an anti-cockfighting referendum on the November 1998 ballot. To succeed, they have to get more than 100,000 signatures by June 1998. In the St. Louis-Dispatch, Oct. 12, 1997, campaign manager, Sandy Mickelson, stated that the referendum drive is designed to bypass a legislature controlled by a minority of cockfighting supporters. A gamecock breeder/lobbyist was cited saying he is sure his side will lose in a public vote.

According to the article, “The statute that Mickelson wants to put on the ballot would make it a Class D felony to fight gamecocks, stage a cockfight, knowingly attend a fight, sell a gamecock, possess cockfighting implements such as gaffs (razor-sharp blades attached to the bird’s leg) and sell such implements.”

Please Help

For more information on what you can do to give cockfighting the boot in Missouri in 1998, contact Missourians Against Cockfighting, 11939 Manchester Road, #130, St. Louis, MO 63131. Phone: 1-888-98CRUEL (27835); 314-994-1000.


“IT’S TIME TO PUT AN END TO IT.”

“COCKFIGHTING: End the blood sport.”

— The American Veterinary Medical Association has taken an uncompromising stand against cockfighting. As stated in the AVMA’s 1997 booklet, The Veterinarian’s Role in Animal Welfare, “The AVMA supports laws against the use of dogs for dog fights and poultry for cock fights. Further, the AVMA recommends that dog fighting or cock fighting be considered felony offenses.”
In Memoriam

United Poultry Concerns takes this opportunity to acknowledge and mourn the death of Ron Scott in 1997. Ron was the Director of Two Mauds, Inc., an animal welfare foundation with a compassionate heart for chickens. Ron was a videographer who accompanied British activists Vicki and Tony Moore to Spain, helping them document the horrible blood fiestas held there each year in addition to hosting their talks and publicizing their work in the United States. In 1992, Ron videotaped our Second Annual Spring Mourning Vigil for Chickens at the Perdue chicken slaughter plant in Salisbury, Maryland. On that hot, dusty, gruelling day in May, Ron tirelessly recorded scenes out of view from the street where we held our signs and conducted our candlelight vigil in front of the slaughterhouse. The last time Ron and I spoke was at the Summit for the Animals meeting in Rockville, Maryland last April. He told me that my speech about chickens and the genetic engineering of domestic fowl made him cry. There are not enough tears for the loss of this wonderful, good man who cared and gave so much to make the world a better place.

– Karen Davis

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POINT OF VIEW

Thanksgiving dinner's sad and thankless
Christmas dinner's dark and blue
When you stop and try to see it
From the turkey's point of view.

Sunday dinner isn't sunny
Easter feasts are just bad luck
When you see it from the viewpoint
Of a chicken or a duck.

Oh how I once loved tuna salad
Pork and lobsters, lamb chops too
Till I stopped and looked at dinner
From the dinner's point of view.

United Poultry Concerns would like to
take this opportunity to thank Olive Nash for
her invaluable volunteer services over the
past year. Olive has done everything from
managing our membership database to trans­
porting chickens to their new homes to rep­
resenting UPC at the Virginia Association of
Independent Schools to participating at our
many protest demonstrations, tables and
leafletings. It's an honor to work with Olive
and to thank her for a rewarding year.

---

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Thank You Positive Force!

Positive Force, a vigorous social justice organization in Washington DC, held a Benefit for United Poultry Concerns on September 13th featuring several of the area's leading bands. The group raised over $500.00 for United Poultry Concerns with a $5 admission fee. UPC wishes to thank everyone who took part in a great evening, with very special thanks to Katy Otto and Mark Andersen for making it happen.

Please plan to hold a Fundraiser for United Poultry Concerns in your area in 1998. Help United Poultry Concerns by having a yard sale, a dinner, a dance, a magic show — anything! Raise Consciousness, Raise Cash!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUING SUPPORT

United Poultry Concerns would like to thank the following foundations for graciously assisting our work in 1997: Ahimsa Foundation, Alexander Foundation, Helen V. Brach Foundation, In Defense of Animals, The Jewish Communal Fund, The Parks Foundation, and Two Mauds, Inc. We extend our heartfelt thanks to each and every one of our members who have so generously supported United Poultry Concerns during the past year. Your gift is our life support. Please give generously in 1998. All donations are fully tax-deductible. Thank you!

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The Animals' Agenda, Vol. 16, No. 2 • Reviewed by Deborah Tanzer, PhD

For Example,

"Environmentalism challenges us to think about how we view and treat the weaker and more pacific beings in our midst, be they nonhuman or otherwise. It invites us to explore how we want, on principle, to regard these beings. Are we content to maintain that a genetically altered creature, or a docile and perhaps even stupid one, deserves to be morally disdained or abandoned? Do we believe that a weaker creature is less entitled to justice and compassion than more vigorous types? Do we suppose that creatures whose lives we humans have wrecked do not have paramount moral claims on us?

"Environmentalism has a tendency to blame such victims. There are implications that ecological sophistication comport with turning away from them sniffily, like a bored husband, or Dr. Frankenstein, to things more 'interesting' and grand, like a mountain or, more aptly, to 'thinking' like one."

Excerpt from Karen Davis, "Clucking Like a Mountain," part II of Thinking Like a Chicken: Farm Animals and the Feminine Connection, Animals and Women: Feminist Theoretical Explorations.

Order Animals and Women by sending a check or money order payable to United Poultry Concerns, P.O. Box 59367, Potomac, MD 20859. $16.95 + $3.00 shipping & handling.

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INSIDE

Turkey Olympics
UPC Thanksgiving
Cockfighting
Forced Molting And More!

Wishing You Peace and Joy in the New Year

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