

SHARK's July 2023 Newsletter
[SHARK Showing Animals Respect and Kindness](#)
July 2023



This update was supposed to be a report of the first quarter of 2023, but we've been so busy that the months have gone by in what seems like just a few weeks.

They say time flies. [Given our nonstop pursuit of animal abuse across the country, the adage has proven to be true.](#) Our work is both physically and mentally exhausting for our entire team, but cockfighters nationwide are under siege in a way they never dreamed possible in their worst nightmares.

I can't adequately express the gratitude of the SHARK Team for your support of our efforts. There are precious few people in the animal protection movement who understand the importance of fighting animal abuse where it occurs - out in the real world. Animal cruelty occurs largely in places where one doesn't want to go, in conditions that are often not just uncomfortable, but are downright dangerous. That's why so very few organizations leave their friendly confines. It's also why they get so very little done.

Animal abuse is like cancer. You have to go after it, where it happens, and cut it out. You allow us to do that. Our victories for animals are yours also.

Our travels so far for 2023 have taken us through at least 13 states - [Alabama](#), [Delaware](#), Florida, Illinois, [Kentucky](#), North Carolina, South Carolina, Louisiana, Michigan, [Mississippi](#), [Oklahoma](#), [Tennessee](#), [Texas](#) and West Virginia. In some states like Tennessee, Delaware, and West Virginia, the police are responding, cockfights are being shut down, and those involved are being cited.

In states that are noted for corruption in general, such as Kentucky, Mississippi, and Oklahoma, some of the police have done everything in their power to protect cruel, illegal cockfighters, but our persistence is proving that there is a limit to the ability of corrupt police to protect these criminals.



Baughman Pit in MS

Casey County, KY Pit

Felton, Delaware Pit

Even more promising, is it is clear that federal law enforcement agencies are watching our work. We can uncover some illegal cockfight operations more quickly and easily than they can, and we can legally fly drones without going through all the legal hoops that the feds and other law enforcement have to deal with.

We are perfectly happy to act as bloodhounds on the trail of cockfighters. The nature of SHARK's investigators is to work in the field. I choose them for those skills, for their keen judgement and bravery. I am not overstating when I say that one SHARK investigator is worth dozens of paper-pushing bureaucrats in the big animal protection groups.

The challenge we face in that role is our shortage of resources. We are working our small team to its limits and beyond, and our financial resources are taking a real hit as well.

[Travel is expensive, whether it is for fun, or as in our case, for dangerous and challenging work in some truly objectionable places.](#)

One of the most frustrating things we've learned in the three years that we've been pursuing cockfighters, is that any organization, especially on a national level, that crows about exposing one cockfight pit isn't running a serious campaign. There are many hundreds, if not thousands of cockfights across the country. Stopping one accomplishes almost nothing, because where there is one, there are more. Shut down one location, and everyone just moves to another, and another for a few weeks, then it is back to business as usual.

If you truly want to [stop cockfighting](#), you must hit them everywhere, almost at once, over and over again. It is much the same as a war on dangerous drugs, or a war on terrorism. It has to be waged every day, day in and day out, for the long haul. That is clearly too much for most groups to handle, but we think our nonhuman friends are worth it.

On average, SHARK is exposing anywhere from one to three cockfights per week, and we keep track of them afterward, waiting for them to try to reopen. And they almost always try to reopen. When they try, we have to be on them, but we don't have enough people or money.

We are keeping a fast-growing list of not just cockfight pits, [but the breeders](#) of fighting chickens. [It is also illegal to ship any animal for the purpose of fighting, so we are also monitoring breeders who are illegally shipping fighting roosters across the country and abroad via the US Postal Service.](#)






Clear Creek Farms

Jumper Farms

Cockfighters don't put just their own birds at risk - they also endanger wild waterfowl, domestic poultry, swine, horses, dogs, bats and even humans.

There is far more at stake than the hundreds of thousands of birds who are tortured for the casual pleasure and illegal betting of the criminals. Roosters bred for cockfighting pose a high risk for catching and transmitting Avian Flu, due to being raised in the elements, with poor biosecurity. These roosters are moved extensively and are exposed to other birds during cockfighting events.

[As of May 31, 2023 the number of poultry, both commercial and backyard flocks, that have died due to the rampant Avian Flu is nearly 59 million birds.](#) One can argue that these animals would have been killed for food anyway, but **all of them are going to be replaced, which means 59 million additional birds** will suffer and die.

 Wild Birds	 Poultry	 Humans
Wild Birds Detected	Poultry Affected	Reported Human Cases in the U.S.
7,045 as of 6/7/2023 Full Report >	58,789,591 as of 6/7/2023 Full Report >	1 as of 04/28/2022 Full Report >

We have seen cockfights happening within a short distance of large commercial poultry operations, proving their lack of care of this dangerous Avian Flu.

We are working relentlessly to cut off every head, limb, and appendage of this monster - from the breeders, to the creeps in the cockfight pits, to the corrupt cops who protect them and even the US Postal Service employees who knowingly service illegal rooster breeders.

Sometimes when we go looking for breeders, or pits, we don't always find what we are looking for. On March 17th we were in southern Illinois acting on a tip regarding a game fowl breeder, instead we found a disgusting property that was hardly adequate for life. There was one adult dog and one dead adult dog, as well as puppies in an unsafe crate with plastic draped over the top. These dogs were being forced to live in squalor. We called local animal control to go and check out the location and hopefully save the dogs. With much persistence, the dogs were rescued from the location, the location was apparently abandoned. It was with a little luck, and continuously doing the grueling work of following the leads we receive on breeders, that we found these dogs and got them into a safe environment where they were able to be adopted out to good homes.



St Clair, IL Property that was abandoned with dogs and chickens still living on premises



animal
wellness
action

SHARK is also working with two great organizations - the [California-based Humane Farming Association](#), and [Washington DC-based Animal Wellness Action](#), with each group specializing in a different aspect of the overall campaign.

SHARK is on the front line, with our drones overhead, and our hidden cameras inside the illegal cockfight pits. The Humane Farming Association is working on legal approaches to deal with corrupt police. Animal Wellness Action is working to pass stronger laws that include stiffer penalties. This team approach is what is needed to stop a cockfight mafia that stretches not just around the country, but quite literally around the world.

Recently SHARK, the Humane Farming Association and Animal Wellness Action submitted [a letter calling for an independent investigation into the corruption of the State Police](#). We sent the letter to Governor Andy Beshear, Attorney General Daniel Cameron, and Secretary Kerry Harvey. We received the support of over 50 groups prior to the sending of the letter, and the support has continued to grow since, with a total of over 70 names signed on in support of this investigation. Even though the letter has immense support, and was sent to three separate Government offices, we have yet to receive a response from anyone in Kentucky.

It is now July, and our efforts to stop the abuse of rodeo animals is in full swing. We've already documented rodeos in Boone and McHenry County, Illinois, and we're planning numerous other areas.

2023 marks three decades that SHARK has been exposing rodeo animal abuse. We document and expose more rodeo animal abuse in a month than the combined efforts of all animal protection groups, and while there is plenty to show for it, there is still much, much more to be done.

It was 1993 when SHARK first investigated a rodeo in Wauconda, Illinois. We saw the brutality, and animals being shocked, and animals injured. We went to another rodeo, and another, and the story was always the same - indefensible abuse at the hands of a bunch of John Wayne wannabes who don't want real jobs.

Since then we've been to hundreds and hundreds of rodeos across the US and into Canada and Mexico. We've forced a lot of changes, but we still have a long way to go. Worse, if we can't keep the pressure on, the cruelty will get worse, not better.

I can't tell you why other supposed humane organizations won't stick their butts in the seats at rodeo arenas. That is what is needed to document and expose the abuses.

Whatever, wherever the issue, SHARK will not stop. We will not give up. We will continue going out into the field as often as we need to, to make sure that this war is won. Wars are not one in offices, which is why we get out there and do the tough work.

The question I always ask myself, and I'd like you to consider is, why do half a dozen people at SHARK spend more time in the field, and get more done than dozens of supposed humane organizations who have literally a thousand times our resources and personnel? Can there possibly be an acceptable answer to that question?

If you want to see change - real change - [please support us](#). The cause of animal protection can [literally change the world for good](#), and not just for animals, but also for people and the environment, but that doesn't happen from an office.

And just a reminder of one of our recent BIG WINS, just in 2022, was the dismantling of Envigo, the horrific beagle factory farm that typically held some 5,000 beagle prisoners bred for experimentation.

What is rarely mentioned, is that without [SHARK's efforts](#), this story would not have happened. Back in 2017, SHARK drones flew in to expose what had been an ugly rumor for years. Our Angel drones changed everything by showing firsthand the terrible conditions generations of beagles endured for so many years.

SHARK drones returned to document the beagles a number of times, and never once did we receive any offer of assistance from any organization, especially the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS). This matters because HSUS never mentioned that SHARK's work literally made the beagle rescues possible, resulting in millions of dollars in donations received by HSUS.

We're extremely happy that the Envigo beagle operation is shut down, and that the dogs can now have lives worth living. It will be an even better day when animal lovers support the organizations who actually do the work, instead of opportunists far more interested in making money than in saving animals.

Thank you for your continued trust and support,

Steve Hindi
President for SHowing Animals Respect and Kindness