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Humane Society of Huron Valley Discouraging Senior Center Donkey Basketball Event

(Ann Arbor) – The Chelsea Senior Center has been asked by the Humane Society of Huron Valley to cancel the scheduled Donkey Basketball Event for October 29, 2005 at 7pm at the Washington Street Entertainment Center.

According to the Humane Society of the United States donkeys used for this purpose may be subjected to a variety of abuses. During the heat of competition, inexperienced riders often mishandle donkeys, pushing, pulling, kicking and punching ‘uncooperative’ animals. Donkeys have been accidentally injured by misthrown balls or by falls on slippery surfaces. Unfortunately the public is not aware of the many problems that occur behind the scenes. Provided by outside companies, donkeys are often shipped nationwide, spending their lives in cramped trailers. Stress from frequent travel can weaken the animals’ immune system, increasing their susceptibility to a common and sometimes fatal disease known as ‘shipping fever pneumonia’. Both players and spectators may be kicked by frightened animals.

Spine damage to the animals is also common, as the weight of the riders can be excessive and because riders are constantly jumping on their backs after being thrown off.

“These types of events cause great stress and are potentially harmful to the animals. Donkey Basketball is actually outlawed in some states. Animal exploitation and cruelty should not be used for sport or entertainment, and is socially unacceptable” says HSHV Cruelty Investigator, Julie Curtis.

“As a nonprofit, we certainly understand and appreciate the need to raise funding for important community services. But the Senior Center should be setting a positive example to our community, not using animal exploitation to support its activities,” says HSHV Executive Director, Tanya Hilgendorf. “We hope the Senior Center will give serious consideration to canceling this event.”

The mission of the Humane Society of Huron Valley is to find a home for every adoptable animal in its care and to prevent cruelty to animals.

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