

Animal Instincts

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floor, he regularly addresses the plight of animals that are used for research or consumption.

According to Cole, Troen's statements offend some HIV-positive churchgoers who claim they are alive today because of medications tested on animals. Troen also lights his own candle for mistreated animals and sits in silent protest during part of each service.

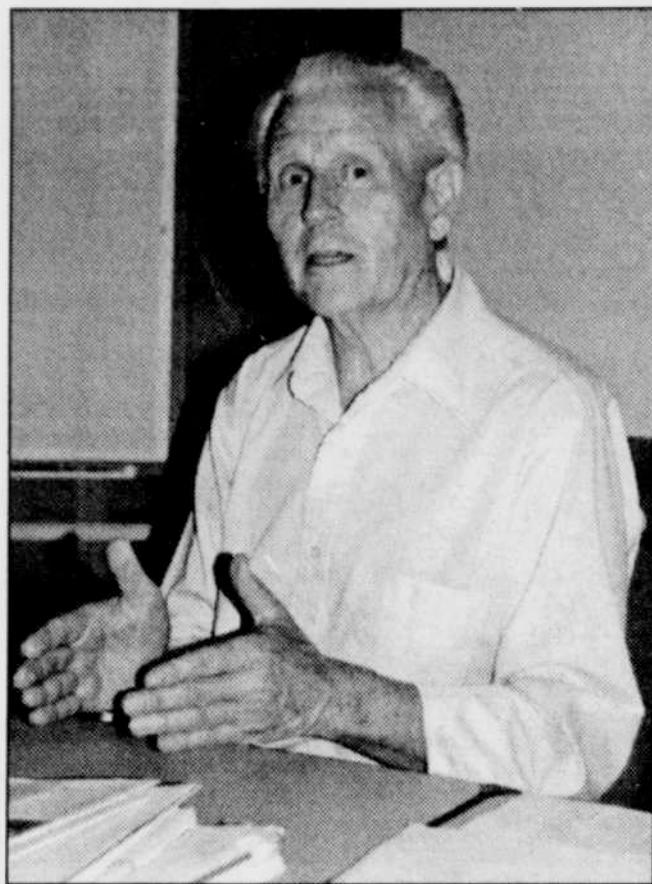
"Rev. Cole encourages us to speak out for justice," Troen says, disappointedly. "The church claims it will expose and oppose oppression in all of its forms."

Troen thinks the church doesn't want to acknowledge the oppression of animals because the issue is so sensitive and complex. Still, he says, "I just cannot understand it from gay people, who should understand oppression."

Cole rebuts: "Roger would like MCC to take a leadership role in fighting for animal rights. We acknowledge there is merit in this, but we don't have the resources to take it on."

Animal activism is not new to Troen. He says he started learning about animal welfare in the '70s when he attended some informational conferences in California. In October 1986, Troen and a group of other activists secretly infiltrated the University of Oregon research labs and liberated hundreds of animals.

"I had three rabbits, 100 rats, 30 mice, 11



Roger Troen: gay man, animal lover

hamsters and my aunt's car," he says. He distributed some of the animals to people on the Oregon coast; some were sent to Canada.

His crime was discovered when a veterinarian found a U of O tattoo on one of the rabbit's ears. Troen, 58 at the time, was tried the next year and sentenced to 90 days of house arrest.

He still owes the university \$20,000. "I could write a whole book about it," Troen says.

For now, he's content to publish his newsletter. **JO**

KATY DAVIDSON is a Just Out staff writer who can be reached at katy@justout.com.

Leader of the pack

Portland woman gets bitten by doggone good idea

BY ORIANA GREEN

Laurie Morton has pretty much always lived in a pack. First, as a member of a traveling hodgepodge of kids who followed their fathers up and down the West Coast as they dredged harbors. Then, as a last century hippie who lived with a dog pack.

Now, as publisher and editor of the brand-barking-new *Dog Nose News*, Morton is surrounded by her dog, her staff and all of their assorted canines. Yes, they all have dogs—although it's not a requirement—and they're all welcome at the office.

Morton's cattle dog, Hank, is the office greeting committee. She describes him as a "budget purebred because he has black spots. I picked a cattle dog because I love Eastern Oregon, and I researched for a rugged desert dog," she explains. "We operate with timeouts," she adds, clarifying how potential chaos is averted.

So how does someone decide to start a newspaper for dogs' best friends? Rather impulsively, it seems.

Although Morton has earned her living as a writer for many years, her most recent assignment was to compose dull training manuals. "I quit because I was bored...this is way more fun than trucks," she enthuses.

At the end of last April, Morton had trouble finding a dog trainer offering advanced classes, and the proverbial light bulb lit up. "I called my partner, Marcia, on

the phone and told her I decided to start a dog newspaper."

Good partner of more than a dozen years that she is, Marcia Cutler was supportive from the get-go. She has even signed on as bookkeeper and proofreader.

Crunching some numbers made them optimistic that this could fly—or make that run. More than 350,000 Portland Metro households have dogs.

"I see this as a contribution. I'm filling a niche because there's an enormous dog population, and a majority of owners are proactive dog people. Their dogs are family members," Morton explains. "The owners want to understand how they communicate."

Morton also has a deeper, more emotional reason for her new venture. "Some of my very best friends in my life have been dogs. I lost 27 friends to AIDS in eight years, and I became angry at the world. Once I came out of the shock, I decided I'd be more happy directing my time and energy toward dogs," she says quietly.

Dog owners make many sacrifices for their pets, Morton says. "You have to be willing to make changes. It is a lifestyle, like having a 3-year-old for life," she says with the voice of experience.

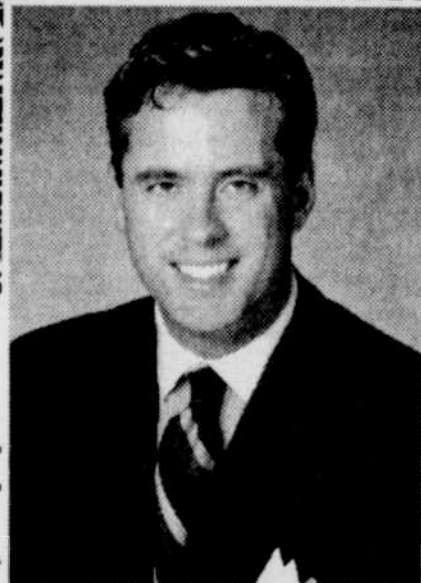
And just like parents, dog caretakers are sali-

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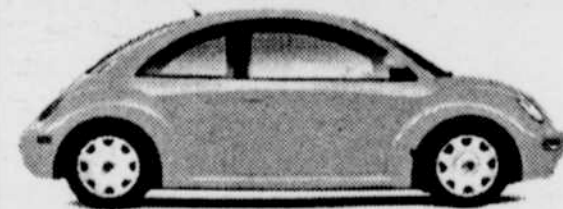


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