



August 3, 2017

Wendy Sandberg
Chair
Washington County Fair

Via e-mail: wendys@washcofair.net

Dear Ms. Sandberg,

I'm writing again on behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) with urgent information about The Great Bear Show, which is scheduled for the upcoming Washington County Fair. I urge you to ensure that the fair goes forward without this exhibitor.

The show's operator, Bob Steele, has a disturbing history of violating federal Animal Welfare Act regulations. He was cited by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) *twice* for not providing a bear named Barney with adequate veterinary care after the animal was observed during two different inspections—which occurred more than a year apart—to have large patches of hair loss around his neck and face and halfway down the sides of his body. The inspector noted that the bear was scratching himself in the areas of the hair loss and that the animal's chronic condition had been present since at least November 2014. Another bear, named Andy, is arthritic, according to Steele himself, and video footage obtained by PETA last year shows the animal's labored gait.

Furthermore, the USDA has cited Steele for handling bears in a manner that doesn't ensure their safety or that of the viewing public. He reputedly allows members of the public—including young children—to have their photographs taken with the bears and uses only a [thin Plexiglas barrier](#) and a leash to separate the animals from visitors who are photographed.

Because it appears that you don't intend to cancel the bear act, I'm left with no option but to alert our members and supporters that Washington County Fair apparently doesn't share their concerns regarding animal welfare and isn't interested in addressing the cruelty inflicted on bears used for entertainment.

Please prioritize animal welfare and public safety by canceling Steele's cruel bear show and allowing only wild animal-free entertainment moving forward.

Very truly yours,

Melanie Johnson
Campaign Coordinator, Animals in Entertainment
People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals

PEOPLE FOR
THE ETHICAL
TREATMENT
OF ANIMALS

Washington, D.C.
1536 16th St. N.W.
Washington, DC 20036
202-483-PETA

Los Angeles
2154 W. Sunset Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90026
323-644-PETA

Norfolk
501 Front St.
Norfolk, VA 23510
757-622-PETA

Oakland
554 Grand Ave.
Oakland, CA 94610
510-763-PETA

Info@peta.org
PETA.org

Affiliates:

- PETA Asia
- PETA India
- PETA France
- PETA Australia
- PETA Germany
- PETA Netherlands
- PETA Foundation (U.K.)