

The Great Bear Show (Bob Steele)

2245 Kellyville Cut Off, Jefferson, TX 75657

The Great Bear Show, operated by Bob Steele III, has repeatedly failed to meet minimum standards for the care of animals used in exhibition as established in the federal Animal Welfare Act (AWA). The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has cited Steele numerous times for failing to provide bears with adequate veterinary care, failing to provide them with adequate space and substrates for them to express normal postural behavior, failing to have adequate barriers during public exhibitions and photo opportunities, failing to handle bears in a way that minimizes the risk of harm to the animals and the public, and failing to maintain structurally sound enclosures. Steele repeatedly failed to provide a bear named Barney with adequate veterinary care for hair loss that he had experienced since at least November 2014. Steele also repeatedly failed to provide a bear named Cindy, who was observed pacing on multiple occasions (which could be indicative of physical or psychological issues that may require medical treatment, habitat changes, or husbandry modifications), with adequate veterinary care. Contact PETA for documentation.

November 1, 2017: The USDA cited Bob Steele for failing to repair a platform in an enclosure housing four bears. The platform had a steel leg that was completely rusted through on one side, boards that were chewed and scratched, a hole in the platform floor with two screw-heads exposed, and areas of tubing that were completely rusted through in the framework for the platform steps.

March 31, 2017: The USDA cited Bob Steele for a repeat violation for failing to provide a pacing bear with adequate veterinary care. Cindy was observed pacing in the trailer and temporary enclosure during travel, and the veterinarian said that she should be given barriers, enclosure furnishings, and/or alone time—none of which was made available. Steele was also repeatedly cited for failing to provide bears with adequate space. During travel, their primary enclosure had no visual barriers to allow them to avoid each other or the public and no furniture, water

tubs, straw, or bedding to allow them to express normal postural behavior such as swimming, climbing, digging, and denning. One older male bear, who had been diagnosed with arthritis by a veterinarian, was observed to have stiff and slow movements. The inspector noted that a younger bear got on top of the older one several times and that the older bear had no way to separate himself from the younger one, which could cause him additional stress and aggravate his geriatric condition.

February 25, 2017: The USDA cited Bob Steele for a repeat violation for failing to provide three bears with adequate veterinary care. Barney was observed scratching for extended periods of time and had large patches of hair loss on his neck, face, and sides of his body. Andy appeared to have a hygroma with hair loss on his right front joint. Cindy was pacing, which could be indicative of physical or psychological issues that may require medical treatment, habitat changes, or husbandry modifications. Steele was also cited for failing to provide bears with adequate space. During travel, their primary enclosure had no visual barriers to allow them to avoid each other or the public and no furniture, water tubs, straw, or bedding to allow them to express normal postural behavior such as swimming, climbing, digging, and denning. Steele was also cited for failing to have sufficient barriers to restrict contact between Cindy and the public during photo sessions.

February 26, 2016: The USDA cited Bob Steele for a repeat violation for failing to provide a bear named Barney with adequate veterinary care. He was observed with large patches of hair loss around his neck and face and halfway down both sides of his body and was scratching himself in those areas.

August 25, 2015: The USDA cited Bob Steele for failing to remove excessive rust from a metal door frame in the enclosure housing bears and failing to repair visible pieces of broken metal and nails in one of their shelters.

January 30, 2015: The USDA cited Bob Steele for failing to provide a bear named Barney with adequate veterinary care. He was observed with large patches of hair loss around his neck and halfway down both sides of his body, and he was continually scratching himself. Steele was also cited for failing to provide USDA officials with current travel itineraries for the four bears.

March 12, 2012: The USDA cited Bob Steele for failing to handle animals during public exhibition in a way that minimizes the risk of harm to them and the public. During the exhibition, he failed to have an adequate barrier between the animals and the public,

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failed to have direct control over two bears, and failed to have other trained helpers or handlers present. Three bears were removed from their enclosure one at a time by only one handler. The handler led a male bear out to a chair and released the leash, then led a second male bear to a chair and released the leash, and brought the third bear out before securing all three bears' leashes to the chairs. The two big male bears were sitting alone on the stage for approximately 30 seconds without direct control by a handler. During this same exhibition, two of the bears performed a routine off-leash for approximately 20 to 30 seconds while close to the public barrier, with no additional trained handlers present.

August 8, 2008: The USDA cited Bob Steele for failing to handle animals during public exhibition in a way that minimizes the risk of harm to them and the public. At times during the exhibition, the handler released the bears' leashes while they performed, without sufficient barriers between them and the public. Steele also failed to have a sufficient barrier between the public and an adult bear during a photo shoot.

May 11, 2005: The USDA cited Bob Steele for failing to have a responsible person available to accompany inspectors on an animal-welfare inspection.

December 1, 1999: The USDA cited Bob Steele for failing to have a responsible person available to accompany inspectors on an animal-welfare inspection.

April 9, 1999: The USDA cited Bob Steele for failing to have the attending veterinarian review the program of veterinary care.