

Circus protest

Humane society seeks ban to animal acts

By Greg McIntyre
Staff Reporter

Animal welfare activists are stepping up their opposition to the Shrine Circus, which comes to Vancouver tomorrow through Sunday.

More than 40 people are expected to demonstrate outside the Pacific Coliseum before the 8 p.m. show tomorrow.

And Vancouver Humane Society president Ingrid Pollak is asking city council to pass a bylaw to ban

animal acts.

Saanich council passed such a bylaw in February, which says, "no person shall operate or carry on a circus, public show, exhibition, carnival or performance in which animals are required to perform tricks, fight or participate in performances for the amusement or entertainment of an audience."

"We've had quite a few letters from people saying they agree with us. We haven't had any in opposition," said Saanich Mayor

Murray Coel yesterday.

Ald. Libby Davies said Vancouver council tried to ban a rodeo last summer but found that it didn't have the authority.

"Our law department came back and said we couldn't do that. It got very complicated with the PNE because they control the events," Davies said.

"And then we had to back off."

But Davies said she was interested in the Saanich bylaw.

"I think it's a different issue, possibly, if we have a bylaw that deals with it from the point of view of animals. We do have a vicious-dog bylaw, for example. It may well be that we do have some jurisdiction. That's one of the questions that will come up."

Mayor Gordon Campbell said circuses aren't high on his list of priorities.

"It's not like a rodeo where you have spurs digging in or animals being prodded," said Campbell. "It hasn't been something that I've been worried about."

Shrine Circus chairman Larry Rumohr wouldn't discuss the condition of the animals.

"We just don't have the time or interest in any potential adverse publicity so we discourage all interviews," Rumohr said.



GORDON CAMPBELL
'circus not a priority'



LIBBY DAVIES
looking at Saanich bylaw