

Certification of Joe Fury

I, Mr. Joe Fury, certify, state, and allege the following:

1. I was a former animal caretaker employee at the Wild Animal Orphanage [WAO], owned and operated by Carol and Ronald Asvestas, in San Antonio, Texas. For approximately 4 years, I worked at the 7 acre Leslie Road site and at the Talley Road site where former laboratory primates infected with infectious diseases such as Herpes-B virus, AIDS, and HIV are housed.
2. In this capacity as a former WAO employee, I am familiar with the facts, events, and circumstances I am describing in this certification.
3. As background, I began working at the WAO in 1997, starting out as a volunteer, and was ultimately hired as an animal caretaker staff member. As a WAO "Animal Care Technician" [my title], my many chores dealt with animal care, feeding, cleaning, monitoring, maintaining animal pens, and transporting animals throughout the United States.
4. I feel now that I can speak out publicly and "blow the whistle," since I recently learned that I was no longer a single voice against the WAO and Carol and Ronald Asvestas' improper care of the animals, as well as their gross neglect of the animals and of gross neglect in running the Orphanage. I am willing to testify in any court of law against Carol and Ronald Asvestas and the WAO and their related facilities.
5. With regard to the circumstances of my leaving WAO in 2001, I was wrongfully terminated by Ronald and Carol Asvestas over a repeated dispute that escalated regarding my employment time card. The time card issue has been an ongoing point of conflict between Ron and me. I wish to emphasize that I lived in my own personal R.V. right on their premises and routinely arrived early and on time for work at 9:00 AM. But on the other hand, Carol and Ron Asvestas, who also live next door to WAO, were **routinely late**. Since I did not have the office keys, I did not have access to the time-clock time card and was unable to punch in my time of arrival. As such, Ron would not document the actual time I arrived for work. In fact,

this has occurred so often, whereby Ron would dismember the time frames I worked from my employment records, and cheated me out of the actual salary due and owed to me. On many occasions he cut the time owed, not just to me, but to other employees as well. Ron said, he was doing us a favor by being hired and we should be grateful. Since I was insistent that my salary records be accurate to show the true times-in and times-out, in order to be paid the proper salary, I was merely exercising what I believe are my legitimate labor employee rights. As such, since this occurred so often without any resolution, and since I insisted that my time cards be corrected, Ron refused. In fact, on this last occasion, in the heat of his rage and anger, Ron lost his temper, became verbally abusive, and fired me.

6. I am more than willing to testify in any court of law in New Jersey and any other federal court jurisdictions against Carol and Ronald Asvestas and WAO, but I fear for my personal safety from violent physical harm as a result of spiteful retaliations that I believe may be set into place by Ronald Asvestas. Since I was a former security guard, my perception of Ronald is that of a "thug." I am very concerned, for Ron has close ties with "shady" friends and associates, some former prisoners, who I feel are dangerous people that may be capable of violence towards me, I am putting this on the record, in the event any actual harm comes to me, so that law enforcement agencies would properly investigate.
7. With regard to my employment at WAO, Carol and Ronald Asvestas failed to provide me with the **IRS W-2 Forms for the Year 2001**. To date, I was never provided with these documents for my income tax returns. Ron refused to mail them to me.
8. With regard to **animal escapes at WAO in 2001**, at the Talley Road site, an HIV infected former laboratory chimpanzee escaped from its cage. At the Tally Road site, many primates infected with HIV, AIDS, and Herpes-B virus are housed at this location. Although the chimpanzee was eventually recaptured, this could have endangered not only the staff but other animals and the public health as well. As I understand it, this escape was never disclosed nor reported to any authorities such as the USDA, etc.
9. With regard to **animal escapes at WAO**, an arctic fox escaped and was never found. I do not believe this

escape was ever disclosed nor reported to any authorities such as the USDA, etc.

10. With regard to **animal escapes at WAO**, I also observed a Capuchin monkey [with a stub tail] escape from its cage at WAO.
11. With regard to **Carol Asvestas routinely KILLING tigers at WAO, two tigers named "Rajah" and "Garfield" were destroyed** by Carol and not by a veterinarian, **with a lethal overdose of Ketamine**. Carol claimed blood was coming out of the nose of "Garfield" [the female], yet failed to call and notify a veterinarian. Without any veterinary examination or proper diagnosis whatsoever, Carol claimed the tiger "Garfield" had a stomach tumor. That was her justification for taking the tiger's life. Then shortly thereafter, within about a day or so, Carol **also killed the male "Rajah"** [the mate] claiming **he was old and she needed the cages**. Additionally, Carol **killed a 3rd tiger** that she had recently acquired, claiming he was "aggressive." In fact the tiger was frightened and distraught from being taken from his loving owner.
12. With regard to **Carol Asvestas KILLING tigers at WAO**, another former WAO employee, Lilac Alfke, was told a completely **different version** [in fact a bold faced lie] as to why the tigers were destroyed by Carol. Lilac was told that "Rajah" and "Garfield" were "aggressive" and banged against the cages, and therefore had to be destroyed. Carol has routinely lied regarding the true circumstances.
13. With regard to **WAO staff using illegal drugs** on the WAO animal premises, on many occasions I personally observed **Carol Asvestas, Ronald Asvestas, their daughter Nicole Asvestas, and other staff smoking "pot."** Many times I observed the 2 welders, Troy Duplichan and Mike Escamilla smoking "pot" [marijuana] while working at the animal premises. A great deal of this illicit drug use occurred at the WAO animal facilities at the Leslie Road site and Talley Road site.
14. With regard to the "pot" issue, while employed at WAO, I did a cross-country overland trip from Texas, accompanied by Troy Duplichan, another WAO employee, sent to retrieve wolves from a facility in Sacramento, California. I was disturbed that Troy was driving and handling these animals, while he was under the influence of "pot" which he smoke. In fact there were multiple trips I made with Troy that involved

- retrieving Big Cats and laboratory monkeys, whereby Troy was under the influence of smoking "pot."
15. With regard to the "pot" matter, I observed Nicole Asvestas [daughter of Carol and Ron] openly smoking "pot" with the staffer, Troy Duplichan at the animal premises, right under Carol and Ron's nose.
 16. I want to point out, that as a former security guard, and as a former assistant director of security in a California mall, and as a tactical security officer, and as a dedicated and responsible person entrusted with the care of those animals at WAO, **I do not smoke cigarettes, I do not drink alcoholic beverages, and I do not take illegal drugs.** Therefore, I was appalled at the WAO owner, Carol Asvestas, and her daughter and her staff openly smoking "pot" on the animal premises. I felt this endangered not only the animals, but also the public.
 17. With regard to **alleged alcohol abuse**, both Carol and Ronald Asvestas drink excessively. As a matter of fact, in my opinion, Ron is a full-blown alcoholic. I have witnessed Ron drinking every day from morning until night, and always driving [without a valid driver's license] with an ice chest full of beer in the vehicle he was driving.
 18. All this **usage of alcohol and drugs at the WAO** endangered the health, safety, and welfare of the animals housed under their care and custody, and also endangered the staff and general public.
 19. With regard to the issue of **lack of veterinary care at WAO, for the entire year of 2001, there was a veterinarian on site only twice.** Once was to neuter several macaques and some other primates. The 2nd occasion was to neuter "Borris," the brown Grizzly bear.
 20. With regard to **Ronald Asvestas' drivers license, he has none.** Yet he has been driving the Orphanage's vehicles, such as the White Ford Expedition, every day on a routine basis. I believe Ron lost his license as the result of a DUI violation.
 21. With regard to **Ketamine, a controlled substance**, as a staff member I was routinely sent by Carol and Ron Asvestas to retrieve large quantities of Ketamine from the Gilbeau Animal Hospital. The drugs were waiting for me at the front desk.
 22. With regard to the issue of **bio-hazardous waste** at the Tally Road animal facility where the primates infected

- with HIV, AIDS, and Herpes-B are housed, the infected animal waste was simply hosed down, and went into the ground. There was no proper disposal of the body fluids, and waste of the infected animals was disposed of.
23. With regard to the **alleged misuse of public donation money**, multiple company payroll checks made **payable to my name**, were given to me to **endorse and cash for Carol and Ron's personal use**. As I understand it, this same procedure of issuing "payroll checks" to an employee's name, then endorsed, and cashed and given to Carol and Ron, was also done to Lilac Alfke, a former WAO employee. Carol and Ron told me the money was for "postage."
 24. With further regard to **alleged misuse of public donation money**, at least one of the vehicles that was purchased with company Orphanage money, was driven every day as a pleasure vehicle for the personal use by Melissa Asvestas, Ron and Carol's youngest daughter.
 25. With regard to the **improper diets of food fed to the animals** at WAO, Carol had us feed frozen by-product food to the Big Cats. The frozen food should have been thawed out to room temperature before being fed to the animals, for frozen food can cause intestinal complications if fed continuously on a daily basis. But Carol ignored this protocol. The bears and monkeys were fed dog food. This did not provide proper nutrition adequate for bears and monkeys.
 26. With regard to the **neglect of over 600 animals** at WAO and related facilities at the Leslie Road and Tally Road sites, the animal caretakers only work from 9:00 AM until 5:00 PM. After 5:00 PM, the animals are left alone, unattended.
 27. With regard to the sum total of alleged wrongdoing conducted by Carol Asvestas and her husband Ronald Asvestas of the WAO, I firmly believe they should be closed down permanently and not allowed to acquire any more animals. In fact they should be strictly prohibited from taking TOPS' tigers. The Asvestas' only motivation in taking more and more animals is pure greed to acquire money. They do not care about the welfare of the animals under their custody. I believe a full investigation should be conducted by multiple federal authorities regarding Carol and Ron Asvestas and WAO.

28. I hereby certify to the best of my knowledge, recollection, information, and belief, that the foregoing statements made by me are true. I am aware that if any of the foregoing statements made by me are willfully false, I am subject to punishment.

Dated: November 5, 2002. By [SIGNED] Joe Fury.