

This is a foxhunter's reply, block by block, of Mary Hay's post from February 2017, to point out the fallacies and to try to correct the record. It seems Ms. Hay knows almost nothing about foxhunting.

The local fox hunt club's purpose is to chase foxes, coyotes, rabbits, etc. to their death

(Hunting is legal – you may not like it, but hunting is legal; however, lie #1, foxhunting in N. America is more about the hound work of tracking and the chase, but most hunts call off the hounds to leave the quarry to be chased another day. Since early colonial times, the sport has evolved to the chase and not the kill. Our country had no need to manage vermin population, unlike the UK.)

by Headwaters Hounds kenneled outside of town. Salida has become a popular area to visit and move to bringing folks from all over with new ideas, plans and contributions that are progressive and welcome; this new activity is not.

(Again this is your opinion. I hope to move to Colorado because of this Hunt Club; I have been a landowner in Fremont County for more than 10 years, and this aggressive behavior by Chaffee County and Citizens of Salida is not the tolerant and open-minded Salida that I once knew. Tolerant, only if it matches your beliefs, I guess.)

Salida and Chaffee County is small area of national forest, ranches, a fantastic river and breathtaking mountain peaks. There are four seasons of outdoor recreational opportunities and an amazing art district. Do we really need a club that chases wildlife, our wildlife as tax paying residents, to the death and then lets hounds mutilate them and their young?

(Lie #2 – the hounds are not chasing to the death – the interest is the hound work, and leaving quarry for another day; Lie #3 therefore they do not mutilate; Lie #4 and nor are their young mutilated. Do you have any idea of how much of your tax dollars goes towards predator kills for the ranchers? Look it up)

Fox hunting and "cubbing" - the separating of a mother from her young and then urging the dogs to tear apart the baby animals - has been banned in Great Britain. Why then does it have to be brought here to this community?

(Again, your ignorance of the sport makes us foxhunters laugh – Lie #5 – this form of cubbing may have taken place in UK, I do not know, but never has it occurred here by MFHA sanctioned hunt clubs.)

But if you can't do it in Monument, then why not try it here!

(Silly, there is a hunt club in Denver, since 1907! and Colorado Springs; MFHA hopes to spread the territories so there are no disputes, kind of like a franchise agreement; maybe you own a business?)

Is this how we want Salida to be recognized? Do we not have better things to offer the tourists, visitors, our children and ourselves? What is the economic value of people getting to exercise their horses in such an abhorrent way? Equally, teaching horseback riding does not require the cruelly killing of wildlife.

(Again, your ignorance: equestrians spend lots of money keeping their horses, tack, farm equipment, vets, farrier. Keeping a horse is about a car-payment a month! Money being spent in this community. This is a sport that any social-economic status, any age, multi-generational, any gender or sexual orientation can enjoy. Lie #6 Ask the agricultural stores if they appreciate their clients? I have bought an auger, a seed spreader, a back hoe, a harrow, forklift, sod, irrigation, etc – all bought locally. This foxhunter is spending good money in this community! Oh, you are a city person? Or have you never been out of Colorado? Do we REQUIRE THE KILL?? Absolutely not, that is the exception – any upon inspection, we find that the quarry is

lame or diseased with mange. To your credit of knowledge, at least you are not accusing the foxhunters to be shooting wildlife – most ignorant criticism of foxhunters paint pictures of guns going off. The huntsman might carry a gun, but typically it is either loaded with blanks or rat shot to be fired in the air- to get the head up, break the train of thought of a hound tracking the wrong quarry – like a deer. Then the huntsman resumes his commands by voice or the horn.)

It was disturbing to see the Headwaters Hounds being advertised and paraded at the County Fairgrounds last summer. Did the spectators realize what these dogs are trained to do and what cubbing is?

(What a pretty sight! What a nice use of the fairgrounds! Foxhunting took place in this country before there was a state of Colorado! The Fairgrounds offered English/Hunter classes...do you know the history of these hunter classes? What do you KNOW what is cub hunting. To correct you, cubbing is the fall season of taking out the hounds a few young hounds at a time with the older hounds, to learn how to stay with the pack, to behave and not sight-see and dawdle, to learn to track the right quarry, leave the deer alone, leave the cows alone, etc. Nature has her young out in the forest too. The sporting measures of foxhunting, is to teach the young hounds what to chase, and young nature learns how to evade the pack. Very much like JV team on JV team.)(You can also equate this to our nation's trend of "Take your Child to Work days" – teaching the young hounds what is right and what is wrong)

This was also in contrast to the hard work of our 4-H youth learning to care for and display their animals.

(4-H, FFA and Pony Club have good values too, we have nice national relationships with them. Pony Club of America was instituted by MFHA)(I hope you are a consistent backer of these organizations, they can always use more support)(And you forgot the part of the 4-H auction...most of those pets the kids raise are being slaughtered.)

It was even more offensive to see Headwaters Hounds appearance in our Salida Christmas parade with red hunting (not Christmas red) attire and multiple puppies. Is this cruel business truly representative of our Salida scene and the spirit of the holiday?

(Sorry, you are not aware of the LONG HISTORY of FOXHUNTING in AMERICA. Foxhunt attire is traditional and pupurposeful. Please read some books, Derry Dell Press is a fine publisher of many hunting sports. Rita Mae Brown has a fabulous fictional series! Again, have you never traveled to other parts of particularly small towns in Virginia, Maryland, Massachusetts?)

Did the children lining the parade route understand that these puppies will live a boring life in caged pens and be trained to brutally kill other babies, many of their same species?

(Your passion and emotion, wow! Do the children know what all the marquis along Highway 50 mean when they read in the fall and winter "WELCOME HUNTERS"? What will happen to BAMBI??)(What do I tell my kids about the June Pride Parade?! (Hunting has been a necessity of mankind for millennium, and has modernly been regulated. I remind you, it is legal. I do not choose to entertain LGBT, tattos, peircings, NOR do I want my children engaging in those activities, but I teach my children that when they are adults, they may choose their lifestyles. At least my kids have learned that nature happens – if a bird of prey or a coyote eats one of our beloved chickens, then so goes the circle of life. My kids are not sheltered from the REALTIES OF NATURE. SHE IS CRUEL. Haha, the hound in cages? Lie #7 & #8 Have you been to a hunt club's kennels? Let me contrast that – have you been to a county shelter???? These hounds have more space than the less than ¼ acre lots in town, and go out 3-5 times a week on 8-10 mile romps! What happy hounds. Not to mention the kennel inspections a hunt club endures every year by the national representatives of MFHA.)(Lastly, the hounds are bred for tracking/scenting. It is not in their nature to be "KILLERS" as you very wrongly think.) (Hounds do have squabbles, hound-on-hound injuries do

happen. My brother threw a stick at me, landed me with stitches. I learned not to pester him. Hounds learn not to pester the "bigger" hound)

Some 20-30 dogs live in small kennels and sheds. They have nothing to do except defecate on the neighborhood road, howl and bark 24/7. According to neighbors, if they bark too much they are doused with water and vinegar from a spray hose which can burn eyes and nose. They are bored and lonely; two have fought each other to the death. The mutilation is what gives them the incentive to hunt. Without being rewarded with the bloodied and torn bodies, the hounds have no interest except for their freedom and a run.

(I have no words, but that this information is inaccurate and mis understood. I think you have watched "Game of Thrones" too many times.)(Lies #9-16) .) (Actually, this hunt club is very small. There are some MFHA recognized hunts in America who maintain a pack of more than 40 couples - that's 80 hounds!)

What will happen when all the local wildlife in the hunt area (on whose land will this occur?) has been killed? Will they hire trappers to bring in more animals from other counties and forest? Where will it all end?

(Such DRAMA! The statistics of US Government measures to control predators will enlighten you about how many coyotes there really are. This survey is supposed to be taken every five years, but I see that the most recent survey is not available yet.

<http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/usda/current/CattDeath/CattDeath-05-12-2011.pdf> I do not believe Headwaters Hounds has ever had a coyote kill, but a few jack rabbit kills; kind of like that prairie dog you tried to avoid but killed by accident. Headwaters Hounds will not be the cover-story of Outdoorsman Magazine anytime soon for its hunting kills.)(No, Foxhunting bylaws and code of ethics forbids trapping and releasing quarry in a territory. Our Code of Ethics states that all hunting practices must be done in the light of the public. There is no poaching, baiting, trapping. Hounds track only what mother nature provides.) (You can cut the hysteria) (I have same strong beliefs about killing a baby in the mother's womb...your passion may be better vented there. I am sure you fair on the side of life, as I do.)

We have local organizations and school classrooms whose mission is to teach children (and adults!) about wildlife conservation and habitat preservation in our local environment.

(Foxhunters are completely responsible for nearly million acres being protected by land conservation Trusts. We do thousands of hours volunteer keeping trails open to the public; maintaining tracts; mowing, underbrushing, building pavillions, picking up trash! Your doggone ignorance is appalling!) (DO you have any idea how many acres are required for a successful Hunt Club to survive? Tens of thousands of acres! We do not take this land-pressure for granted. Greedy counties like Chaffee want all the population to come in, chop up farms and ranches into little shoulder-to-shoulder HOA subdivisions --- and where is the wildlife supposed to go???? WHO THE HELL IS EXPLOITIING NATURE???)

This is "ruthless exploitation" of our wildlife and domestic pets. We are suppose to be stewards of our public lands (and private for that matter) and the inhabitants thereon. It is a more honorable goal to show folks the wonderment of wildlife and nature, than it is to promote the unnecessary, barbarous and merciless killing of animals simply for personal enjoyment. Predation is natural and make no mistake, this not sport hunting!

Yes, this is hunting. Any help we can lend a cattle rancher, we are grateful for the opportunity to ride his beautiful, pristine land.

Dogs are our pets. They have value beyond being murderers. They should not be treated so casually or callously. Dogs belong in our homes and not in crowded pens away from people as are the Headwaters Hounds.

(Lie #17 These are working dogs. They have a purpose and a job. Just like at the airport, oh, yea, you don't travel, the TSA respectfully ask that you do not interact with their drug sniffing dogs. They have a routine that they need for doing their job.)

Dogs give us so much of their lives, providing therapy, search and rescue (like the little boy a dog discovered in an Aurora pond this winter), military assistance, seeing eyes, and other life giving efforts, like giving unconditional love, support and kindness to soldiers with PTSD. We talk about and promote animal welfare- teaching them to kill defenseless wildlife is certainly not a part of their well-being.

(They are trained and bred to track scent. Like a pocket pooch is trained to nip at fingers and yap. Seriously though, the good dog is good because of good alpha-owners. Ask Caesar Milan – the good dog is good because he is hard wired to be a pack animal, like the coyote, and when there is a good alpha leader, and the dog lives IN THE MOMENT, the dog is happy to follow the alpha dog, which is the owner. They are visited every day, fed, watered, picked up after ACCORDING TO USDA GUIDELINES FOR KEEPING A PACK OF DOGS, by the way) (See how much you are learning?!) (When the hounds are too old to hunt, they are retired. They ideally stay with their pack or they are adopted out to a family who wants a couch potato. Have you adopted a retired foxhound or a greyhound? They are such loves!)

There was a fox hunt club ball in a local restaurant recently. The only local "ball" I am aware of is the celebration hosted by the hospital foundation to fundraise and to honor medical professionals and volunteers who provide health care and save lives. This ball is a celebration of the hunt. The participants see no value in the dogs or wildlife beyond the thrill and distraction or buzz the hunt gives them.

(The seasonal Hunt Ball is a tradition of the sport. Most all hunts have them – they can be lavish or held as a "barn dance". We invite the locals, the landowners, our friends. Just because you were not invited or have never heard of a Hunt Ball does not lessen it.) (It is kind of like a company picnic – you say thanks to those who supported you, your volunteers, you give awards to that super-doer. Sheesh, have you been in polite society????)(I am sure the venue appreciated the booking)

Several formal citizen complaints were filed last fall with the Colorado Department of Agriculture. At the time no one had bothered to obtain the required license for Pet and Animal Care Facilities or PACFA. A license has since been obtained for "small scale dog breeding kennels" (not livestock) with no background checks or input from Colorado Parks and Wildlife, local residents or neighbors-- and no public hearing! Now anything goes regardless of the regulations for licensing and local ordinances. To say that such authority does not apply because the dogs are "livestock" is absurd and groundless. A dog is a dog -- or is it really a cow or goat? Do cows run and kill wildlife in the forests? Is that why ranchers have cows? Where's the beef?

(All of this is true, kind of...it just seems that Chaffe County does not know what to do about a neighbor dispute – a neighbor moved in next to a hunt club's kennels, not knowing much about living next to a kennel of foxhounds. Now the neighbor is upset. I have had to maintain my fences to keep Casey Everett's cows off my land. No big deal. I really like Casey, and I frequently ask to help him move his cattle to their next location. SEE HOW EASY THAT IS???? This is RIGHT TO FARM AND RANCH COUNTRY. Even with all his cow poo ALL OVER MY DRIVEWAY, no big deal, I fix my fences to keep them out. What has Mr. & Mrs. Vely done to protect themselves from this nuisance?? Not a darn thing. I don't see any hedge row being planted to buffer the sound. Grow the heck up.)

Time and effort is being spent to fight this activity because apparently nobody else will. The sheriff's office receives complaints about the continuous barking that go unanswered. Colorado Parks and Wildlife does nothing and yet this agency is suppose to preserve and protect wildlife, isn't it?

(No, it's job is to regulate a flow of money for hunting permits) (Headwaters has permits and permission to hunt on all the land it hunts)

We have humane societies that are suppose to offer support services for the prevention of cruelty to dogs like the Headwaters Hounds and provide public education for responsible pet ownership. Where are they?

(I suppose they would be there if there WERE ANY CRUELTY, and there isn't.. It is such a shame that due to Mr. Vely's BS petition, you would normally find us foxhunters very friendly, but we have been VERY UNJUSTLY ATTACKED by crappy lies. We normally would invite you on a hunt, invite you to our parties and balls, invite you to our kennels – we spend a heck of a lot of time and resources on our beloved sport. But I assure you, unless you do some serious research, listen and hear from other foxhunters, the sport & the life of a foxhound is not what you think it is. I probably have the same awful prejudices about LGBT – not to mention teaching this stuff in schools to me is child abuse!-, tattoos, piercings, but shit, I have never denigrated nor perpetuated full of crap lies about them!) (I like to think you are only ignorant of the sport, have never known foxhunting, and would not normally, deliberately perpetuate lies)

And, where are the people who love and admire wildlife and their own pets? Where is their compassion and concern for animal welfare, both domestic and wild in this instance?

In my opinion this situation is not debatable or defensible. How can it be? It is truly unconscionable to train dogs to kill when they should be living in a family pack being loved, respected and cared for, given a treat, having their ears scratched and taken to the dog park to play. It is the ultimate in cruelty, greed and hard-heartedness to chase wild animals to the death and kill their young in such a gruesome manner.

(Again, you don't understand foxhunting – can't say there are no kills, very few, but that is not the object of our sport. The objective is for hounds to find the scent and track it. Can you imagine the god-given talent to find a scent and figure discern that the toes were pointing North and not South?? Can you imagine? It went THAT WAY! What a miraculous thing!) (And then, if the hounds over-run – and the coyote was so clever to make a 90 degree turn, and the hounds loose the scent, and then the hound go back to where they last thought they had it; they cast themselves again -like a fisherman casts a net – to figure out where did that line go? Do you know how fast a coyote can run? According to this website, 42.9 mph. <http://www.speedofanimals.com/animals/coyote> I can't find any stats on foxhounds, but a Jack Russel can be 20-25mph, a Greyhound is avg 45 mph, Border Collie 20-30mph...so you can sleep well that the coyote is truly evading the pack. Rarely a kill happens. We hope to chase it and marvel at the hounds ability to figure it out another day. If we killed everything we sought, you are right, there would be nothing to chase.)

I have chosen my words carefully and with heartfelt sincerity in this letter. I have spent most of my life volunteering on behalf of animal protection, both domestic and wild. All of my pets have been rescued, and I have devoted my life and finances for my dog to be able to walk with a prosthetic. This shameful activity is shattering.

(Again, please go visit other parts of the country and read some American History. It is shattering to you because you have never heard of it. It thought the same way about some society abnormalities that my Grandmother would consider a sin – living in sin is one example!)

I deeply believe this unnecessary conduct is disgusting and so unbelievably cruel to the wildlife and their young; inhumane to the penned up dogs all alone outside with nothing to do but bark and then be punished for it. It is of no value or purpose except for “self-serving, self-gratification and momentary entertainment.”

(Hmmm, back to my example of society abnormalities?) (I am not trying to shut down tattoo and piercing parlors, and I find those mutilations appalling, I choose not to participate. Oh sheesh, I forgot about all the weed shops!!! Do you get my drift? I am tolerant of other lifestyles and past-times, Salida folks ought to back the heck off the hounds and the hunt club. Back to my earlier statement is Salida folks are tolerant, so long as it matches their definitions. What hypocarcy!)

There is nothing endearing or appealing about it. It sets a terrible example and precedent; it must not be condoned.

Headwaters Hounds people and cubbers would do better to go out to the Fox Den restaurant on Highway 285 and have a drink, not on me, but on the wildlife and hounds whose lives you will be saving by not participating in or supporting this appalling activity.

In support of the best for all li fe,

(To: Mary Hay, Salida – you are very misinformed, and you exhaust me. Your mind probably cannot be changed, but hopefully you are less ignorant now. I totally support Headwaters Hounds)

Mary Hay Salida

Respectfully, Katie P