

The Philippine Star

19 November 2011

What's there to hide?

By Kathy Moran

Why does it seem that cruelty is easier done when we deal with animals? Don't they have any rights?

Yes, they do in RA 8485 or the Philippine Animal Welfare Act.

Just as in the case of laws for people, animal laws are also violated and perhaps animal laws are more easily violated than human laws. But that can be contested, too, right?

First there was, and is, the case of the dolphins, which have been used for shows here in Manila and then in Subic. The cruelty stems from the places where they are kept. These places are so small that the dolphins have no place to maneuver about.

Recently, there was news that 25 dolphins are being trained at Ocean Adventure, which will be shipped to Sentosa in Singapore soon.

There is Lolong, the saltwater crocodile who was captured in Agusan. They don't want to let Lolong go because, first he may do harm to other humans (although, to this day, there is no proof that he has harmed anyone) and then there is that *Guinness World Record*, which we now hold for having the largest crocodile in captivity.

Just recently I was watching TV and I was so saddened by the Antarctic penguins, that are now among the animals in Ocean Adventure. How is this possible we are in the tropics, and even if we recreate the climate of the Antarctic, surely it is cruel and unnatural to keep these penguins here.

Why are we so cruel to animals? Just so that we can show off?

I have refused any invitation to visit Ocean Adventure or any such place, whether here or out of the country.

* * *

"Ocean Adventure people have something to hide," Anna Cabrera, executive director of the Philippine Animal Welfare Society (PAWS), says.

Anna, Louis Ng, executive director of AC RES (an animal welfare charity based in Singapore), volunteers of Earth Island Institute and a group of animal welfare advocates recently visited the marine park.

Anna shares that they were sent away from the portion of the park that overlooks the enclosures where 25 dolphins being trained for Resorts World Sentosa Island are kept.