

Statement from SHARK Investigator

An hour or so before the shoot was to occur, everyone gathered at the lodge's outdoor amphitheater. This was so Senator Inhofe could speak to the attendees. Oklahoma Congressman Markwayne Mullin, who participated in the live pigeon shoot, was introduced to the crowd and then Senator Inhofe pointed out young girls, who were pre-teen to early teens. He joked that not only would the girls be throwing the pigeons at the shoot but that they still had blood on their clothes from doing it last year. We were also told that there were to be one thousand pigeons used for the shoot.

Before we got ready to leave for the shoot, Senator Inhofe announced that they had received word that an animal protection group was going to disrupt the pigeon shoot. This took me by complete surprise and I was concerned that my cover had been blown. Fortunately, I was in deep enough so that no one was able to figure out who I was and I was able to get to the shoot location, which was a few miles from the lodge.

When we arrived at the shoot location there were two Kiowa County Sheriff vehicles and officers at the gate. They appeared to be acting as security for the event, as they were checking wrist bands (given to attendees of the fundraiser) to make sure no activists got in. I noted later when I left the shoot that the Sheriff's SUV had a bumper sticker on it that said "Inhofe" and appeared to be promoting Inhofe's election campaign. There were also Oklahoma State Game Wardens present who also appeared to be working the event. It is important to remember that this shoot was part of a federal election campaign fundraiser and it was disturbing to see state and county employees, and therefore taxpayer money, being used to support a political event.

Before the shoot started, they had a cannon set up and they shot two bowling balls at a nearby mountain. This seemed incredibly reckless but no one seemed to care.

The shoot itself took place on a field not far from the road where the sheriff officers were. In the center of the field was an open tent where a few people were surrounded by crates of pigeons. These people would pick up the birds and violently throw them into the air, so that they could then be shot. I would often see a shower of feathers after the birds were thrown, so the cruelty of the event began before a shot was fired.

Encircling the tent, and positioned like numbers along a clock, were large bales of hay which were shooting stations. There were five or six shooters at each station and when the birds were thrown into the air, a volley of gun shots would blast out from the direction the bird had been launched. I saw Senator Inhofe at one far station and filmed him - to prove that he was participating in the slaughter that unfolded.

Spectators, such as myself, were lead to a nearby open tent where a Mariachi band was playing. I had to be careful while filming as there was an active effort made to look for activists, but I was able to record the horror that unfolded.

During the shoot, a number of wounded birds landed where we were sitting. One wounded bird who fell nearby was picked up by a man and then thrown back into the air to be shot. Another wounded bird with blood all over the inside of her wing stumbled across the chairs we were sitting on. A woman next to me, who had never been to anything like this before, asked me to

get one bird to safety and I did what I could to get the bird away and under a nearby car, so at least she wouldn't be thrown back into the killing field again.

I filmed a number of surviving birds, some of whom were hiding under and on top of cars. There were two that I will never forget; the first was a bird that was sitting on top of a car and she was clearly traumatized and shaking uncontrollably. The second was a very sweet bird that I saw wandering along the cars and I escorted her out of the danger zone and behind a parked car. I was going to try to rescue both of these birds, but they had disappeared into the brush by the time I was leaving.

After the shoot ended I returned to the lodge as I had one final task to accomplish; earlier in the day the campaign had a poster board with the names of the sponsors of the event and I needed to get a picture of it. While looking for that sign, I began a conversation with a fellow attendee of the fundraiser who told me he worked for an organization whose mission was to fight against animal protection organizations. It appeared that he may have suspected me, as he interrogated me about a few things, but I passed his test. I was then able to covertly photograph the donor board and then depart with all the evidence.

The bloody killing at Senator Inhofe's pigeon shoot went on for nearly three hours. It was a horrifying massacre where one thousand innocent animals were tortured, maimed, wounded and killed, all for a fundraiser, and for fun.