



AUGUST 2023

LEHIGH ACRES MAN ARRESTED FOR KILLING DOG

"See it, say it, make the call, it works," stated Sheriff Carmine Marceno. "The hero that reported this ensured that this dredge of society will face justice."

Early this morning, the Lee County Sheriff's Office received a message on Facebook Messenger from a concerned citizen in reference to a possible deceased dog. The original post was reviewed and the context of the message was disturbing. The message was shared with our Animal Cruelty Task Force and analysts in the Real Time Intelligence Center, who immediately began an investigation.



Ultimately, our research led detectives with the ACTF and the East District Criminal Investigations Division to a residence on Meadow Road in Lehigh Acres. Contact was made with 31-year-old Anthony Jabrail Knight (DOB 08-14-1991), also known on Facebook as Antonio

Rodriguez. When confronted with the information we had to this point, Knight confirmed he posted the messages and showed detectives where he buried his deceased dog, Kalea.

It was discovered Kalea was left in a cage within the garage with no ventilation or water, where she died with her face in an empty bowl.

(Anthony Knight...continued)

After a search warrant was granted, Kalea's remains were collected and sent for a necropsy.

Knight was arrested and is being charged with Felony Animal Cruelty.

ACTF would like to remind you that heat poses a deadly danger to your animals.

As mentioned earlier, Knight has prior convictions for drug possession, fleeing to elude, battery (including battery on a pregnant woman), violation of probation and possession of a weapon by a convicted felon. Additionally, Knight was on probation at the time of the incident.

Anthony Knight is proof that animal abuse, aggression and criminal behavior go hand-in-hand and, that by removing animal abusers from our streets, we make for a safer community.

YOU CAN REPORT SUSPECTED ANIMAL ABUSE ANONYMOUSLY!

Animals are unable to speak for themselves. Reporting the abuse, mistreatment and neglect of animals is everyone's responsibility...*and did we mention cash rewards?*



SEE IT, SAY IT, SEND 'EM TO THE MARCENO MOTEL

A call for service from a concerned citizen, regarding possible animal abuse, led to the arrest of an individual who clearly needs to be behind bars.

The caller indicated that the shrieking of a dog, along with a male voice, could be heard from a neighboring apartment.

Upon arrival, LCSO deputies knocked on the apartment door, eventually opened by James Lyster.



Blood spatter was immediately spotted and Lyster was asked if he had a dog. Lyster returned to the door and dropped a bloody Pomeranian onto the ground.

The canine, "Benji," an eight-year-old Pomeranian, was bleeding from his face, nose and mouth.

James Michael Lyster (DOB 08-14-1971) was arrested and charged with violation of Florida Statute 828.12(2), a felony.

Had it not been for the concern of a nearby resident, it is unlikely that the Lee County Sheriff's Office would have ever been made aware of the horrific beating that Benji endured at the hands of James Lyster.



(Lyster...continued)

Benji suffered a broken jaw, broken teeth and internal bleeding. He was unable to stand on his own. He will require additional surgeries, including dental procedures,



going forward. Veterinarians have indicated that Benji's recovery will take a significant amount of time.

"See it, Say it, Make the call" isn't a catch phrase, a slogan or a restated motto. It is a means for caring citizens and guests of Lee County to be the voice for those unable to speak on their own behalf.

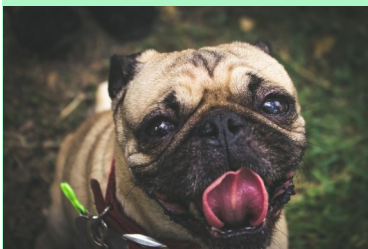
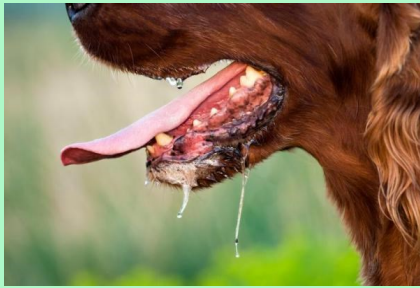


SWELTERING HEAT, SCORCHING TEMPERATURES... KEEPING YOUR PETS SAFE AND COOL.

With heat indexes reaching and exceeding 110° Fahrenheit this month, pet heatstroke is a genuine concern.

Pavement temperatures will likely surpass the 150° Fahrenheit mark and significant burning to your pet's paws can begin in as little as 60 seconds. Walking your dog in the shade or on grass will dramatically reduce the likelihood of injury.

While all pet owners know that leaving pets inside of a parked vehicle is considered Animal Cruelty by Florida law, it still occurs. Pets left in running vehicles, with the air conditioning on, have died when the vehicle stalled or ran out of fuel and interior temperatures rose quickly.



When a canine's body temperature reaches approximately 107° Fahrenheit, organ failure and death become commonplace. Heatstroke,

however...also known as Hyperthermia...can begin at around 103° Fahrenheit for both dogs and cats.

Excessive panting, vomiting, dry or sticky or abnormally-colored gums, an abundance of drooling, lethargy and/or disorientation are common signs that your pet may be suffering from the effects of the heat.

Brachycephalic canine breeds such as Pugs, English and French Bulldogs, Boxers, Boston Terriers and Bull Mastiffs...to name a few...have shortened snouts and smaller airways. As a result, they have a more difficult time regulating their body temperature.

Brachycephalic cats...Persians, Himalayans, Exotic Shorthairs, Scottish Folds and snub-nosed mixes of

(Keeping Your Pets Cool...continued)

these breeds, along with felines with thick and lengthy fur, such as Maine Coons, Norwegian Forest, Birman, Turkish Angoras and Ragdolls are also at increased risk of Hyperthermia.

As is the case with humans, animals considered overweight and animals suffering



from Asthma and Bronchitis are at higher risk.

Please...be cognizant of your pet's condition.

Please...avoid unnecessary exposure to extreme heat.

Please...keep your pets safe from these excruciating temperatures.



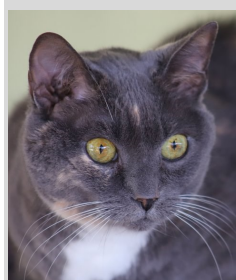
Immediate veterinary care should be sought should you believe that your pet is suffering from heatstroke. While transporting your pet, make efforts to lower their body temperature by using

fans or air conditioning.

ALL THAT JAZZ...

"Jazz," a senior feline residing at the Animal Refuge Center, is in need of a quiet and safe home.

Jazz gets along well with staff and with other cats. She would make an ideal addition to a calmer home.



Come out to the Animal Refuge Center, located at 18011 Old Bayshore Road in North Fort Myers, and meet this sweet girl!

For additional information, please call 239-731-3535.

Q&A WITH DR. MEGAN DAVIS, DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL OPERATIONS AT CAPE CORAL ANIMAL SHELTER

Dr. Megan Davis joined the Cape Coral Animal Shelter as Director of Medical Operations in April of 2022 and oversees the veterinary care for patients at the shelter's veterinary clinic as well as their shelter animals.

Monthly, Dr. Davis kindly takes time out of her busy day to answer questions emailed to the Lee County Sheriff's Office Animal Cruelty Task Force.

Question: Aside from taste, are there any benefits to giving your dog rawhide products, or is this something to be avoided at all costs?

Dr. Megan Davis: "Rawhides are typically made of cow skin. Left over hides are brined, dried and chemically treated before being marketed as dog chews.

There are potentially some benefits to giving your dog rawhides but there are a lot of risks as well.

The act of chewing helps prevent plaque and calculus build up and promotes healthy gums. Some dental rawhides also have a rough texture and special enzymes added to further promote oral health.

Rawhides can be a good "quiet time" activity for anxious

dogs or rambunctious puppies. It satisfies their natural chew instinct and can help alleviate boredom (and destructive behaviors that come along with it). It can also be a distraction during stressful events like thunderstorms.

The biggest downside to rawhides is the risk of choking and intestinal obstruction. Aggressive chewers may be able to break a piece of the chew off and many dogs try to gulp and swallow when the chew gets to a smaller size. Rawhide is poorly digestible and can sit in the stomach for weeks causing irritation and upset. If a piece moves into the intestines it can get stuck requiring emergency foreign body surgery.

Rawhides have a risk of both chemical and bacterial

(Dr. Megan Davis...continued)

contamination. A large 2017 recall was initiated due to presence of cleaning chemicals not approved for use in the treats in the US. And, there have been cases of E. coli and Salmonella linked to rawhide chews. This is dangerous for both dogs and humans so always wash your hands well after handling any kind of rawhide.



If you provide your pup with a size-appropriate American produced rawhide treat and closely monitor them while they chew its probably ok as an occasional treat. But I would stay far away from the mass produced decoratively shaped rawhides that appear around the holidays.

Safer alternatives include:

- Rubber based toys like Kong, especially if you can "stuff" them! (Try freezing peanut butter or yogurt inside.)
- Hide-free chews. SmartBones are a favorite in my household!
- Bully sticks (still have a risk of bacterial contamination but are far more digestible than rawhide.)
- Himalayan Yak Chews (remove when it gets to swallowing size)



DR. SHARON POWELL, DVM, DISCUSSES CAT WHISKERS

Appointed by Governor DeSantis to the Board of Veterinary Medicine and winner of the 2023 FVMA Veterinarian of the Year Award, Dr. Sharon Powell is a veterinary wealth of knowledge and friend of the LCSO Animal Cruelty Task Force.

Part of a cat's majesty is their whiskers! These specialized "hairs," aligned in rows, certainly contribute to their mysterious and almost mystical appearance. From a functional standpoint, cats wouldn't, for all intents and purposes, be able to complete any feline tasks without them.

So, we asked Dr. Powell about feline whiskers.

"When it comes to feline elegance, few features are as iconic and captivating as a cat's whiskers. These mystifying sensory organs, officially known as vibrissae, are fascinating and versatile sensory tools that play a vital role in a feline's daily life.

Whiskers are specialized hairs that differ in length and thickness from the rest of a cat's fur. They are most prominent on a cat's face, usually arranged in four neat rows on each side of the snout, above the eyes, and even on the backs of their front legs. These whiskers are deeply rooted in follicles surrounded by a rich network of nerves and blood vessels, making them highly sensitive to even the slightest stimuli.

Cat whiskers serve as exceptional sensory tools that enable felines to navigate their surroundings with precision. They act as an extension of a cat's sense of touch, allowing them to perceive objects, navigate in low-light conditions, and judge distances with remarkable accuracy. As cats move through tight spaces, their whiskers brush against objects, alerting them to potential obstacles, narrow openings, or changes in their surroundings. By interpreting these tactile sensations, cats can make quick and accurate judgments about whether they can fit through a gap or if an object is within reach.

Additionally, whiskers help cats gauge distances and perceive depth. When stalking prey or pouncing on a toy, their whiskers extend forward, enabling them to accurately judge the position and movement of their

(Dr. Powell...continued)

target. This sensory advantage is especially crucial in low-light conditions or when the cat's vision is compromised.

The length and arrangement of whiskers on a cat's face are not random. Typically, they are as wide as the cat's body, with the longest whiskers located on the sides of the upper lip and shorter ones above the eyes, on the chin, and on the back of the front legs. Whiskers on the back of the front legs, known as carpal whiskers, aid in climbing and hunting activities, acting as an additional source of sensory input.



Beyond their role in spatial awareness, cat whiskers can also provide valuable insights into a feline's emotional state. When relaxed, a cat's whiskers are typically in a neutral position, extending sideways from the face. However, when a cat becomes agitated or threatened, the whiskers flatten against the face, indicating tension or fear. Conversely, when a cat is excited or curious, the whiskers extend forward and become more pronounced.

In addition to their role as sensory organs, whiskers play an essential role in communication among cats. During social interactions, cats use their whiskers to convey their mood and intentions to other felines. When two cats greet each other, they may briefly touch their whiskers, which is known as "whisker greetings."

Cat whiskers are a marvel of nature, combining elegance and functionality in a single feature. These specialized sensory organs enhance a cat's tactile sensitivity, providing them with crucial information about their surroundings. From navigating through narrow spaces to perceiving depth and judging distances, whiskers are indispensable tools in a cat's daily life. Moreover, they

(Dr. Powell...continued)

serve as indicators of emotional states and play a significant role in feline communication.

As cat lovers, it's important to understand and appreciate the importance of whiskers in our feline companions.



Respecting their whiskers and refraining from trimming or otherwise interfering with them allows cats to fully utilize these remarkable sensory

appendages and ensures their overall well-being. So, the next time you marvel at your cat's whiskers, remember that they are not just decorative adornments but vital tools that contribute to their extraordinary abilities and add to the magic of their feline allure.



DISASTER PLANNING FOR PETS

Storms, fires and flooding have forced many to abruptly leave their homes. When pets are involved, planning ahead could mean the difference between life and death for your animals.

- ◆ Pack an emergency kit. It should contain your pet's vaccination records, medications, pet-waste bags, first aid supplies and a litter box, litter and scooper for cats.
- ◆ Microchip your pet. Ensure that existing chips are linked to updated information.
- ◆ Have the ability to quickly pack familiar foods and treats...enough to last for seven days.
- ◆ Have a list of hotels, shelters and facilities that allow pets.

DOG WASTE...THE REAL SCOOP

Picking up dog droppings may very well be one of life's more unpleasant tasks.

Due to the repugnance of the chore, many pet owner's stare off into the opposite direction, seemingly intrigued by a colorful bird or newly observed flora, in an effort to pretend they haven't noticed the obvious arching of their canine's spine.

Others stare at their cellular devices, pretending to be engrossed in a life-altering text message.

Dog feces do not simply disappear or evaporate. The waste does not fertilize the grass. In fact, much of the uncollected droppings makes its way into our waterways when rain washes the abandoned feces into storm drains.

According to the National Institutes of Health, dog feces "may be a serious hazard because they may contain microorganisms



that are both pathogenic to humans and resistant to several classes of antibiotics."

Fecal contents may contain salmonella, E. coli and a host of other infections. An additional concern for Southwest Florida is that canine waste provides a nitrogen source for algae blooms.

Please pick up after your canine.



Consider using biodegradable waste bags. They are made from renewable materials that will not harm the environment.

Dispose of pet waste (including cat litter) using your trash cans or community waste receptacles. Do not flush pet waste down the toilet, dump waste bags into storm drains or abandon waste near bodies of water.

"PIZZA & PAWS" EVENT HELD TO FIND LOVING HOMES FOR ADOPTABLE CATS AND KITTENS

Frequently, during kitten season, the Lee County Sheriff's Office hosts feline adoption events in an effort to find safe and loving homes for the many homeless kittens and cats housed in local shelters.

On Wednesday, August 13, 2023, a "Pizza and Paws" adoption event was held in unison with the Animal Refuge Center of North Fort Myers.

Guests enjoyed a free pizza lunch, generously and thoughtfully donated by Luigi's Pizza é Pasta, located in Suite 196 at the Miromar Outlets.



If you were unable to attend, and wish to provide a home for a local cat or kitten, please reach out to one of our local shelters for additional info.

DOGS AND NATIONAL PARKS

Our national parks are magnificent, protected areas designated by Congress to allow residents and visitors to enjoy the diverse geological features, the variety of ecosystems and some of the country's most breathtaking scenery.

To the surprise of many, canines are welcomed at nearly all United States National Parks.

With the safety of your pet and the well-being of wildlife being a definite concern for the National Park Service, dogs must be well-controlled on a leash no longer than six feet. Pet excrements must be picked up...no exceptions, and some trails may be off-limits to canines.

Nevertheless, the National Park Service has added a pet information page to their website with tips, event listings and travel suggestions designed to enhance your visit...you can even become a "B.A.R.K. Ranger!"



FDA ADVISORY:

DO NOT FEED CERTAIN LOTS OF DARWIN'S NATURAL PET PRODUCTS FOR DOGS AND CATS DUE TO SALMONELLA

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration is cautioning pet owners not to feed their pets certain lots of Darwin's Natural Pet Products raw cat and dog food, made by Arrow Reliance Inc., after FDA samples from the lots listed below tested positive for Salmonella.

Darwin's Natural Pet Products Natural Selections Chicken Recipe with Organic Vegetables for Dogs, **Lot 9774**, manufactured on Jun 13, 2023.

Darwin's Natural Pet Products Natural Selections Chicken Recipe for Cats, **Lot 9795**, manufactured on Jun 28, 2023.

Darwin's Natural Pet Products Natural Selections Chicken Recipe for Cats, **Lot 9830**, manufactured on Jul 19, 2023.

The products are in white and clear plastic packages. The dog food has blue labeling, and the cat food has blue and green labeling. Each package weighs two pounds and consists of four separate units. The lot codes are printed on the front of the lower left unit of the package.

If you have these lots of pet food from Darwin's Natural Pet Products, or you can't be sure of the lot code of the products you have, throw them away. Do not feed them to your pets.

The FDA is issuing this advisory because these lots of Darwin's Natural Pet Products cat and dog food pose a significant risk to human and animal health.

Salmonella can affect both human and animal health. People with symptoms of Salmonella infection should consult their health care providers. Consult a veterinarian if your pet has symptoms of Salmonella infection.



SCOOTING ALONG...

That classic Tibetan Floral rug beautifies the room. The sunlight illuminates the vibrant and splashy colors.

Fido, however, believes that this work of art is missing something...perhaps a brown stripe would complete this masterpiece.

Scooting, the dragging of a canine's backside along the floor, is a sign that something is amiss.

Most commonly caused by anal gland issues, scooting can be the result of allergies, general irritation, parasites such as tapeworms and/or Neoplasia.

As is always the case, it is best to have this matter inspected by a veterinarian if scooting becomes an ongoing behavior.



RETIRED K-9 JAGER PASSES AWAY

It is with a heavy heart that Sheriff Carmine Marceno announces the passing of retired K-9 Jager.

Sergeant Jamie Thorpe's retired partner, K-9 Jager, sadly passed away this past month. Jager served the residents of Lee County from 2012-2021. After retiring, Jager lived with Sergeant Thorpe and his family.

Over Jager's career he had 431 patrol deployments. During those deployments, he apprehended 69 suspects, and located 38 articles of evidence.

Jager had 132 narcotics deployments which led to numerous felony arrests. K-9 Jager conducted over 100 public demonstrations, where he positively interacted with the citizens of Lee County and represented our agency with pride.

Throughout Jager's career, he was called upon to go after some of the most violent and dangerous criminals, and always made sure Sergeant Thorpe and his fellow deputies made it home safely. We will miss you, buddy!



SWIMMING FOR SENIOR DOGS

As we age, exercising becomes more difficult and, in some cases, painful.

The same is true for aging dogs who may find discomfort and/or pain when placing weight on their bones and joints.

For this reason, swimming is an excellent option for many senior dogs. It's a low-impact exercise, non-weight-bearing and places virtually no stress on tendons and/or joints. It strengthens muscles and provides for a great cardiovascular workout.



With the water supporting the majority of the dog's weight, the motion is unlike any exercise that they would experience on solid ground. Additionally, it is believed that swimming is naturally relaxing, however, sessions should only last between 15 and 30 minutes.

Some dogs, often Brachycephalic and barrel-shaped dogs, struggle to swim due to their physical characteristics, so it is recommended that you discuss this option with your veterinarian prior to beginning a swimming regimen with senior dogs or with dogs dealing with medical conditions.

A LOW-CARB PRETZEL!

Look at that face! Meet "Pretzel;" a one-year-old fur-ball seeking a loving and caring home. While he may have some issues with other dogs, he is filled with love and hoping to share it with you!

Stop by the Cape Coral Animal Shelter and say hello...or call 239-573-2002!



Q&A, REGARDING PET FOSTERING, WITH CAPE CORAL ANIMAL SHELTER DIRECTOR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

For a host of reasons, local rescues and shelters simply do not have enough room to house the many of the dogs and cats needing homes in Lee County.

On occasion, a pet needing time to recover from medical treatment/surgery, requires a bit of extra attention prior to being made available for adoption.

Additionally, there are pets that show severe stress in a shelter setting...especially those who have previously resided in a home and struggle to adjust.

These are merely a sample of reasons why fostering a dog or cat is such critical component in the adoption process.

We sat down with Liz McCauley, Cape Coral Animal Shelter Executive Director, and asked several questions regarding the pet fostering process.

Animal Cruelty Task Force: "Liz, can you please tell us how the pet foster parent program works?"

Liz McCauley: "It's easy! Anyone who has gone through our general volunteer orientation signs up for our foster orientation, which goes over all the specifics of the program. We typically look for fosters for several types of situations. We always try to put kittens and puppies that are too young to be spayed/neutered and up for adoption into foster homes. At that age, they benefit tremendously from socialization so you're sole job as a foster is to cuddle and play with them—get them used to being around people and ready for their forever home. We try to put nursing moms, both kittens and puppies, into foster homes as well. They benefit from a quiet, nurturing home rather than the daily hustle and bustle of the shelter. We like to put our senior residents into foster homes for the same reason, and other dogs and cats that just don't do well at the shelter. We also have what we call "fospice" dogs and cats—ones that have been diagnosed with something terminal and their time is limited. If they are still active and living a good quality of life, we keep them in these very special foster homes until it is their time. It takes very special people to be a "fospice" foster.

Animal Cruelty Task Force: "With the existence of local shelters to house dogs and cats, why are foster parents

(Pet Fostering...continued)

and foster homes needed?"

Liz McCauley: "Fostering is crucial to the work we do. Every animal we can put into foster gives us more room at the shelter to save another animal. CCAS, in particular, is very small, so having the amazing foster program we do has truly enabled us to do thousands of



adoptions in our three-plus years instead of just hundreds."

Animal Cruelty Task Force: "Liz, who is responsible for the food and veterinary costs associated with caring for a pet?"

Liz McCauley: "We are! We take care of food, supplies, and all veterinary care. All we require is that you bring the foster back to our shelter for veterinary care and for meet and greets when scheduled."

Animal Cruelty Task Force: "We have heard people say that 'I could never foster...I'd have to adopt them.' Is that something that you often hear?"

Liz McCauley: "Well, yes, sometimes that happens. We call it a 'foster fail.' However, most of the time that doesn't happen because you realize that fostering is just an important part of the journey for that animal—a very important role that you were a huge part of. You realize they are ready to move on to their forever family, and it's the most rewarding feeling in the world when that happens."

Fostering domestic animals saves thousands of lives annually and, as indicated, is a critical component in the pet adoption process. All expenses are paid by the shelter. Your contribution is a safe, loving and nurturing home!

Considering fostering a pet? Please call the Cape Coral Animal Shelter at 239-573-2002...or call any of our local shelters or rescues!



HAPPY BIRTHDAY, KHALEESI!

There was no chance that the Animal Cruelty Task Force was going to let Khaleesi's birthday pass without fanfare!

While it pains us to repost photographs of Khaleesi taken during her rescue, those disturbing pictures, posted alongside her current photos, serve to demonstrate what strict law enforcement, alert rescue partners and a whole lot of love can do.

Khaleesi's parents, Judy and Don, were heaven-sent! Their genuine love and care for this furry girl has been more than any of us could have asked for. We are forever grateful!

In the Autumn of 2021, Mutty Paws Rescue presented the Lee County Sheriff's Office Animal Cruelty Task Force with the basic information needed to arrest those involved in her mistreatment. They placed Khaleesi in the wonderful foster home that ultimately became her forever home.

Khaleesi just celebrated her third birthday...one filled with love, respect and incredible care.

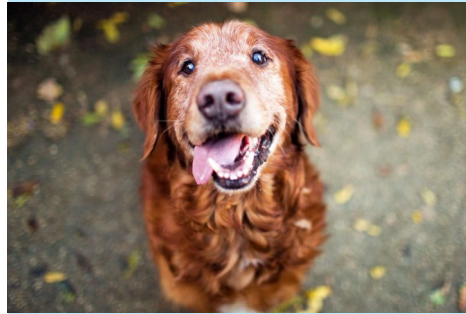
For those who wonder why Sheriff Marceno devotes time, resources and manpower in an effort to eliminate animal abuse, neglect and mistreatment, simply look at the "before and after" photographs.



ADOPTING A SENIOR DOG... AN ACT OF LOVE AND COMPASSION

Most veterinarians begin to categorize dogs as "senior" upon reaching their seventh birthday. However, smaller dogs tend to live longer lives and may not fall into the senior category until the ages of eight or nine.

Most dogs, when appropriately cared for, live many happy and enjoyable senior years.



Older dogs regularly find themselves homeless by no fault of their own. Often, senior dogs are surrendered due to the death of

a guardian, a change in living arrangements, the arrival of a new baby...none of which involve the canine's behavioral or health issues.

Sadly, many potential adopters quickly bypass the adult and senior dogs housed in shelters in search of younger canines...often puppies.

In reality, these adult and senior dogs are generally well behaved, are housebroken and have excellent social skills. Like all other homeless animals, they deserve the safe shelter of a loving home.

Both pure-bred and mixed breed seniors are available at all of our local shelters.

It is heartbreaking for many of us to think of senior canines having to live out their remaining years inside of a shelter.

Should you have that special place in your heart and in your home for a senior dog, please reach out to any of our local rescues or shelters. ❤️

AUGUST 26TH..."NATIONAL DOG DAY"

Admittedly, the LCSO Animal Cruelty Task Force celebrates and honors dogs every day of the year...so, how do we begin to approach "National Dog Day?"

While we can easily slip our pooch an additional treat, perhaps instead we can consider how we can better the lives of homeless dogs residing in shelters and rescues?

Our local shelters and rescues save an immeasurable number of animals annually! Please...volunteer, donate!

SIGNS AND INDICATORS OF DOGFIGHTING

Dogfighting, a spectator “sport,” is one of the most heinous and heartless forms of animal abuse.

While dogfighting is a felony in all 50 states, it continues to be a huge problem in both rural and urban areas around the country. Fighting takes place in basements, back-alleys and often in rather elaborate settings.

These fights are generally held in small, secured enclosures, usually from 14 to 20 square feet, and can last anywhere from a few painful minutes to many agonizing hours.



Most often, Pit Bulls are utilized in the sport, however, many different

breeds may be used.

It is estimated that tens of thousands of dogs are killed, each and every year, as a result of dog fighting.

What to look for...

Not all of these signs definitively identify the existence of dog fighting, however, they should be reported to law enforcement.

Pit Bulls on heavy chains are often a sign of fighting. Occasionally, the dogs are secured with padlocks, chained to tire rims, trees or poles and are generally unneutered. Should a home or yard have a large number of this particular breed...especially if they appear to be

(Dogfighting...continued)

aggressive...a report should be made.

“Breaking sticks” are wooden or metal rods, usually about 12 to 16 inches long, used to pry open a dog’s mouth. One end is generally flat or pointed and many of these sticks are bloodstained. If you see them, it’s a likely sign of dogfighting.

Scarred, injured dogs are a sign of dog fighting. Dogs with puncture wounds, open sores, torn or mangled ears/lips are indicative of fighting and must also be reported immediately.

Fighting enclosures may appear to be locations used to confine dogs. However, deep scratches and/or blood stains are good indicators of dog fighting. Camera and video recording equipment found nearby these enclosures generally indicate that these matches are being recorded.

Large amounts of vitamins, drugs, dog food supplements and veterinary supplies don’t always indicate the existence of fighting, but are often found when these dog fighting rings are exposed.



The Lee County Sheriff’s Office Animal Cruelty Task Force is committed to the investigation, the location and the termination of dog fighting operations. Please call 239-477-1000 to report suspected animal fighting operations, animal abuse or cruelty. To report anonymously, please call SWFL Crime Stoppers at 1-800-780-TIPS.

“I’m proud of the Animal Cruelty Task Force for the positive work they do on a daily basis. They have undoubtedly made a positive impact in our community.”

- Sheriff Carmine Marceno

