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## Pit bulls found abandoned

Conditions lead to suspicions of dogfighting

By Diana Royal Staff Writer



The two pit bulls were definitely fighting ... fighting to stay alive.

Had a neighbor not seen them and realized their owner had not returned for them after moving from

This dog's teeth were filed down, almost to the gum line, and he was left in the backyard of an Alexander home for 10 days with no food or water.

Alexander, the pair may not have made it through another day.

As heartbreaking as it was for Richard Daniels, president of Old Fella Animal Rescue, to hear the neighbor describe those two dogs - chained to a tree for 10 days, no food, no water - he had no idea how much worse the situation would become as he made his way to claim the abandoned animals.

According to Daniels, the teeth of the smaller dog had been filed down just below the gum line, and holes could be seen where the root canal had once housed the nerves.

"This painful procedure was done so he couldn't defend himself," Daniels said, convinced the malnourished, fungus covered animal had been used as a "bait" dog for other dogs that were being trained to fight. "He and another dog were chained to a tree and left to die ... this was the fate of these poor, voiceless animals whose only crime was being born."

What saddened Daniels even more was the fact that the sheriff's office offered no assistance until he himself stepped in to take the dogs.

"How long must we wait in this county until compassion overtakes apathy and the authorities take their responsible role in curbing animal abuse?" he asked.

For the two dogs that were rescued, possibly from brutal deaths in a fighting ring, the end looks like a happy one; however, as revealed through numerous media reports nationwide, authorities have little control on the seemingly popular sport.

Daniels admits he is speculating on the situation with the two dogs from Alexander - "but it runs true with other animals that have met this fate," he said, adding that pets are stolen and placed in a fighting ring only to be mauled by fighting dogs and then thrown into a field to die - if they aren't already dead.

There will be a hearing to determine whether a warrant will be issued for the owner's arrest. In the meantime, the healthier of the two, the one Daniels believes hadn't yet gone through the abuse inflicted upon the other, will remain in his new foster home until the hearing.

The "little dog" as Daniels likes to call him - the one with the broken and filed teeth and paper-thin flesh stretched over protruding ribs, has a long road to recovery but is being cared for.

"He's such a sweet dog," Daniels said, "even through all the abuse he has suffered."

As for the dog's possible link to fighting, he said he cannot think of any other reason why the teeth would have been filed. "Perhaps he was rescued just in time," he suggested.

"(Dogfighting) is a vicious ring of cruelty devised by man for entertainment and money," he continued. "Maybe the Michael Vicks of this world have been living here unafraid because they feel nothing is going to be done ... The eyes and ears of the world will be watching the Vick saga, but who will be watching Burke County?"