



2/14/24 Media Release

Linda Vaccarezza Found Guilty in Animal Cruelty Case

Nevada City, CA – After a three-day trial, a guilty verdict was returned in the Nevada County Superior Court on Feb. 8 in the case against Linda Vaccarezza, owner and operator of Pitty-Pop Pit Bull Rescue, of Grass Valley. Vaccarezza was found guilty of misdemeanor animal cruelty and operating a kennel without a permit.

Vaccarezza was investigated by Nevada County Sheriff's Office (NCSO) Animal Control Officers (ACO) for animal neglect charges for more than two years, and despite efforts to help Vaccarezza bring her business into compliancy, ACO ultimately rescued a total of 35 dogs and puppies for their safety and livelihood throughout the course of the investigation.

The investigation gained momentum back in March 2023 following a tip regarding endangered animals in a barn on the property. ACO responded with the Nevada County Sheriff's Humane Emergency Animal Rescue Team (HEART), and a search of the barn resulted in 11 chickens and six dogs being seized (these dogs are accounted in the 35 total). An attempt to inspect the main home on the property that same day to conduct welfare checks on additional animals was denied by a male on the property. The Sheriff's Office subsequently secured a search warrant, which was executed in April 2023 with additional dogs seized.

"One of the animals we rescued was a little gray, male puppy that we found in a cage," recalled ACO Supervisor Stefanie Geckler. "Upon initial assessment of the puppy, we saw several open sores on the puppy's tail-head, and hind end that appeared to be infected. He appeared lethargic, emaciated, and unable to walk. The puppy's red blanket in the cage was soaking wet, saturated with what appeared to be urine. This blanket was seized in the search, and we later weighed it and tested it for ammonia levels. It weighed 4.7 lbs. and the ammonia level reached 230.86 PPM, which is dangerously high for any living being."

Several of the animals rescued appeared ill, malnourished, injured and/or were living in unsanitary conditions. All rescued animals were taken to a local veterinarian for assessment and treatment. Evidence collected by NCSO ACO was turned over to the Nevada County District Attorney's Office for prosecution.

Vaccarezza will be formally sentenced on March 18, 2024, at 9:30 a.m. at the Nevada County Superior Court.

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