

Humane Society of Elmore County News – 2 Sep '13

Rea Cord

Director

By now most of you reading this are likely aware of the multi-state dog-fighting bust that took place last week in Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi and Texas. This was a three-year, Federal level investigation/operation involving numerous agencies though our shelter was not involved in any way. An operation of this magnitude, where over 300 dogs of varying ages from puppy to senior had to be helped, did not happen without some tremendous cooperation of many law enforcement and animal welfare agencies and we just want to thank each and every organization and person who helped in taking these dogs to safe locations where they can finally learn that all humans don't expect them to live tortured lives on the end of chains being starved and ignored.

With at least one dog-fighting bust site located in Lee County, AL, this certainly hits close to home and a person would have to be very naïve to think that this heinous activity doesn't take place in our county – it does. Dog fighting is cruel, disgusting, barbaric and a felony level crime in Alabama punishable by up to ten years in prison. Alabama's felony cruelty laws for dogs and cats are actually considered to be in the top three toughest in the country so now we can only hope the authorities have solid and strong cases for maximum sentences for those in our state. And while you may detest dog-fighting, you might think that it has nothing to do with you since you would never participate. Sadly however, dog-fighting does impact communities as pets are stolen, or free-to-good-home/stray/roaming pets are gotten for fighting or for breeding to sell puppies for fighting, or to be used and discarded as 'bait dogs' (training aids). Sadly we take far too many calls about missing Pit Bulls in particular and very few seem to be recovered – truly depressing to think of their possible fate and other breeds/species are also not safe since a 'training aid' can be any type dog, puppy, cat or kitten. If this upsets you it should as this is the other horror of dog-fighting and just proves why anyone who participates or condones or even knowingly looks the other way should be jailed at best or ostracized from society at worst.

What is the purpose of writing this? That part of this multi-state bust took place in a neighboring county should alert you to a HUGE reason to keep your pets safely at home, not letting them roam, not giving away pets to the first people who will take them, and securely locking (i.e. padlocks) gates to fenced yards to at least reduce the chance of your pet being stolen. Sad, yes, but part of today's reality nonetheless. And while we have no information as to where any of the dogs are being held and treated, you can bet they are all being scanned for microchips, so we can only hope that in the midst of all this sadness, there might be the reunion of a long-lost dog. Want to go talk to your vet about having your pet micro-chipped now?

To wrap up this Labor Day note on a much lighter note - Bark in the Park at Ft. Toulouse is coming up fast on Sunday, 22 September from 1-5 pm! Join us for an afternoon of fun with fellow pet lovers, great food, pet contests, children's games, dog activities, wildlife & livestock exhibits, Puppet Shows, Mimes, Big Mo from the Biscuits, Meet the Breed, pet items for sale and so much more! Admission is \$5 for those 13 and older. All dogs must be leashed, good in public and have a current rabies tag on their collar. In the event of severe weather, the backup date for Bark in the Park is Sunday, 29 September 2013, still at Ft. Toulouse. For more information go to our website at www.elmorehumane.org.