



ATLANTA PET RESCUE TEAMS UP WITH DEKALB COUNTY SOLICITOR'S OFFICE TO RESCUE CRUELTY VICTIM

For immediate release.

Atlanta Pet Rescue & Adoption, Inc., a no-kill animal shelter, has been working closely with DeKalb County Solicitor-General Shawn Ellen LaGrua to rescue a medium-sized mixed breed dog now named Max -- a victim of abuse held as "evidence" in an animal cruelty court case.

Max's story began in April when several people saw a woman beating him in the middle of the road. Cars were stopped and witnesses of the abuse were trying to take him from the woman. By the time the police arrived, the woman had fled with Max. Two days later, a DeKalb County Animal Services officer responded to a call reporting that Max was again being beaten and kicked while on a leash. On April 30, 2005, Max's owner was arrested for animal cruelty and taken to jail, and Max was taken to the vet to be treated for his injuries. Once treated, Max was detained at DeKalb County Animal Services in a small cage 24-hours a day with little to no human contact.

The law leaves animal subjects in cruelty cases in an unfortunate position. They are considered both "property" of their abusive owners and "evidence" in the cruelty case. Therefore, they are often held in limbo for months in animal control facilities. Max was held at Animal Services for over five months until finally, after an exhaustive search for Max's missing owner, Ms. LaGrua's office was able to file a motion to release Max since his owner had clearly abandoned him and since he was no longer needed as evidence for the cruelty case.

Judge Barbara J. Mobley signed the Order releasing Max for adoption. Max was released to Atlanta Pet Rescue & Adoption on Thursday, October 13, 2005, where he has since been vaccinated, tested negative for heartworms, seen by a veterinarian, and is ready to be adopted into a loving home.

**4250 Woodland Brook Drive • Atlanta, GA 30339
770.351.7377 • www.atlantapetrescue.org**

Atlanta Pet Rescue is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, no-kill, volunteer-based animal shelter operating on a shoestring budget. The shelter rescues and finds adoptive homes for approximately 2,000 homeless Atlanta dogs and cats each year. Dogs are available for adoption five days a week, Tuesday through Saturday at 720 14th Street in midtown, Atlanta.

DeKalb County Solicitor-General Shawn Ellen LaGrua recently launched the Domestic Violence/Animal Cruelty Initiative in May of 2005. The Initiative's purpose is two-fold: to encourage more effective prosecution of animal cruelty and domestic violence cases in DeKalb County and to educate the public about the link between domestic violence and animal cruelty. Ms. LaGrua emphasizes that while she's an animal lover, it's not only about the animals. There are major correlations between perpetrators of animal cruelty and perpetrators of domestic violence. The launch of the Initiative included a day long training for local law enforcement conducted by Animal Planet's Animal Precinct stars Annemarie Lucas, Mark MacDonald and Henry Ruiz, agents with the ASPCA in New York City. Local students also had the opportunity to meet with the agents and learn what they can do about animal cruelty.

For more information on the Domestic Violence/Animal Cruelty Initiative, please contact the DeKalb County Solicitor-General's Office at 404-371-3224 or 404-687-3593.

For more information on Atlanta Pet Rescue, please visit the News Room on our web site, www.atlantapetrescue.org or call 770-351-7377 and ask for Judith Price, Director and Founder of Atlanta Pet Rescue.