

Kane woman facing charges for alleged animal neglect

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer
April 19 2018 2:09 PM



KANE – A Kane woman is facing four counts of violation of owner's duties following what was described as an “emergency rescue” of dogs on her property by the Riverbend Humane Society.

Joyce M. May was charged on Tuesday, April 13, with four counts of violation of owner's duties, a Class B Misdemeanor. Count I alleged May failed to provide adequate shelter and protection from weather in subfreezing temperatures to two shih tzus, two pit bulls and a mixed breed golden retriever. Count II alleged May tethered a pit bull to a tree by use of a log chain. Count III alleged the golden retriever to a tree by a log chain. The fourth count alleged May tethered a pit bull with a lead less than 10 feet in length.

A representative of the Riverbend Humane Society said they discovered only one dog house on the property and said there was no food to be found. A bowl of water had been placed by the neighbor and at least one dog had to be cut from a chain-link fence. That dog also suffered raw skin from its log chain and tight collar, the representative said. She said she could not comment further regarding the issue due to the matter being under investigation and the defendant being innocent until proven guilty.

On March 23, 2018, the Riverbend Humane Society's Facebook page said they had to close due to an emergency rescue of dogs from Kane, Illinois, which is located on the border of Jersey and Greene Counties. Two pit bulls and a German shepherd mix were taken from the property and placed into the care of the Riverbend Humane Society. One of those pit bulls, named Belle, has since been adopted, as has a mixed-breed boxer taken from the property and named Chance.

A letter sent to the Greene County Sheriff's Office from May's neighbor was also provided to Riverbender.com. That letter alleges May has been mistreating her animals since 2015. The letter alleges dogs on the neighboring property often killed kittens, which would be buried by the property owners. It also states kittens from that property would cross the property line and kill squirrels and birds after using the neighbor's yard as "a litter box."



The neighbor said she would often complain to Greene County Animal Control regarding the animals' treatment, and was told to simply poison wet food to take care of the cat problem, she wrote.

"I could never do this to the poor lil animals who never asked to be raised by such awful people," she wrote. "I asked for a live trap to help catch these cats and was told they don't have any and was against the law to do this."

The neighbor said May soon moved to a trailer across the street from her and would leave the dogs unattended with short chains and no shelter as temperatures dropped to 28 degrees. It was on that day, March 23, the neighbor documented the treatment of the animals and contacted the Greene County Sheriff's Office, Riverbend Humane Society, which previously said they did not have room for the animals, and PAWS from Jacksonville.

PAWS took the shih tzus for rescue, and Riverbend Humane Society took the large breeds. A representative from the Riverbend Humane Society said May surrendered the animals without resistance.

The neighbor said as many as 10 cats possibly owned by May have not been taken at this time, and were still causing a nuisance to her property shortly after the dogs were taken. She provided screen caps of conversations between her and Greene County Animal Control, PAWS and even May.

In those conversations, May denies causing the terrible conditions to her animals, saying:

“I have never abused any animals in my whole life so why would I start now I am a animal lover not a hater. That is why I took all my dogs for walks when it was nice out right? You just need to mind your own business and keep out of my business. And besides why would I do this to any dog or animal? You don't know me so back up.”

May also stated she provided adequate food and water to her dogs during the cold winter months, adding “I will get me another dog if I want.” She also claimed she herself has gone without food so her dogs could eat.



Ultimately, May claimed someone did that to her dogs that Friday morning while babysitting for her sister. This was disputed on a Facebook thread by whoever operates the Facebook account for the Riverbend Humane Society, which said the following:

“You informed my director on the phone this afternoon that she tangles herself up in the fence all the time. Knowing she does this you still leave her in a place where she can potentially hurt or even could possibly kill herself...”

The Riverbend Humane Society said they are also in need of donations. Besides cash, the organization needs cat and dog food, sheets, blankets and kitty litter. A representative from the organization said they go through as much as \$5,000 a month in vet bills. Donations can be sent to the shelter, which is located at 23402 Crystal Lake Road in Jerseyville.