



SOCIÉTÉ POUR LA PRÉVENTION DE LA CRUAUTÉ ENVERS LES ANIMAUX (CANADIENNE)
THE CANADIAN SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS

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Court case proceedings for puppy mill owners

Friday, October 31, 2008 – Over a month ago, some 330 dogs from two puppy mills were rescued. The SPCA is pleased to report that the dogs are recovering both physically and mentally despite the tremendous ordeal they have been through. Almost all have been placed in temporary or permanent homes.

Yesterday both suspects from the two puppy mill cases, Francesco Coelo and Carole LaPalme, appeared in court. They were both charged with indictable offences which offer a maximum penalty of five years in prison.

The first suspect, Francesco Coelo, pleaded guilty and received a suspended sentence, three years probation (the conditions are such that he can only own three animals in total, that the SPCA can inspect his property on a regular basis and that he must inform the SPCA of any change of address. He also received 180 hours of community service and a \$3,200 fine.

“Clearly the fact that Mr. Coelo demonstrated a gesture of good faith by pleading guilty and liberating his animals influenced the sentence he was given. However, I still feel that the sentence was completely inadequate given the crime,” said Alanna Devine, Acting Executive Director of the SPCA.

“The sentence handed out demonstrates that the current legislation and the manner in which it is applied will not serve as a deterrent against animal cruelty – why is it that a man who pleaded guilty to animal cruelty is still allowed to have three animals under his care! The seizure, care and rehabilitation of these animals cost hundreds of thousands of dollars and all Mr. Coelo had to contribute was \$3,200. This is not right,” added Devine.

The second suspect, Carole LaPalme has pleaded not guilty and will appear for a pro forma on December 17th. This once again signals the dire need for better enforcement of the Provincial animal Welfare legislation (P-42) and stronger Federal laws.

The general public is encouraged to sign the petitions found on www.spcamontreal.com and to get involved in the fight against animal cruelty.

About the SPCA

The CSPCA was founded in 1869 making it the oldest humane society in Canada. Its mission is to protect animals against negligence, abuse and exploitation and to speak for those who cannot speak for themselves by ensuring their well-being. Raising public awareness and helping develop compassion for all living creatures is also part of its mandate. Every year, the CSPCA finds homes for over 10,000 animals, making it the shelter with the highest number of adoptions in Canada. To learn more, visit: www.spcamontreal.com.

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