



Putnam County Justice Center
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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

OPERATION STORM'S END

PUTNAM COUNTY, TN – July 8, 2019, Putnam County Sheriff's Office Deputies have arrested Tara Neutzler, 44, and Donald Schoenthal, 53, of Cookeville, TN formerly of Atwood, TN for 3 counts of animal cruelty and 1 count of aggravated animal cruelty. The Putnam County Grand Jury indicted Neutzler and Donald Schoenthal on July 1, 2019.

On May 10, 2019, the Putnam County Sheriff's Office rescued more than 40 animals from an inhumane residential breeding enterprise. PCSO became aware of the animals' situation after serving a warrant earlier that day. The PCSO Warrants Division was dispatched to the Locust Grove Road residence to serve Neutzler a warrant for TennCare fraud and felony theft. Deputies noticed numerous dogs and cats crammed into cages in the yard and there was a distinct odor of urine, feces and decomposition inside the residence. Warrants Deputies alerted Investigators of the Sheriff's Office of their findings, and PCSO immediately reached out to Animal Rescue Corps (ARC), a nonprofit animal rescue organization, for assistance.

Later that evening when PCSO Investigators and ARC responders arrived at the home, they were shocked to find dogs living in inhumane conditions and running loose on the property. While dogs and cats were running loose inside the house. They even found a putrefied dead kitten in a basket on a shelf. Ammonia levels and fresh diarrhea indicated that some dogs had been previously held in the basement for an extended period of time. A total of 23 dogs and 19 cats were found on the premises. The food available to them was moldy, when food was present, and some of the animals were without water. Animals were suffering from dental disease, had matted fur, fur loss or untreated skin infections and were covered in external parasites/fleas and ticks.

ARC transported all the animals to their Rescue Operations Center in Lebanon, TN. Once there the dogs and cats received thorough veterinary examinations and any necessary medical treatment. (In addition to the initial findings, animals were found to have ear and eye infections, internal parasites, overgrown nails, pyometra, untreated entropion and corneal ulcers.) ARC staff and volunteers have been caring for the animals of Operation Noah's Ark at this center for over a year. ARC has been caring for the seized animals from both operations with help from Redemption Road Rescue and the BISSELL Pet Foundation, who provided emergency grants to assist with medical care and daily needs.

Tara Neutzler and Donald Schoenthal's bonds are set at \$10,000. each.

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