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Justice for Sally after abandonment in clothing bin

HYDE PARK, NY – Officials from the Dutchess County SPCA announce sentencing in the abandonment and animal cruelty case of Sally, the little yellow terrier left emaciated and starving in a clothing bin. The case began on September 15, 2008 when SPCA Humane Law Officers responded to a call concerning a dog found dumped in a charity clothing donation drop bin. Justice came today in the Town of Hyde Park court when Judge David Steinberg sentenced Gary Lee Rhodes to 8 months in jail.

The Executive Director of the Dutchess County SPCA, Joyce Garrity, stated "We are all pleased that justice has come for Sally, a dog that represents so many animals that suffer needlessly. Unfortunately, we see more cases of cruelty where the abuser is never found and held responsible."

Humane Law Officers, with the assistance of the Dutchess County Sheriff's Department, apprehended the perpetrator within a few days of finding Sally. Heather Ryan, ADA represented the District Attorney's Office at the sentencing hearing. The eight month sentence included 4 months for the charge of abandonment and 4 months for the charge of animal cruelty. Both were misdemeanors.

Veterinarian Dr. Joseph Palamara noted that the two to three year old dog was grossly neglected and suffered from malnourishment. He stated, "The dog had not been well-taken care of even before she was abandoned. We were able to find her before she suffered irreversible damage such as organ failure. With proper care she has gained weight and is now doing very well."

The shelter was able to find a permanent home for Sally. "She is in a loving home and receiving the care she needs. She is thriving now," said Joyce Garrity.

The Dutchess County SPCA, a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit, is the lead agency for animal rescue and adoption in Dutchess County. The DCSPCA is a no-kill shelter with a 137-year history of concern, caring and providing shelter for unwanted, abused, abandoned and neglected animals. Central to the mission of the DCSPCA is the securing of caring, responsible, permanent homes for the adoptable animals in its care.

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