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Dog's sad saga ends with a new beginning in Arizona sanctuary

Worldwide Facebook campaign, petitions, saved Smokey from a death sentence.

By Alex Stuckey, Staff Writer Updated 8:36 AM Thursday, December 16, 2010

DAYTON — Smokey, the dog that attracted an international following for surviving a brutal beating, being run over by a car and escaping euthanasia, left Ohio on Wednesday with a Tibetan Buddhist nun for his new home at an animal sanctuary in Arizona.

The nun and animal rights activist, Kunzang Drolma, stroked Smokey's black and brown scraggly coat and gently placed him in his crate bound for Young, Ariz.

"He's going home," Drolma said. "We're taking Smokey home."

Drolma and Smokey, a 5-year-old Rottweiler/collie mix, boarded a Continental Airlines flight — paid for by the airline — Wednesday to central Arizona.

Drolma is director of Tara's Babies Animal Welfare Sanctuary, which began as a 140-acre ranch to house animals displaced by Hurricane Katrina. The sanctuary has 70 dogs.

"We're liberating Smokey from jail," Drolma said.

Although Smokey's story has a happy ending, his tale is a sad one. It began after the dog was accused of biting a 2-year-old boy during Memorial Day weekend and was later severely beaten with a Louisville Slugger baseball bat and hit with a car.

Police charged Chasity Elliot and Robert Profitt with misdemeanors, including animal cruelty, abandonment, a loose dog citation and lack of a dog license.

Profitt changed his plea from not guilty to no contest. Sentencing has not been scheduled.

Elliott has a possible jury trial Jan. 5.

The dog originally was given to Greene County Animal Control for euthanasia, which prompted a response from animal rights groups worldwide to save the dog through Facebook sites and petitions.

The dog's owner, Ellen Barney, rescinded the order and turned it over to the county.

Then, Tara's Babies stepped in.

With the help of donations collected through Facebook and its website, the sanctuary raised about \$1,400 to fence in a new yard at the ranch for Smokey, complete with a cedar dog cabin.

"This is the beginning of his new life," Drolma said. "His arrival at the sanctuary will be the first time in four months he's been off a leash."

Although the sanctuary is open to adopting Smokey out eventually, Drolma said that the sanctuary was really his home.

"We take a dog in for life," she said. "When we take a dog in, it's their home and they are our pets."

Despite the dog's supposed violent disposition, Drolma was very please with how calm and loving he was toward her.

"We will bond. He knows I love him and that his life is going to turn around," she said. "Nothing bad's going to happen to him ever again."

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Smokey flies to Arizona

Photo 1 of 5

Staff photo by [Teesha McClam](#)

Kunzang Drolma, a Tibetan Buddhist nun, prepares to take Smokey the dog to an Arizona dog sanctuary called Tara's Babies, where Drolma is the director, at Dayton International Airport on Wednesday, Dec. 15. Smokey, who was accused of biting a child, later hit with a baseball bat and hit with a car, was being held at Animal Control in Xenia.







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