

INJUSTICE FOR ANIMALS – ALABAMA STYLE

ANDREWS' STREET HOUSE OF HORRORS

CONVICTED DOG ABUSER KIM KEY



BACK OF HOUSE

THE FIRST VICTIM



AND . . . 26 MORE INNOCENT VICTIMS PAID WITH THEIR LIVES

THEY WERE VICTIMIZED NOT ONLY BY KEY, BUT ALSO BY THE COUNTY AGENCIES THAT KNOWINGLY AND WILLFULLY FAILED TO PROTECT THEM:

- The Limestone County Sheriff's Office
- The Limestone County Animal Control Agency
- The Limestone County Health & Safety Department

The Final Victimization Came at the Hands of the Limestone County Judicial System on December 12th

INJUSTICE FOR ANIMALS – ALABAMA STYLE

KEY'S “ADOPTION” DUMPSTER FOR THE DEAD AND DYING



- ON THEIR WAY HOME AND OUT OF HELL -
SOME OF THE 23 WHO ESCAPED THE DUMPSTER IN 2006





For Immediate Release:
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Contact: Susan Netboy
800.446.8637

ATHENS MAN WHO OPERATED A DACHAU-STYLE GREYHOUND ADOPTION FACILITY FACES ANIMAL ABUSE CHARGES

Birmingham Race Dogs Fall Victim to Starvation and Neglect

Limestone County, Ala. – Athens resident, Marion Kimberly Key, who presided as President of the Greyhound Retired Racers adoption group faces several counts of animal abuse and neglect for the starvation of at least eight greyhounds and one Afghan hound. A hearing is scheduled for 9 a.m., Wednesday in the Limestone County Courthouse. Key had obtained the majority of his greyhounds from the Birmingham Racecourse. The dogs were intended for adoption, but adoptions rarely occurred. Key seems to have fallen over the edge of sanity and into hoarding mode, barely recognizing the suffering inflicted on the dogs in his care.

Charges were filed against Key in early September when a Limestone County sheriff's deputy who was investigating a complaint at the Key residence discovered the bodies of several dead greyhounds in cages. Four barely surviving, but live dogs were also found in cages – three greyhounds and one Afghan hound. The four survivors were transported to the Limestone County Dog Pound. One of the greyhounds, died en route; a second died the next day. Weighing only 18 pounds, the dogs had lost more than two thirds of their body weight under Key's care. The surviving Afghan and greyhound were nursed back to health by Dr. Pittman and adopted out a month later.

Deputy Sheriff King, who stumbled upon this house of horrors, was not the first in the Sheriff's department to be alerted to problems at 17107 Andrews Street. Formal written complaints of animal abuse were lodged against Key back in February of 2006, when greyhound advocate, Mary Prather, traveled all the way from South Carolina to personally investigate concerns from a local resident about conditions at the adoption facility. The Greyhound Protection League (GPL) hired Steve, a private investigator, to assist in the investigation and provide local connections to authorities in the area.

From the outside, the house was eerily quiet, dark curtains and boards covered the windows. What Steve and Mary found when they were finally allowed into the house was utterly shocking. The stench of urine and raw sewage was so overwhelming that they could hardly breathe; the walls and floors were caked with urine and feces. It was evident that no attempt had been made to clean for months on end. Every room in the small, dilapidated house was crammed with wall to wall stacked cages. The 55 lethargic greyhounds imprisoned in the cages were lying in their own feces and urine. Many were desperately thin and suffering from ulcerating sores and other untreated medical conditions. Many of the dogs were non-responsive to the presence of humans and appeared to have given up on the possibility of ever leaving the hellish existence that had become an everyday reality. Mr. Key who admitted that he rarely let the dogs out of their cages appeared to be oblivious to the stench and filth that surrounded him. Mary convinced Key to let her purchase four greyhounds who were transported to Florida where they received months of medical care. One died because her ravaged body could not battle the kidney disease that had been caused by starvation.

A week later, Mary returned to the house accompanied by Steve, Deputy Sheriff Mike Boyle and animal control veterinarian Dr. Pittman. Deputy Boyle refused to enter because of the stench. When Key's wife agreed to release 40 of the 51 remaining dogs, Bob Varnberg immediately started the drive from Florida to Alabama to pick up the dogs in a borrowed greyhound-hauling rig. When Bob arrived, Key stubbornly refused to release all of the promised dogs, no amount of pleading, threatening, or money would change his mind. Only 19 of the 51 greyhounds escaped the torture and death that ultimately befell the 32 that were left behind. Those in dire need of medical attention were taken to Marilyn Varnberg for care. Heartbroken, Mary continued to file complaints with Sheriff Blakley, animal control and the health department. Except for a promise from Dr. Pittman that he would follow up with monthly visits, none of the local agencies would intervene on behalf of the dogs. Anonymous sources have revealed that four additional

greyhounds were released in 2007, and that the bodies of the other dogs that died over the ensuing months were unceremoniously disposed of by Key.

"All the dogs would be alive today, if local authorities had intervened a year ago," said GPL President Susan Netboy. "But the Sheriff refused to act, despite clear evidence that these helpless animals were in the care of an individual whose mental deterioration precluded even giving them a bowl of food. Their tragic deaths lie primarily at the feet of the local authorities who did nothing."

- END -

The Huntsville Times

Man gets probation in cruelty case

Thursday, December 13, 2007

From staff reports

Huntsville Times

ATHENS - An Athens man, in whose house deputies found several dead dogs this fall, pleaded guilty to animal cruelty in district court Tuesday.

Marion Kimberly Key, 55, pleaded guilty to one count of cruelty to an animal before Limestone County District Judge Jeanne Anderson, assistant district attorney Becky Grimes said.

Anderson sentenced Key to a 90-day jail sentence, which she suspended, and two years probation, and ordered him to pay \$1,570.71 in restitution, Grimes said. Anderson also said that Key cannot own or possess any animals during his probation, Grimes said.

Limestone County deputies called to Key's house at 17107 Andrew St. on Sept. 3, which was Labor Day, found five dead dogs and four malnourished dogs inside, said sheriff's investigator Eric King.

King said he thinks the dead dogs included four greyhounds and an Afghan. Animal control officers removed four living dogs, but two of them - a greyhound and an Afghan - died by the next day, King said.

King said he did not arrest Key on Sept. 3 because Key was adamant that he had been feeding the dogs.

Dr. Robert Pittman of the Limestone Veterinary Clinic called King the next day and told King that the two dogs he had examined were malnourished. King said he then swore out a warrant for Key's arrest.

The case caught the attention of the Greyhound Protection League based in California.

"As far as I'm concerned, the legal system failed those dogs," the league's Susan Netboy said.