



NEWS RELEASE



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DOG FIGHTER CONVICTED ON TEN FELONY COUNTS!

Los Angeles – LA Animal Services is reporting Arnette Counts, 43, of Los Angeles was convicted by a jury yesterday (November 5th) on 10 felony counts of Illegal Dog fighting. Judge Bob S. Bowers remanded the defendant into custody after the conviction. Counts faces a maximum state prison term of nine years.

Counts' co-defendant, Walter Citizen III, pleaded guilty on February 8 to five felony counts of dog fighting for his involvement in the operation that was run out of his South Los Angeles home.

The case was co-prosecuted by Deputy District Attorneys Kimberly Abourezk and Deborah Knaan.

In March 2007, during a probation search, the Los Angeles City Animal Cruelty Task Force found 17 adult pit bulls and four puppies on Citizen's property. According to prosecutors, all of the adult dogs had injuries and scars consistent with dog fighting. While Counts did not live at the location, he admitted that he purchased some of the equipment used to condition the dogs for fighting and that he "took care" of the dogs every day. Members of the Task Force found personal documents belonging to Counts at the home, along with dog fighting magazines and publications, and dog fighting paraphernalia, such as weighted collars and a "bait" animal.

After the conviction LA Animal Services Assistant General Manager, Kathy Davis stated, "Illegal animal fighting is one of the worst forms of animal cruelty. We hope this conviction sends a resounding message to those involved in this cruel "sport" that the City of Los Angeles takes the crime of animal cruelty very seriously."

Sentencing is set for December 1, 2008 in Department 105 of the Criminal Justice Center in downtown Los Angeles.

For more information or assistance call LA Animal Services at
1-888-452LA-PET1/1-888-452-7381
(TTY Hearing impaired: 877-875-8205) or visit the website at www.LAAnimalServices.com.

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