



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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An End to Agony, Served with Jail Time ***Cornelius Wayne Bush Sentenced for Cruelty to Animals***

Washington, DC – After suffering prolonged abuse at the hand of his owner, The Honorable Judge Geoffrey M. Alprin delivered swift justice for Maze, an adolescent white and black pit bull mix dog yesterday, sentencing Cornelius Wayne Bush for one charge of misdemeanor Cruelty to Animals.

Bush was arrested on March 9, 2013 after an investigation by the Washington Humane Society, in which Humane Law Enforcement Officer Monica DiGiandomenico found significant evidence of tormenting. Bush will be serving a split sentence comprised of 60 days in jail, 120 days suspended, no animal ownership for five years, forfeiture of Maze, 12 months of probation, drug and psychological counseling, \$500 restitution, and a \$50 victim witness fee.

As The Honorable Judge Alprin appropriately stated in court, Bush should be ashamed of himself. We couldn't agree more.

Officer DiGiandomenico first responded to an anonymous call about Maze's condition in February 2013. Through her investigation, she discovered that he was primarily living outside without access to adequate food, water, or proper shelter. Maze was found to have superficial wounds and was chained by his collar in such a fashion that immediate seizure was necessary to ensure he did not choke. Maze was later diagnosed with hyperthermia. But the evidence that came next sealed Bush's fate.

A witness came forward and stated that the dog was routinely beaten by Bush. The witness then shared twelve audio recordings acquired over several months which demonstrated a pattern of abuse. The recordings revealed 78 distinct, heart wrenching incidents of vocalization by Maze. These were identified by animal behavior expert and WHS Director of Behavior and Training, Marika Bell. She stated that these vocalizations indicated fear, pain, and Maze trying to defend himself.

"It was intuitively obvious from listening to the tapes that abuse was occurring. It was shocking to go through the tapes and imagine that a human being could cause so much torment and suffering to an animal," Marika Bell stated.

At this point, Maze's future is unknown. He is currently receiving ongoing care and love in a secure location.

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The Washington Humane Society (WHS) is the only Congressionally-chartered animal welfare agency in the United States and has been the leading voice for animals in the District of Columbia since 1870. WHS provides protection and care to nearly 30,000 animals each year through its broad range of programs and services including: sheltering, adoption, humane law enforcement, spay and neuter, humane education, human – animal rehabilitation programs, and lost and found services. For more information, please visit www.washhumane.org.



Previous living conditions for Maze



Maze, weeks after rescue