

March 15, 2013

I'm writing in the hopes that this may bring some positive attention to the efforts of a group of people who are fighting to protect all pets and to share information to anyone who has ever owned and loved a pet, no matter what kind of animal that pet may be.

In April of 2012 Alex Wullaert, a Branford, CT resident at the time, was arrested for littering. Littering, in this case, was the dead body of his 6 year old pitbull/boxer mix dog, Desmond.

Madison police were notified that Desmond's body had been found in a black garbage bag and, thankfully, the officer who was assigned to the case had the instinct to follow up by scanning for a microchip, which eventually led to Alex Wullaert as the owner.

In Alex's sworn police statement, which he gave voluntarily, he admitted to, over the course of 8 months, locking Desmond in a tiny apartment bathroom for 12 or more hours a day, starving, beating and, ultimately, strangling Desmond to death. In the necropsy (autopsy) report, pieces of tissue, wood and plastic were found in Desmond's shrunken stomach indicating Desmond was chewing on anything he could in the bathroom to survive. The report also described bruising was found on Desmond's head and body, broken teeth and multiple bone fractures, including broken ribs. There were very clear signs of abuse and severe neglect.

As it states in the police report, Alex rescued Desmond after his ex-girlfriend (and mother of his two year old daughter) surrendered Desmond to the New Haven Animal Shelter. The reasoning for her surrendering Desmond was that she couldn't care for Desmond and her daughter when Alex was forced to leave their home after Alex tried to strangle her during a domestic dispute. This shows that Wullaert's capacity for violence is not limited to animals.

Desmond was a shelter favorite. Volunteers at the shelter all fell in love with him. Desmond was eager to please, grateful for any attention, playful and very affectionate. He quickly became known as Sweet Baby Desmond. Everyone was thrilled when Desmond was rescued, not realizing who Alex was or the history he and Desmond shared. When Madison police informed the shelter volunteers of what Alex had done, they were all shocked, saddened and completely heartbroken.

As a result, the **Justice for Desmond** group was formed. Started by the shelter moms who cared for and loved Desmond, this group has now garnered worldwide support through their Facebook page and their tireless work to spread information about this case. Since Alex's first court date, many supporters have shown up in the rain, snow and freezing cold to protest peacefully outside. They want Alex to answer to the full-capacity of the court for the crime he has committed. Wullaert and his attorney, Richard

Silverstein, have managed to postpone this case for almost a year in an attempt to cycle through the docket judges in an attempt to get a judge who will be lenient.

To those of us who support Desmond and anyone who believes violent crimes like this cannot go unpunished, this has become a frustrating stall tactic that has become a mockery of our court system and another example of a waste of taxpayers money. One positive from all of this postponing is that the support for this group continues to grow. At the moment, the **Justice for Desmond Facebook page has almost 6,000 'Likes'**.

The reason I share all of this now is that Alex has applied for Accelerated Rehabilitation, a type of probation for those in need of psychiatric help who are first time offenders. At the conclusion of the probation if no other crime has been committed, then Alex's record will be wiped clean. We believe it is abundantly clear that Wullaert should not be eligible for Accelerated Rehabilitation, since he is neither a first time offender nor one who has simply committed a petty crime. He is a danger to society with a history of violence which WILL repeat itself, and escalate, should he be let go with a simple slap on the wrist.

As a resident of Branford, I believe there is an opportunity here to make a stand as a community. Violence is occurring every day and the punishment for those who are caught rarely equals the severity of the crime itself. This case could set a precedent to show that abuse of any kind will have serious repercussions. Branford residents should join Justice for Desmond to show their support for this cause and show that we will not tolerate violent crimes to occur in our community.

April 11, 2013 is Alex Wullaert's next court date for murdering Desmond. Many of Desmond supporters from around the country will be there to protest his application for Accelerated Rehabilitation. Please help us keep Desmond's memory alive and bring Alex to justice! Join us at the New Haven Superior Courthouse at 8:00am to show that we stand united as a voice for the voiceless. Anyone who would like to show their support can also visit **Justice for Desmond** on Facebook or Twitter.

We stand not only for Desmond but also for the many animals who suffer and die at the hands of their abusers and against these abusers who continue to walk free because these crimes are sadly not taken seriously.

Thank you for your time and support!

****Please adopt for your local shelter****

Kelly Ferro and Jason Blackson

