

05/17/2009 UPDATE:

## DAR&E's Response to the Continuing Internet Campaign

A little over two years ago, a foster dog named Stella was stolen from DAR&E by a foster parent. In spite of repeated attempts to reach a compromise, we regrettably had to file charges against the now ex-volunteer for stealing our dog. DAR&E has been the subject of several internet smear campaigns and many defamatory attacks from the ex-volunteer and her supporters. We stood firm in the face of these attacks as we believe that a rescue Doberman does have value and that the concept of stealing any dog is wrong. The Commonwealth of Virginia agreed with us and the ex-volunteer was charged with "Failure to return a dog" and "Larceny of certain animals and poultry", which are felonies under Virginia law. The trial involving this person was held on May 4th and May 5th of 2009 and the ex-volunteer was found guilty by a unanimous jury decision.

While we are pleased that the judicial system supported our belief that a rescue animal does indeed have value and that no one should be permitted to steal a rescue dog, we remain disappointed that Stella has never been found and will likely never be located. In the work of rescue, it is our goal and hope that we will remain involved in the lives of all the animals that enter our program – because of this ex-volunteer's actions, Stella has no support network to fall back on if some misfortune befalls her. The following link is to The Winchester Star, a public newspaper's account of the trial and its outcome:

[http://www.winchesterstar.com/showarticle\\_new.php?sID=6&foldername=20090508&file=Canine\\_article.html](http://www.winchesterstar.com/showarticle_new.php?sID=6&foldername=20090508&file=Canine_article.html)

Shortly after the ex-volunteer stole Stella, she filed charges against DAR&E with the Doberman Pinscher Club of America (the DPCA). Her charges centered around her misguided beliefs that DAR&E had not followed proper procedures in dealing with Stella. While we believe that the DPCA should have pended adjudication of that complaint since the case was already in the criminal court system, they opted to proceed with processing the complaint. Because of the criminal trial, DAR&E's responses were forced to be somewhat limited per instructions from our attorney. In the end, the DPCA chose to sanction DAR&E for two years. We believe this was an unfair decision and one that was politically motivated and not supported by the facts of the case. The outcome of the trial has made the facts clear and they do not support this sanction.

The DPCA sanction against DAR&E expired on April 21, 2009. As of today, DAR&E has not opted to renew our relationship with the DPCA. In court on May 5, 2009, the president of the DPCA stated that a rescue Doberman has no value. While we appreciate the many good works that the DPCA performs on the part of the Doberman Pinscher breed, we cannot in good conscience affiliate ourselves with an entity that believes that rescue dogs have no value. Therefore, we will continue to operate independently of the DPCA.

DAR&E is happy to see this sad chapter come to an end and will continue to work hard to achieve our core mission: rescuing and re-homing abandoned, neglected and unwanted Dobermans in Maryland, DC, Virginia and West Virginia. For over 11 years, DAR&E has saved nearly 1300 Dobermans that otherwise would have died or been destroyed. We have a wonderful volunteer base and are very sound financially. Our volunteers are renewed and refocused and we hope to continue to serve our communities for many years to come. Thank you for your continuing support.