

Man rescues dog left to die in trash bag

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Written by

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BRYSON CITY — Swain County authorities are trying to find out who injured a dog, put it in a trash bag and then threw it into a Dumpster near Bryson City.

The dog survived and is recovering at a Franklin animal hospital.

Thomas “Trip” Carswell discovered the dog Wednesday still wrapped in a white trash bag in a Dumpster off U.S. 19 south, just outside the Bryson City town limits. A dead dog was lying in the trash bin along with the young dog.

Carswell, who was dropping off trash at the county site, described his reaction as “shock, disbelief.”

The dog, which is believed to be 6-8 months old, had managed to force its head and paws out of the bag, Carswell said.

“I’m sure it woke up and was suffocating,” he said. “They had to have known the dog was still breathing when they put it in the trash bag.”

The dog suffered a crushed muzzle, according to Carswell’s wife, Love Carswell.

“It took a heck of a lot of force. The dog was bleeding through its nostrils, and it could not open its mouth there was such heavy swelling,” Love Carswell said.

Dr. Jeffrey Todd, owner of Noah’s Ark Companion Animal Hospital in Franklin, cared for the dog Wednesday night. The hospital is providing free care for the dog they are calling “Bryson.”

“He’s doing a heck of a lot better. He still has some bleeding in his nose,” said Dr. Jessica Tracy, who was caring for the dog Thursday.

Tracy said Bryson probably has some fractures, but he wants to eat, wants attention, and “he’s wagging his tail whenever any of us come around.”

Because the dog’s injuries are isolated to his face, because he was found along with a dead dog and because he was still alive when he was placed in the bag, “It does not look like this was an accident,” she said.



Tracy said hospital workers have seen this kind of thing “a couple of times before.”

“We can only speculate based on what we have seen before,” she said. “This is unfortunately something that people do. They try to knock the animal out and wrap it in the bag so it suffocates.”

The Swain County Sheriff’s Office is investigating.

“We don’t have any suspects or anything really to go on at this point,” said Jason Gardner, chief deputy with the Swain County Sheriff’s Office.

It’s not clear what happened to the second dog.

Love Carswell, who is a retired 911 dispatcher, said she received hundreds of calls about animal abuse over the years.

“We’re so passionate about this. I have seen this so many times, cases of cruelty and abuse. We’ve had to deal with this for years and years and years. We’ve just had enough,” she said.

Swain County does not have a county-run animal shelter.

“One of our dogs, this lady called and said, ‘If you don’t have somebody come and pick up this pup, I’m going to drown it’,” Love Carswell said.

The Carswells rescued that dog, but she says, “There’s only so many dogs you can support.”

She says Swain County commissioners haven’t made the issue a priority. “I feel like it’s not given the serious consideration that it warrants,” she said.

Gardner said the Sheriff’s Office has a difficult time even finding a place to take vicious dogs.

The county used to have an agreement with an organization that would come to the county once a week and pick up strays and other animals in need of a home. That program ended.

Swain County leaders have talked about getting animal control and a shelter, but they have never moved ahead with it, Gardner said.

http://www.citizen-times.com/article/20130322/NEWS/303220006/Meet-dog-survived-being-left-dead?nlick_check=1