



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Peninsula Humane Society & SPCA Humane Investigators Discover Cockfighting Operation in East Palo Alto

BURLINGAME, CALIF. — On March 23, Peninsula Humane Society & SPCA (PHS/SPCA) Humane Investigators along with East Palo Alto Police Department uncovered a cockfighting operation in East Palo Alto while responding to complaint about cockfighting received on the PHS/SPCA's Cruelty hotline.

"When we arrived on scene, it was clear dozens of roosters had been modified and trained for fighting," said PHS/SPCA Lead Humane Investigator Christina Hanley. "Most of the roosters had been 'dubbed', a very painful process in which their comb, wattles and earlobes are cut off. This type of modification of roosters is consistent with cockfighting. Many of the birds still had open and bleeding wounds from the dubbing process."

"Along with the modified roosters, we also discovered other cockfighting paraphernalia including sparring muffs and several vials of antibiotics used to keep the roosters from developing infections from injuries sustained during fights," according to Hanley.

In total fifty-six chickens were surrendered to PHS/SPCA by the suspect. All of the surrendered birds were humanely euthanized since many were ailing from injuries consistent with cockfighting and/or were not safe candidates for adoption due to their aggressive nature. Many of the birds were suffering from wounds three to four weeks old.

The suspect was arrested by PHS/SPCA Humane Investigator Hanley and booked under California Penal Code 597(a) which is a felony charge of crimes against animals and Penal Codes 597i and 597j both misdemeanors related to the possession of fighting birds and implements.

"Cockfighting is not only illegal, it is animal abuse," said Hanley.

PHS/SPCA Humane Investigators handled more than 450 cases of animal cruelty and neglect in 2016 alone.

Our highly trained investigators perform vital work in investigating animal abuse claims and removing animals from harm's way. They also work with our District Attorney's Office to prosecute violators. PHS/SPCA has a Cruelty Hot Line and encourages the public to call if they suspect an animal is being abused. The number is 650-340-7022 ext. 601.

About Peninsula Humane Society & SPCA

Peninsula Humane Society & SPCA is a private, open-door, not-for-profit animal welfare organization. Primary programs include animal adoptions; animal rescue and sheltering, including specialty care for domestic animals with medical and/or behavioral challenges; wildlife rehabilitation; animal cruelty investigation; community outreach and education; low-cost spay/neuter; and obedience classes. This vital work is made possible by volunteers and donations. PHS/SPCA receives no funding from national animal welfare organizations. Visit www.phs-sPCA.org to learn about all PHS/SPCA's programs and services, ways to help the animals and special events.