

Two men face charges in separate animal cruelty cases in Schenectady

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By Steven Cook

SCHENECTADY — Three malnourished cats — two of whom died — and a dog that was severely beaten have two men facing charges in unrelated cases, authorities said today.

Now the SPCA is looking for help in caring for the surviving animals.

In the cat case, Wendall Smith, 25, was arrested early Monday in Saratoga County, days after SPCA officials released his name as someone wanted for questioning in the case.

Smith faces three counts of misdemeanor animal cruelty.

Smith was arraigned and ordered held without bail.

He is accused of leaving three cats without nourishment for days at a second-floor apartment on State Street in Schenectady. Two of the cats died. The third survived, but appeared to have turned to the carcasses of the two dead cats to survive.

The Schenectady, Schoharie and Saratoga County Society to Prevent Cruelty to Animals had sought Smith since Friday, after discovering the cats that day as a result of a hotline tip.

Other tips generated from media stories on the case helped locate Smith in Saratoga County, Mathew B. Tully, SPCA chief, said today.

The surviving cat, dubbed "Bud" by the SPCA, was doing better today, officials said. He is eating on his own. He may still have lasting injuries through possible neurological damage from malnutrition.

But Bud is also purring, officials said.

In the second, unrelated case, Michael S. Perillo, 42, of 2438 Albany St., was charged with one misdemeanor count of torturing or injuring animals and resisting arrest and aggravated harassment.

Perillo is accused of beating a Great Dane name Oliver, punching it and taping its mouth shut with duct tape, Tully said.

Responding officers found a large amount of blood on the front porch. They soon found the dog with severe damage to its mouth and jaw. The dog also suffered a possible fractured skull in the attack, Tully said.

The dog was rushed to Latham for emergency veterinary care.

SPCA officers and Schenectady police officers arrested Perillo after a struggle, Tully said.

Tully said Perillo admitted to beating the dog and said that he did so after the dog nipped at him.

Perillo also allegedly told officers that he received the dog from a friend to watch while the friend was incarcerated.

The SPCA is now providing care to both Bud and Oliver.

The SPCA relies on donations from the public to do its work. No funds are received from the state.

The SPCA has set up a fund to help in the care of the animals. They've been taking donations since Friday, but, by early Monday, had only received one \$5 donation, Tully said.

Anyone wishing to donate can do so by mail at Guardian Angel Fund, PO Box 9516, Niskayuna, NY 12309 or online at www.countyspca.org/index.php/donate-now.