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## NEWS RELEASE

### ANIMAL CRUELTY TASK FORCE ANNOUNCES FIRST FELONY CONVICTION

A gang member, Aaron Jones, 26, of Los Angeles put his puppy in a bathtub of scalding water and then used a tazer gun to zap the dog, all this to hurt his girlfriend whom he just had a fight with. Mr. Jones was sentenced to three years in prison for abusing "Sheila", a German Shepherd mix breed puppy. Sheila survived her injuries and is now in the home of the Los Angeles Police Officer who was involved in the case. This was one of the first convictions for the Animal Cruelty Task Force.



The Animal Cruelty Task Force consists of two Los Angeles Police Detectives, Detective II Walt Hampton, and Detective I Linda Ortega. Five Department of Animal Services Officers, Captain Wendell Bowers, Officer Sean McCarthy, Officer Armando Navarette, Officer Chip Vang and Officer Annette Ramirez. This task force hit the ground running and, in its very first case, accomplished exactly what was predicted, and is committed to taking criminals who abuse animals off the streets.

The press conference held today included Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, Councilman Tony Cardenas, LAPD Assistant Chief Sharon Papa and General Manager, Guerdon Stuckey, Animal Services.



Mayor Villaraigosa stated, "When we protect animals we are protecting ourselves, we are protecting our communities".

"Los Angeles is putting a leash on animal cruelty, " said Councilman Cardenas. "We have taken this vicious criminal off our streets and his conviction will make animal abusers think twice before hurting more defenseless victims. Reporting animal abuse stops other crimes of violence."

“This task force represents a cutting edge strategy that allows the City of Los Angeles to effectively investigate and abate issues of animal cruelty,” stated Guerdon Stuckey. “By reporting animal cruelty to the task force, you, the public are also assisting in these convictions of animal cruelty and taking the criminals off the streets”.



“Sheila” after her veterinary care. Now living with her new owner, an L.A.P.D. officer that first arrived on the scene.

For information or assistance, residents can call L.A. Animal Services at 1-888-4LA-PET1/1-888-452-7381 (TTY Hearing Impaired: 877-875-8205) or visit the website at [www.LAAnimalServices.com](http://www.LAAnimalServices.com).

L.A. Animal Services rescues, houses and cares for lost and abandoned animals, enforces animal-related laws and acts to prevent cruelty to animals.