

Convicted animal abuser ordered to pay \$3,300

Thoroughbred horse had to be euthanized

BY JOAN RANSBERRY
Staff Writer

A Stouffville man has been sentenced to four months house arrest, placed on three years probation and must pay \$3,300 in restitution after pleading guilty in a Newmarket court to animal cruelty charges Monday.

Julian Cassey, 45, was charged following the October rescue of two thoroughbred horses and one Shetland pony from an Aurora-area property.

Acting on a complaint concerning the condition of the animals, investigators with the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals removed the horses and pony from the rented property.

One of the horses was in such bad shape, it had to be euthanized.

"The horses were found severely emaciated," Ontario SPCA communications officer

Christine Arnett said. "The thoroughbreds were approximately 400 pounds underweight and the pony about 100 pounds underweight."

The court was told that although the horses were on pasture during the day, the poor quality of the pasture, coupled with the poor quality of the horses' teeth and a heavy parasite load, was not adequate to maintain body condition.

"The pony was also suffering from extreme overgrown hooves," Ms Arnett said. "It took a farrier five hours to perform corrective trimming of its hooves."

Under an order from Judge W.W. Bradley, Mr. Cassey is not allowed to possess, care for, or own any animals for five years and must allow Ontario SPCA inspectors to conduct inspections of any property he owns or resides at for three years.

In addition to paying restitution to the Ontario SPCA, Mr. Cassey was ordered to perform 240 hours of community service.

"If I had the jurisdiction, I would prohibit you for life from owning or caring for animals," Judge Bradley said.

Ontario SPCA livestock inspector Doug Rombough said the agency often encounters the rational that an animal is thin because it is old.

"This case demonstrates that this is merely an excuse," Mr. Rombough said. "Given normal levels of food and care, elderly animals are quite capable of living normal lives and maintaining health and body condition."

The surviving horse and pony have been adopted by an Ontario SPCA volunteer.

"The remaining horse and pony have improved greatly," Ms Arnett said. "Happily, they were adopted together by a new owner who also has other horses. Although they endured great hardship together, they will now go on to live out their lives with each other in a caring environment with a family dedicated to their well being."

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