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**QUEENS MAN ARRAIGNED ON ANIMAL CRUELTY CHARGES FOR TYING DOGS BEHIND
CAR AND DRAGGING THEM**

Defendant Faces up to One Year in Jail, if Convicted

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced that Dan Bujor was charged with animal cruelty for tying two dogs behind his car in Long Island City and then driving through the neighborhood. Video captured by a bystander showed the dogs, named Marzipan and Nougat, forced to run behind the vehicle.

District Attorney Katz said: "As alleged, the defendant tied a German shepherd and a pit bull to the back of a car and dragged them down a Long Island City street. I thank the good Samaritans who came forward to report this cruel act and the NYPD for quickly apprehending the defendant and seizing the animals, which are now under the medical treatment of the ASPCA. We are grateful that the dogs survived and their alleged abuser will now be held accountable in our court system."

ASPCA Vice President of Humane Law Enforcement Howard Lawrence said: "The footage of this incident is deeply disturbing and serves as a stark reminder of the persistent issue of animal abuse in New York City. In the last two weeks alone, the ASPCA has taken in nearly 20 animals from 18 suspected cruelty situations. We are thankful to be able to provide ongoing care for these dogs and other vulnerable animals as they recover, and we extend our sincere gratitude to the Veterinary Emergency Group (VEG) Upper East Side, the New York City Police Department, and the Queens District Attorney's Office for their swift action and invaluable support in this case."

Bujor, 68, of Long Island City, was arraigned last night on a criminal complaint charging him with two counts of overdriving, torturing and injuring animals; failure to provide sustenance; and driving by unlicensed operator. Queens Criminal Court Judge Anthony Battisti ordered Bujor to return to court March 5. If convicted, he faces up to one year in jail.

DA Katz said that, according to the charges, on January 4, at approximately 6 p.m., a witness observed Bujor driving a red Volkswagen Passat near 11th Street and 43rd Avenue in Long Island City and dragging two dogs by their leashes connected to the trunk of the car.

One of the dogs, a pit bull, became unhooked from the car. Bujor allegedly grabbed both dogs, put them in the car and fled.

The witness contacted the NYPD.

An officer observed Bujor holding two dogs by the leash on the corner of 11th Street and 43rd Avenue. He was allegedly unable to produce a valid driver's license.

The NYPD removed the dogs, and the animals were taken to the ASPCA in Manhattan to be examined. The German shepherd, named Marzipan and about 2 years old, had a ruptured eardrum. The pit bull, estimated to be 2 to 4 years old and named Nougat, had new abrasions to the paw pads behind her wrists, inflammation of the skin between her toes and diarrhea.

The investigation was conducted by the NYPD's 108th Precinct.

Assistant District Attorney Zoe Marks of the District Attorney's Domestic Violence Bureau is prosecuting the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Nicole Reid, Interim Section Chief of the Animal Cruelty Prosecutions Unit, and Assistant District Attorney Mary Kate Quinn, Bureau Chief of the Domestic Violence Bureau, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Special Prosecutions Joyce A. Smith.

Criminal complaints and indictments are accusations. A defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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