



**ANIMAL
ALLIANCE**
OF CANADA

*Animal
Protection
Through
Education &
Advocacy*

Royal's Story: A Case Against Pound Release

Chronology of events

September 2 – 3, 2001

- Royal was a Golden Retriever, who lived with his human companion, Laurie Bishop, since he was a pup.
- On September 2 of this year, Royal wandered off their property, possibly in search of Laurie who was away for a few days. After several hours of looking for Royal, Laurie's husband, Barry Clarke, called the Animal Control number in the local phone book. He was directed to the Owen Sound SPCA and got an answering service. The service was not able to direct him to the animal control person in Dundalk.
- Barry called both the police and fire departments who recommended calling the township office. Since it was a long weekend the offices were closed.

September 4, 2001

- Barry placed an ad about Royal in the local paper, to run the following day.

September 5, 2001

- As a result of the ad, Barry received a call from the local people who had found Royal on the Sunday morning of September 2nd, the day he went missing. They found Royal while out for a walk and called Arteeka Canine Control staff who picked Royal up on Sunday. The Hills described Royal as extremely friendly and told the animal control person they would adopt Royal if he were not claimed.
- Barry immediately called Arteeka Canine Control and left a message on the answering machine. When his call was not returned he persisted, calling 4 more times before he was able to speak to an Arteeka employee. A horrified Barry was told that Royal had already been adopted. The employee said that the dog had been in the pound since Friday, which was August 31, even though the Hills family said they found Royal on Sunday, September 2. Barry told the employee that he had to have Royal back and he wanted to know who had adopted Royal. He was told that information was confidential.
- In a desperate attempt to appeal to the man, Barry said, "Royal needs special attention and if you would tell the people I'm sure they would return him". The reply was that he would..."see what he could do".

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September 6, 2001

- Barry again called Arteeka. This time he was told the adoptive family had Royal euthanized by a veterinarian because he was having seizures. Barry believed he had been told the truth but he held off telling Laurie because she was still away and he knew how devastated she would be.

September 9, 2001

- Barry called to tell Laurie that Royal had wandered off the property, ended up in the pound, was adopted and then euthanized. Devastated, Laurie, who was still away, called Arteeka. She reached the employee who had impounded Royal and was told that Royal had been at the pound for 5 days. The employee also said, “You know there is a hefty bill involved here, but we won’t send it to you, we’ll let the township eat it.” Laurie explained that she did not care about the bill. All she wanted was her dog back. Laurie requested information about the adoptive family and the veterinarian who had apparently euthanized Royal, but was told that the information was confidential.

September 10, 2001

- On advice of the township, Laurie called and spoke to a person whom she believed was Greg Smith. She questioned him about Royal’s situation. Greg said that he would have to check his records and that he would get back to her. He did not call back and did not respond to Laurie’s repeated calls.

September 11-16, 2001

- Laurie and Barry called the township and their local councillor. They began to realize that something was wrong. They tried to get answers but were repeatedly told, “We’ll look into it” or “There’s nothing we can do for you”.
- Finally Craig Daniels, Chief inspector for the Ontario SPCA told Laurie to call Penny Lawlis, an inspector with OMAFRA, who referred her to Garrit Rietveld, the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, OMFRA, inspector for the Fergus area where Arteeka is located. Gerret listened to Laurie’s story and said he would look into it and get back to her.
- By now Barry and Laurie were very frustrated. After telling their story to different people, they found out that Arteeka sends dogs to research. Laurie contacted Shelly Hawley-Yan, the Director of Animal Alliance’s Project Jessie programme. Project Jessie is a programme that rescues dogs and cats from pounds that are to be handed over for research.

September 17, 2001

- Shelly first spoke to Laurie on September 17th, two full weeks after Royal’s disappearance. Laurie indicated she had already been in touch with OMAFRA, but hadn’t heard anything back from them and was worried about Royal.

- Shelly also requested that OMAFRA investigate the situation.

September 19, 2001

- Garrett Rietveld told Laurie that OMAFRA had records from the pound but that he could not release the information without department approval.
- On the same day, Dawn Pate, Manager of Multi-Sectoral Issues, and Garret's immediate supervisor, called Laurie and said that the information could not be released without approval from their legal department. Alarmed at not being told what happened to Royal, Laurie called a number of people, including Gwen McBride, Director of Livestock Technology, OMFRA.

September 24, 2001

- Laurie received a call from Gwen McBride who told her Royal had been euthanized at a "supply" facility. When Laurie asked for more information, Gwen explained that further information could not be released because of legalities. After more calls to OMAFRA, Laurie was told the case had been turned over to another department for investigation and it could take several weeks before more information was released. She was told that she could file a Freedom of information request if she wished to pursue the matter.
- After finding Royal had been sold to a "supply" facility and knowing the University of Guelph purchases dogs from local pounds to be used, Shelly informed Laurie that Royal was probably sold to a University of Guelph pound dog conditioning facility run by Dr. Denna Benn.

October 2, 2001

- Stephanie Brown and Liz White of Animal Alliance met with the Canadian Council of Animal Care (CCAC), explained the situation and raised concerns regarding Royal. Although CCAC is a voluntary peer-review group and has no legal authority to interfere in the operation of Dr. Benn's facility, they contacted her and relayed the details about Royal.

October 3, 2001

- Dr. Benn phoned Laurie and told her an older Golden Retriever was purchased from Arteeka Canine Control on Wednesday, September 5th at 7:30 am. He had been judged too old for any of the current research programmes so was euthanized by 9:30 am that same morning.
- When Laurie asked Dr. Benn whether she had received any paperwork or checked that Royal had been held the required time, Dr. Benn replied, "No, I have been dealing with pounds for years and I just go on trust."

October 4-30, 2001

- To date Laurie has received no paperwork from either Arteeka Canine Control for the University of Guelph to determine the fate of Royal. She has been visited by an investigator

who investigates primarily for Ministry of Natural Resources. According to him, he has never done an investigation under the Animals for Research Act. Laurie has not been informed by OMFRA staff as to the extent and parameters of the investigation.

Royal was much loved, well-cared for dog. The sale of Royal by Arteeka to the Guelph research facility is a violation of the Animals for Research Act. He was not held for the 72 hours legally required by the Act. In fact, he was held barely more than 24 hours of the countable time by Arteeka Canine Control. The supply facility that took him did not exercise due diligence in determining whether he was eligible for purchase as an experimental subject.

Anyone who would have taken the time to look at Royal would have seen a chubby, well-cared for old dog. He was very friendly and social. His nails had been trimmed 2 days prior to his leaving the property. The hair on the lower half of his body was trimmed because of hot spots. He was not matted or bedraggled. He was wearing a beige collar with his name embroidered into it, and also wearing a dog tag. He was tattooed on his groin and it could be clearly seen, since his hair had been recently trimmed. But because no one really looked at Royal, he was seen as an “unwanted” stray, a dog that had no purpose or value if he wasn’t useful for the current research programs.

NOTE: Under the *Animals For Research Act*, a pound must hold an animal picked up as a stray for at least 72 hours before it can be adopted out, or sent to a registered research facility. This period is not to include weekends or statutory holidays. Since Royal was picked up on Sunday of a long weekend, his time should have been counted from Tuesday morning and he should have been safe until at least Thursday night.