

Santa Barbara Shelter Dog Narrowly Escapes Death After Transfer To High Kill Shelter In Orange County



Veterinarians were concerned with Dexter's emaciated frame, jaunting hip bones and visible back vertebrae upon returning to Santa Barbara

May 16th, 2016-Dexter, a dog from Santa Barbara County Animal Services, was sent to a high kill shelter in Orange County on March 18th, 2016 to participate in a free adoption event. This particular event only required a valid driver's license and small microchipping fee for adoption, without any background check, therefore offering no protection from those seeking bait dogs for dog fights or dogs to sell in medical research. Nevertheless, SBCAS chose to send Dexter and several other dogs to this event with no guarantees of their safety. Although he was originally adopted, Dexter was returned to OC Animal Care shelter in less than a week when his new owners had to move.

While at OC Animal Care, Dexter spent a majority of his time in a kennel with zero enrichment activities. Understandably, his behavior and mood began to deteriorate. Just a few weeks after naming him as their "April Dog of the Month," and in their own words, "a perfect addition to any family," OC Animal Care relabeled Dexter as aggressive and reactive, showing signs of kennel stress, lunging at gates, and baring

his teeth—behaviors likely induced by the high-stress surroundings and his degenerated emotional and mental state. Regardless, as a result of the shelters poorly determined assessment—made without the opinion of a qualified behaviorist—Dexter was kept in near isolation, and deemed unadoptable.

As a result, Dexter was red listed for euthanasia and fated for death. Within days of his scheduled euthanasia, several emails and phone calls were made by rescue networks to SBCAS to inform them that one of their dogs was scheduled to be killed and if they could coordinate a transport for Dexter. **SBCAS responded in an email that they “had no rescue contact or interest for this dog” and would “respect any outcome determined by [their] program.”** In other words, they chose not to rescue Dexter and instead complied with the determination to have him killed.

Through the tireless efforts of Save More Kill Less, an animal rescue networking team, and many volunteers, the rescue community learned of Dexter’s situation and has stepped forward to bring Dexter home and save his life.

Shirley Jensen, founder of Dog Adoption and Welfare Group, had this to say:

"Dexter’s case raises a much larger question. Why are Santa Barbara County citizens being taxed to provide training and kennel enrichment and program managers and then seeing their dogs shipped to places where they receive none of these benefits? We should work together to have this practice suspended until the outcomes of dogs so exiled can be thoroughly investigated and safeguards put in place to prevent other dogs suffering as Dexter has."

"When it comes to the health and well being of animals, Santa Barbara should be a beacon of innovative care. Unfortunately, this is not the case." -Gretchen Lief



A safe and happy Dexter after being rescued by DAWG

The actions of Santa Barbara County Animal Services and Orange County Animal Care are grossly irresponsible and nearly resulted in the death of this animal. Dexter's case is just one of many which exemplifies inefficiency, cruelty, and a lack of leadership.

How you can help!

DEMAND SBCAS END THE PRACTICE OF SENDING DOGS TO DANGEROUS HIGH KILL SHELTERS AND FREE ADOPTION EVENTS

DEMAND THE CREATION OF A SB COUNTY ANIMAL WELFARE COMMISSION TO WORK INDEPENDENTLY OF THE SB COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH