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ORPHANED ANIMALS VANISHING

# The 90 Pig Mystery

## Secrets Of An Animal Welfare 'Angel' Or Maybe Just Playing Another 'Angle?'

### Investigations Swirl Around Wild Animal Orphanage

SAL Political Snitch - Copyright 2007 By SAL

(Editor's Note: Many of the sources for this story have asked for anonymity, some citing fear of retaliation and current employment fears as a reason.)

Where did the little pigs go? More on that later.

But first...

\* \* \*

You've seen her on TV, ministering to the 'orphaned' animals who are abused or abandoned, and it gives you a warm feeling in your heart; but here's some cold water for your brain.

Her name is Carol Asvestas, and for years she has been head of the [Wild Animal Orphanage](#) (WAO) sanctuary. Her husband Ron and other family members are also employed there.

According to numerous sources Asvestas and kin are now under investigation by the Texas Attorney's General office -- initially for funds discrepancies at the charity, and now the USDA is questioning licensing violations.

Other agencies may join in.

\* \* \*

Carol Asvestas has a checkered past.

Locally, in the 90's, she was arrested once for drunk driving and a different case of theft of services was settled with restitution.

The Lightning has learned that Asvestas stunned court clerks when she tried to pay her fine with a check written on a WAO account.

She has been involved in at least three bankruptcy proceedings, according to public records. At least two liens have been levied.

Questions of what happened to pitbulls rescued from a gambling ring remain unanswered. (See story below.)

\* \* \*

Many allegations have been aimed at Asvestas.



According to one donor, approximately 90 potbellied pigs were sent to the compound on the promise that they would receive a new "pig barn" and a life of leisure.

The donor paid \$5,000 to Asvestas and the WAO.

Asvestas tells the Lightning that the barn was built, and then destroyed when the pigs were "relocated." She wouldn't say where they were sent.

Former employees and associates tell stories that indicate "pork" was fed to some of the exotic cats, during the same time frame the pigs vanished. Where the meat came from is part of the mystery.

They also scoff at the notion of a no-kill facility.

"It happens all the time," said one.

\* \* \*

Then, there is the question of daily operations. The following is from a statement given by a former worker, who asked her name not be printed for fear of "retaliation."

The office spaces were always filthy and stank. Mr. Ronald Asvestas and Ms. Carol Asvestas were continually arguing over anything and everything. There was a lot of yelling and name calling in the office by both Mr. Ronald Asvestas and Ms. Carol Asvestas. Mr. Ronald Asvestas likes to call people "crackhead," and I heard him refer to his eldest daughter, Ms. Nicole Asvestas, as "psycho." While I was at the WAO I did not observe any of the employees conducting themselves in a professional manner, including Mr. Ronald Asvestas and Ms. Carol Asvestas. I saw no professionalism at the WAO at all, and there was a general unease felt by all the employees. At this point I constantly had knots in my stomach and felt uneasy about everything connected with the WAO. Because of all the stress of what I was seeing and hearing from the other employees, and what I was seeing at the WAO, and along with the urging of my husband, I quit without notice.

\* \* \*

A Motion Of Understanding, prepared by the AG has gone unresolved.

The Better Business Bureau "Wisegiving Seal" has been removed from WAO promotional publications.

The USDA has been ignored on civil fines. The AG will probably catch that squeal, too.

A former attorney for WAO emailed Asvestas and basically told her to stop talking about such matters with the news media.

I was surprised that the MOU action would be a matter of public record. I thought that the whole idea of do a confidentially procedure was to prevent this matter becoming a matter of public record.

There is much more hidden in the WAO facilities. And we will tell you!

More to follow.

- Developing -

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FIGHTING DOGS EUTHANIZED

## Were Bexar County Pit Bulls Buried Alive?

90-100 Dogs Killed At Local Animal Sanctuary

SAL Political Snitch -10-29-2007

Almost daily, headlines scream of dog attacks, sport fighting rings, cat maimings and cruelty to animals in general.

Case in point.

The debate over the fate of the many times vicious, sometimes killer dogs -- pit bulls -- is far from over, and likely won't be settled soon; but the animals continue to generate strong feelings on all sides of the issue.

Now, there are new facets to the story that are not known.

Disturbing news.

\* \* \*

On Monday, popular WAOI AM talk show host Joe "Pags" Pagliarulo suggested the extermination of pit bulls, following yet another attack last Friday that injured two little girls.

Those dogs will be euthanized, and their owner has been arrested. ([Click for NEWS 12 report.](#))

The San Antonio animal sanctuary [Wild Animal Orphanage](#) (WAO) here in Bexar County, agrees that many pit bulls should be "put down" for public safety purposes, "especially when children are injured," says Carol Asvestats, president of the organization.

In January 2005, the facility located at Leslie and Talley Road, with the help of the SPCA, quietly killed as many as 90-100 pit bulls housed on the charity's property.

Kathryn Bice, executive director of the Humane Society/SPCA in Bexar County was quoted in the Express-News as saying "older, vicious dogs likely will be euthanized."

But there is a problem.

Accountability.

\* \* \*

The following is based on insider information obtained by the Lightning.

The killings were done in secret, with the aid and finances of the SPCA. It was common knowledge to the WAO's friends and employees that the pit bulls were housed at the Talley Road property, and buried there.

At one point, according to eyewitnesses, husband Ron Asvestas (in charge of back-up animal care) became highly concerned of helicopter traffic flying over the property -- fearing either the media or the previous owners had received word of the dogs' location.

The choppers were actually photographing an unrelated story.

Carol and Ron had reason to worry, sources tell the Lightning, because while some WAO workers say they were "bullied" into secrecy, it didn't stop the couple from telling friends and others the location of the pit bull remains.

On "Killing Day," one witness reported, the workers responsible for injecting the animals with lethal poison were very upset and depressed by the end of the day.

Barely before the animals' bodies were cold, they were thrown into a pit located on the Talley Road property, the sources say.

In fact, so quickly were they disposed of that several employees whispered that at least some of the animals may have been buried alive.

Asvestas denied that ugly thought in an interview with the Lightning, but then said she wasn't present.

\* \* \*

What were the animals' lives worth?

According to the WAO's 2005 board meeting minutes, the charity put in a request for \$1400 from the SPCA, for the care of these animals while they were temporarily housed at the WAO's property. Carol Asvestas now admits it "may have been" \$5,000.

There are other discrepancies in the financials of the institution.

This is the same property the Texas Commission of Environmental Quality is currently investigating for other animal burial pits.

Oddly, the WAO refuses to provide a list of euthenized animals over the last seven years.

Other problems with the operation have been disclosed to the Lightning.

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It comes down to accountability.

Whether an irresponsible pet owner, or trusted animal protectorate, accountability is required. We will pursue that goal in this series.

All persons and organizations mentioned in this story are offered free space to respond.

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More to follow.

- Developing -

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WRITE THE EDITOR