

**Pit Bull Task Force Meeting
November 23, 2010, TLAC 6-8 pm**

Notetaking: Kathleen Hamilton

Breed Identification Project:

Tara Stermer has edited the training material to bullet points, is waiting for posters to be printed. Amber Rowland indicated that TLAC could print if Tara would send Amber a PDF. People said they wanted booklets to send with staff that received the training on breed identification.

Training scheduled for December 5, 4-6 pm at 15208 FM 969 (past Cadillac Drive). Task force members are welcome to attend.

Amber advised that Chameleon 9.1 permits identification of dogs by type, and primary and secondary breed which are closest to the dog's appearance. Since this version of Chameleon is new, staff is learning the capabilities of it. Amber is not sure that it will be possible to report a mix only, without a breed identification.

Actions: to attend the training, RSVP via email to Tara.

Myheart4k9s@aol.com Tara will do event notice on Facebook page. Sarah Hammond may be able to mention it on TLAC Facebook page. Tara will coordinate with Amber to set up same training for customer service and vet care staff at TLAC

Education about abolishing dogfighting. On December 12, Tara and interns will be posting signs in east Austin and handing out the cards from SPCA. Will add local 311 number on back of card, as local calls going to the national number on the card may not be referred back to Austin.

Actions: Love-A-Bull will put up a reward for local action notice on the Love-A-Bull site. Lydia will contact APD to advise them that Love-A-Bull is in the loop for referrals about dogfighting. (Local APD investigators are Det. Wegner, Det. Schaan, and Officer Schwettman)

Breed Specific Legislation (BSL):

Lydia discussed two incidents involving pit bulls in Tyler, in east Texas, where the press has become very involved in feeding the fears of the populace.

Sen Eltef and Rep Hopson are considering introducing bsl for this session. They have not shared the text of the bill drafts. When/if the bill(s) are filed and assigned to committees, then a plan for contacting legislators besides Eltef and Hopson can be made.

Further information on BSL may be found on the following

www.love-a-bull.org

www.meetup.org/love-a.bull

www.facebook.com/love-a-bull

www.stopbsl.org

APA! has copies of the petition at its various sites and Love-A-Bull has them at its events.

Actions needed: Continue to collect signatures on petition to ban bsl.

Petitions may be printed out from Love-A-Bull's web site. Do not permit people to sign multiple petitions. Get signatures from outside Austin also if possible. The petitions will be sent to the legislature in early Jan. **Email local editor of Tyler paper** with information about why bsl doesn't work. If contacting Sen. Eltef and Rep Hopson, do so with tact and good information. **Identify other groups who should be sent information about bsl** (no one identified specifically to work on this).

Adult Foster Program.

Love-A-Bull has enough information for its first foster. Sarah H reported on her contacts with TLAC fosters. Although many people seemed to believe that focused blasts should go out to potential staffy fosters, Sarah explained her rationale for advising all of the need (subject line is clear about what needed, some fosters change what their focus is, Sarah is handling too many fosters to be able to do the tailoring required, etc). Sarah communicates with the fosters several times a week, depending on the need. There are 250 approved fosters with 100 active at any one time.

Meghan asked for options if people do not want to be TLAC official fosters. Sarah explained that those people can adopt and try to rehome. There was some discussion of the support given to those people, including changing owner information, hooking them up with resources, etc, and of course Love-A-Bull will support to the extent possible (Leala offers to hold their hands....).

Actions: Sarah will talk with Patricia Fraga, in PIO about press release and other publicity about this, including mentioning Love-A-Bull support and free training. **Tara will help with introducing foster dogs into foster homes and offer free training. Kathryn Sharp should send information to mixed breed rescues**, who might be willing to take more as fosters if they knew free training might be available.

Information on dogs at TLAC: Petfinder will be updated on November 30 at which time it will be possible to have video on the site. Amber is trying to get the city to use Petfinder as the searchable/link for animals. **Action: Meghan will include this recommendation in the report at the next AAC meeting.**

Housing:

Love-A-Bull is putting together a list of apartments who accept bull breeds and other so-called dangerous breeds. A problem has been getting copies of apt

policies. Most apts which allow bull breeds frequently make decisions based on relationship, it seems, and do not want to share written policies. Although some thought we should look at duplexes too, Lydia advocated focusing on apts right now. She said that duplexes and fourplexes are typically more lenient and it is also good not to get stretched too thin at this point. Amber mentioned a San Francisco site which talks about what property owners should ask for and what pet owners should provide, including pet resumes and getting CGS or equivalencies.

Tara is doing a dog training in an east Austin complex where lots of bull breeds live. A class of 50 is expected.

Lots of steps were proposed but no action commitments were made on many of them: Someone who could help with getting access to the apartment association would be helpful. Find realtors who are willing to be pet friendly models and use them as conduits of information into the associations. Buddying up with a realtor who could offer advice and help with approaching the realtor community would be good. Find one or two property management companies and work with them. Get a list of 20 or so landlords with a small number of holdings. This group should become a model of how to approach this issue. Build on the model used by the military who initially banned bull breeds on post but now allow them selectively after they have passed the SAFER test or some equivalent. Tara offered to provide training for association members and realtors.

Actions needed: **Love-A-Bull is looking for a volunteer who can make calls to verify apt policies and update the list** on an ongoing basis.

Rescue subcommittee:

The recent pit event on Halloween at Southpaws was a scream, Marnie reported. Focus was on adoption and recruiting rescues and fosters.

Actions needed:

Anyone wanting to work on these events with Marnie should email her at jasper@sysmatrix.net. Sarah to send info on the TLAC adult foster care program (focusing on bull breeds) to Marnie. A survey needs to go out asking what rescues will take pits or pit mixes into foster care (who will do this not identified).

Pit Bull Awareness Day:

A major success, thanks to all the volunteers, including Tara's crowd-calming group, and the wonderful work by all the Love-A-Bull people, vendors, rescue groups, etc.

Actions in process: Trying to get a video of the parade for Youtube and a copy of Shorty's "B roll" footage.

Next meeting: January 25, 2011 at City Hall, 6-8pm