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Great Danes that survived cruel neglect in Wolfeboro mansion ready for new homes

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WOLFEBORO — More than a year after being rescued from squalid conditions inside a gated mansion, the Great Danes seized from Christina Fay are being adopted into forever homes.

The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) has announced all 78 surviving dogs have now been spayed or neutered and about 20 of the Great Danes with the most challenging medical or behavioral issues are living with families who were already approved by the animal welfare group's placement partners.

"The process of re-homing the Great Danes per the court's provisions has begun in earnest," said Lindsay Hamrick, New Hampshire state affairs director for HSUS.

Following a jury trial, Fay, 60, was convicted of 17 misdemeanor counts of animal cruelty and sentenced to nine days in jail, suspended on the condition she undergo counseling.

Fay also was ordered to pay \$1,953,606.19 to HSUS to reimburse the group for what it says it spent caring for the animals over the past 14 months. The final amount is subject to terms to



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The Great Danes found living in unsanitary conditions inside a Wolfeboro mansion in July 2017 are finally being adopted. (HSUS)



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A jury convicted Christina Fay, 60, of 17 counts of animal cruelty for keeping Great Danes in unsanitary conditions and failing to address their medical conditions, which included ear and eye infections. (Courtesy Photo/HSUS)

be negotiated between the state and the defense.

The judge also awarded the Wolfeboro Police Department \$18,682.88; the department seized the dogs from Fay's 149 Warren Sands Road home.

Fay filed a notice of appeal with the New Hampshire Supreme Court on July 13 and has asked that if she is required to disclose her current address that it be kept under seal.



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A jury convicted Christina Fay, 60, of 17 counts of animal cruelty for keeping Great Danes in unsanitary conditions and failing to address their medical conditions, which included ear and eye infections. (HSUS)

In large-scale animal cruelty cases in which law enforcement requests the assistance of HSUS, Hamrick said, the non-profit works with a network of reputable animal shelters and breed rescue organizations to place animals.

Due to ongoing safety concerns for staff, volunteers and partners in the case — Hamrick said there have been death threats — HSUS will not make public a list of the organizations participating in finding homes for the dogs. Still, HSUS is committed to ensuring each is placed with an experienced and compassionate family, she said.

Anyone interested in adopting one of the dogs and feels their home would be a good fit can email nhgreatdaneshumanesociety.org.

HSUS will not be approving applications or emails, but will ensure they are sent to the adoption agencies for consideration, Hamrick said.

For those who do not end up adopting one of the Great Danes from this cruelty case, Hamrick encourages them to consider taking in a homeless Great Dane from a local animal shelter or breed rescue organization.

HSUS said the case has proven to be the most expensive in the non-profit animal welfare group's history. It says it spent \$2 million housing, treating and caring for the animals since they were seized by police in June 2017.

Given the many genetic conditions from which the dogs suffer, Hamrick said, it has truly taken an "army of the kind" to support them over the past months.

HSUS is deeply grateful to Angell Animal Medical Center in Boston, Rockingham Emergency Veterinary Hospital in Windham, VCA Capital Area Veterinary Emergency & Specialty in Concord, Animal Emergency & Specialty Care of Portland and Tufts Veterinary Emergency Treatment and Specialties for providing exceptional care.

The work won't end once the final dog finds a new home, Hamrick said. HSUS will continue to lobby New Hampshire to toughen its animal cruelty laws to assure commercial dog breeders are held to the same standards as the state's animal shelters and rescue groups, she said, so that costs like those in the Fay case aren't borne by taxpayers and the non-profits helping animals.