



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL HENRY MCMASTER
STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

For Immediate Release
December 20, 2004

Contact: Mark Plowden
803-734-3670
mplowden@ag.state.sc.us

Three In Chester County Arrested For Animal Fighting

Fights Staged Between Pit Bulls and Hogs

Columbia, S.C. – Attorney General Henry McMaster announced today that Arthur Parker, Sr., 47, Arthur Parker, Jr., 20, and Mary Evans Luther, 50, all of 1555 Mt. Vernon Road in Fort Lawn, were arrested on December 17, 2004, by agents of the State Law Enforcement Division (SLED) on charges of Animal Fighting (§ 16-27-30) and Attending an Animal Fight (§ 16-27-40). Animal Fighting is a felony, and carries a maximum sentence of five (5) years imprisonment and a \$5,000 fine. Attending an Animal Fight is a misdemeanor, and carries a maximum sentence of six (6) months imprisonment and a \$500 (first offense).

The arrests were made following search warrants executed at the residence by SLED in a cooperative effort with the United States Department of Agriculture. The purpose of the search was to uncover evidence of “hog dog fighting,” a violation of South Carolina laws on animal fighting. Similar raids took place in Georgia, Alabama, and Arizona. Arthur Parker, Sr. is considered to be the top hog dog fighting event sponsor in the nation, and is believed to conduct the fights across the state.

“The practice of staging fights between pit bulls and captured hogs is illegal under the laws prohibiting animal fighting in South Carolina,” said McMaster. “Like dog fighting, these activities are barbaric, inhumane, and will be vigorously prosecuted in South Carolina.”

“The Humane Society of the United States is proud to be working with the USDA and state and county law enforcement in four states on this organized operation to combat the appalling and cruel practice of hog dog fighting,” said Wayne Pacelle, president and CEO of The HSUS.

According to information provided by the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS): Hog dogging, hog baiting, hog dog “rodeos,” etc., are all terms for a blood sport known as hog dog fighting. An owner leads a trained pit bull into an enclosed pen. At the other end of the ring, the “handler” shoves a feral pig, or hog, through a chute into the pen. The dog then fights until it forces the hog to the ground, often after serious injury to either or both of the combatants. While hunting hogs with dogs is legal in the state, staged fights between animals are prohibited. **To view footage from a hog dog fight, click on this link provided by the HSUS:** http://stream.realimpact.net/?file=realimpact/hsus/video_features/hog-dog.smi.

Fifteen (15) hogs and ninety-five (95) dogs were seized in the raid. A treadmill, medical supplies, hog dogging competition trophies, numerous documents, and other devices thought to be involved in training dogs for fighting were also found. An undisclosed amount of marijuana was found, and drug charges are expected, but have not yet been filed.

All of the dogs seized were turned over to the Chester County Animal Control and representatives of the Humane Society of the United States. The hogs remain housed on the property. A number of the hogs were wounded in various ways and levels of severity, and one suffered from a broken leg.

Arthur Parker, Sr., Arthur Parker, Jr., and Mary Evans Luther were all released from jail on \$10,000 surety bonds.

McMaster stressed that all defendants are presumed innocent unless and until they are proven guilty in a court of law.

#