

RAYMOND A. TIERNEY
DISTRICT ATTORNEY



**OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
COUNTY OF SUFFOLK**

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Contact: Emily O'Neill
Emily.O'Neill@suffolkcountyny.gov

**RIVERHEAD MAN ARRESTED FOR SHOOTING DOGS IN THE
HEAD WITH A RIFLE**

Carlos Lauro Allegedly Slaughtered Various Other Animals on His Property

(SUFFOLK COUNTY, N.Y.) – Suffolk County District Attorney Raymond A. Tierney today announced the arrest of Carlos Lauro, 76, of Riverhead, who is accused of Aggravated Cruelty to Animals and other related charges for allegedly fatally shooting two German Shepherds with a rifle.

“This is a particularly horrific example of cruelty,” said District Attorney Tierney. “While we unfortunately could not rescue all of the animal victims that our investigators found on this defendant’s property, we will seek justice for them.”

“Mr. Lauro is repeatedly the subject of various complaints to the Town regarding the condition of and activities at his Sound Avenue property. Responses to his property by Town Code Enforcement officials have revealed and led to prosecutions by the Riverhead Town Attorney’s Office for illegal animal sales, attempts to operate an illegal slaughterhouse, dilapidated and illegal structures, loose farm animals, and general property maintenance,” said **Erik C. Howard, Town of Riverhead Attorney**. “The Riverhead Town Attorney’s Office applauds the Suffolk County District Attorney’s prosecution of Mr. Lauro and is prepared to assist in any way necessary to secure a conviction for Mr. Lauro’s reprehensible conduct and wanton disregard for the life of a companion animal.”



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"Animals, whether dogs or goats, sheep or chickens experience terror and fight for their lives just as we would when faced with the prospect of slaughter, yet for the animals at this illegal backyard slaughter operation, the experience was made even more horrific, with sick and injured animals living among the corpses of their friends," said **John Di Leonardo, anthrozoologist and Executive Director of Humane Long Island**. "Humane Long Island thanks the Suffolk County and its Biological, Environmental, and Animal Safety Team for prosecuting this heinous case of aggravated animal cruelty and reminds the public that they too can save hundreds of animals annually by simply leaving them off their plates."

"Fund For Animal Cruelty Treatment of Suffolk (FACTS) is providing costs of care to the dogs in this cruelty case as part of our ongoing partnership with the Suffolk County DA's office," said **Joyce Glass, co-founder of the Fund for Animal Cruelty Treatment of Suffolk (FACTS)**. "This is our first case of 2024 and FACTS welcomes the opportunity to fill a specific need in this cruelty case and others being prosecuted in Suffolk County. FACTS is able to continue its work with support from the community. For more information, visit www.factssaves.org."

The current investigation was launched on January 10, 2024, when a one-year-old German Shepard was taken to the VCA Westbury Veterinarian Hospital in Westbury and found to be paralyzed from a gunshot wound to the head. According to a witness, the dog, named "Blitzkrieg," was found shot at about 5:30 p.m. laying in a pen on Lauro's property next to a dead goat. When detectives with the SCDA's BEAST unit arrived to Lauro's home, they learned Lauro had previously shot and killed another German Shepard, a six-month old puppy named "Cranky," approximately a month prior because the dog was allegedly refusing to go back inside his house. The allegations of that event were that Lauro had shot Cranky once in the back and, then, when another resident took him back inside the house in an attempt to console and treat his wounds, Lauro dragged the dog back outside and shot him in the head.

At the home, BEAST detectives found five surviving Belgian Malinois/Dutch Shepard mix dogs, a Border Collie and two German Shepard dogs, and numerous other animals including a multitude of goats, pigs, cows, and chickens.

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On January 11, 2024, the BEAST Detectives with the assistance of the Riverhead Police Department executed a search warrant against the premises and arrested Lauro on felony charges for allegedly shooting the dogs. Numerous other deceased farm animals, including a baby goat and pig, were observed at the scene. The circumstances of their deaths are still being investigated.

Further investigation revealed that the surviving eight dogs, goats, pigs, cows, and chickens had been subject to neglect, living in deplorable conditions without access to clean food and water. Humane Long Island has been assisting the field operation by triaging farm animal victims to appropriate foster care.

