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PRESS RELEASE

October 23, 2014

RE: COMMONWEALTH V. JOHN LOAR AND CHASITY SHUTT

Jail Ordered for Animal Cruelty

A Northumberland County couple will serve jail time for improper care of horses that were judged by a veterinarian to be malnourished and dehydrated. Lycoming County District Attorney Eric R. Linhardt announced the penalties after the couple unsuccessfully appealed their summary charge convictions.

John R. Loar, 28, and Chasity M. Shutt, 25, both of McEwensville, were charged in March with cruelty to animals after Humane Officer Larry Waltz found one dead horse and other malnourished horses at 20 Boyer Lane in Jordan Township, Lycoming County. According to veterinarian Lise Lund, an extremely underweight mare was found dead in a shed. The horse had become trapped underneath a broken board and there was evidence of significant struggling by the animal in an apparent attempt to get up. According to Lund, additional broken boards in the shed were hazardous and there was no evidence that the horses had been vaccinated. The veterinarian also took issue with a lack of water and food. In fact, the other horses were observed eating manure lying on the ground, something Lund termed “extremely abnormal behavior.”

After Loar and Shutt were found guilty by District Magistrate Jon Kemp, the couple appealed to County Court. On Oct. 10, Judge Richard A. Gray upheld the summary convictions. He ordered the couple to serve 45 to 90 days in jail. They were also fined \$750 each and ordered to pay \$3,410.50 restitution to the SPCA. One of the remaining horses was also forfeited to the SPCA’s care.