



# NEWS RELEASE

## OFFICE OF THE STATE'S ATTORNEY FOR HOWARD COUNTY

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For Immediate Release:

### **Columbia couple sentenced to jail in animal cruelty charges**

Howard County, MD (March 17, 2021) – Elizabeth Lindenau, age 49, and Brady Decker, age 47, were sentenced today by Howard County District Court Judge Wayne Brooks to 11 counts of animal cruelty each for failing to provide sufficient food, air, space, and necessary veterinary care to numerous birds, dogs, and cats. Decker was sentenced to 90 days (beginning today) with credit for one day time served. Lindenau was sentenced to 90 days suspending all but 30 days to begin June 1, 2021 with credit for one day time served. Both were found guilty in January 2021 of 11 of the 16 charges.

On July 17, 2019, Howard County Animal Control received an anonymous call reporting a horrible stench that was believed to be dog feces coming from the residence at 9466 Hundred Drums Row in Columbia. Animal Control Officers made numerous attempts to contact the residents of the house, but the homeowners refused to speak with or allow Animal Control Officers into their residence. On July 24, 2019, Animal Control obtained a search warrant and went to the residence to serve the warrant. Once given access to the residence, the Animal Control Officers observed a strong odor of dust, urine, and waste in the residence, and the residence was cluttered with household items, in some areas stacked waist high or higher, making it difficult to walk around the residence. On the main floor of the residence, there was a path to get from one room to another. The Animal Control Officers located 59 live animals inside the residence including 39 birds, 11 dogs, 5 cats, 2 snakes, and 2 turtles, and 42 deceased birds and other small animals in their freezers. Due to the poor living conditions in the residence, including the bird and snake cages being caked with discarded food and waste, all 59 live animals were impounded by Howard County Animal Control.

Probation for both include three years supervised probation, mental health evaluations and treatment as recommended, no animals allowed in any residence where they are living, and Animal Control to make monthly checks of their residence to ensure they have no animals in their residence.

Senior Assistant State's Attorney Devora W. Kirschner, who is also the Deputy Chief of the Special Victims Unit, prosecuted this case along with Assistant State's Attorney Amy Helbig.

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