



Pee Wee (above) posed at his new home with Mary Beth Zwick and Caleb shortly before Northwest Kansas District Free Fair. Caleb and Pee Wee (bottom left) in the parade for the fair with others from the dog classes in 4-H taught by Jacque Drennan. The



fair dog show was earlier in the day. Caleb and Pee Wee (bottom right) hanging out.

Photos by Pat Schiefen/The Goodland Star-News



# This dog is a real survivor

## DOG, from Page 1

“This was the worst case of animal cruelty I’d ever seen,” Parker said, “and I’ve been with the sheriff’s department for eight years.”

Parker said PeeWee was frightened when he approached him.

“He tried to bark twice but his jaw was just hanging and he quit,” Parker said. “His tongue was so dry is looked leathery.

“I put him in the front seat of the car and he just sat there.”

That Saturday, Parker saw PeeWee at Prairieland Veterinary Clinic when he was having his first surgery. He said bone fragments being removed showed the jaw had been broken for awhile.

PeeWee spent nine months at Prairieland, and when he went back to have his teeth cleaned, Zwick said, he made himself right at home.

He has a pin in the left side of his jaw and some teeth missing, she said. His tongue always hangs out a little and has a few sensitive spots on his left side. His jaw still does not completely align and he eats mainly soft food, but with time has begun to eat some small dry dog food.

“He’s a very loving dog,” Zwick said. “He also minds pretty well.”

He is a fence climber and jumper, she added, and he’s always getting loose.

“He goes visiting his friend Ranger,” she said.

Caleb and PeeWee are in the dog program in 4-H under Jacque Drennan, earning a purple ribbon at Northwest Kansas District Free Fair for their efforts in showmanship.

Zwick said she and Caleb had been thinking about adopting a “special-needs” dog after their basset hound died in November 2004.

“When we got Pee Wee, he was so excited he peed on the floor,” Caleb said. “We got him the weekend of my birthday.”

Zwick said she had heard about PeeWee’s case from a friend. They didn’t get to take him home until the court case had been settled, around the first of March.

PeeWee joined another shelter dog at their home, Polar Bear, a soft-coated Wheaten Terrier.

“He came from a shelter in Dodge City,” Zwick said. “Polar Bear ended up at the shelter after he was hit by a car, lost teeth and was no longer a show-quality dog.”

The household also includes fish and a house bunny, Oreo, an angora lop ear.

Caleb said he wants a lizard but his mom draws the line at scaly animals. She said they did have a turtle when they had turtle races at the county fair.

Watching him play, it’s hard to imagine today how badly the Yorkie

was hurt. Court filings spell out the injury:

“Victor Delgato kicked his approximately two-pound dog PeeWee with such force that it caused the dog’s jaw to be broken, twisted and offset to the right in such a way that the dog could not eat or drink, and then did not get this dog the medical attention it needed, which would eventually prove fatal....”

On Tuesday, March 7, District Magistrate Judge Steve Unruh found Delgato guilty after a trial.

Unruh sentenced Delgato to 60 days in jail, which he suspended, a fine of \$250 included in the \$2,604 he was ordered to pay and a year of probation supervised by Court Services Officer Kathy Russell. He still owes the county \$2,008, including restitution for medical care of the dog.

Delgato did not spend any time in jail. He was not jailed when the dog was rescued, said Sherman County Sheriff Kevin Butts, because the officer wasn’t there when the dog was hurt.

Bonnie Selby, Sherman County attorney, prosecuted the case and Leslie Beims was Delgato’s defense attorney. Selby used pictures in court, and PeeWee didn’t make an appearance.

Delgato’s attorney, asked if he had any comment about the case, said no.

Judge Unruh ruled that the county was responsible for \$1,328 of the vet bill. According to Kansas law, he said, a person committing animal cruelty can only be held responsible for the first 30 days of boarding and treatment after the county takes an animal into custody.

Animal cruelty was a misdemeanor in Kansas until “Scruffy’s law” was passed in April making some cases a felony. Kansas had been one of the few remaining states without a felony law.

“Scruffy’s Law,” which went into effect July 1, requires those convicted of animal cruelty to serve at least 30 days in jail and pay a fine from \$500 to \$5,000. In jail, they must have a psychological evaluation and complete an anger management course.

Sheriff Butts said the county usually has around five animal cruelty cases a year, usually dogs being shot or dumped. The county contracts with Scott Gilmer to pick up stray animals, he said.

Butts said they have had a few cases where someone reported underfed cattle. The first case involving horses was in February.

“If you see an animal being abused, don’t look away,” said Sandy Rodgers, president of Northwest Kansas Animal Shelter. “It’s a crime.”

In the heat the area has been experiencing, she added, everyone should be sure animals in their care have shade and plenty of water.

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