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FIRE CHIEF FOUND GUILTY OF FELONY ANIMAL CRUELTY CHARGES

RIVERSIDE, CA - January 26, 2010- Los Angeles Assistant Fire Chief, Glynn Johnson, has been found guilty of felony animal cruelty with special circumstances, (maximum penalty of up to 3 years) and use of a deadly weapon to commit a felony (maximum penalty of up to 1 year), after brutally beating to death a 6 month old puppy named Karley who belonged to Jeff and Shelley Toole of Riverside, CA.

In November 2008, Karley had gotten out of the Toole's backyard and was being brought back by neighbor, Travis Staggs when Johnson offered to bring her back himself. Staggs said he had only taken his eyes off Johnson for a split second when he witnessed the fire chief erupt in violence, punching Karley 10-15 times in the head first with his fist, then with a 12 lb rock. Karley was so severely beaten that she had to be euthanized hours later.

Last Chance for Animals (LCA) and supporters of Karley held numerous protests and rallies for "Justice 4 Karley!" After Johnson was arrested and charged with two felony counts in December 2008, LCA held a large rally and press conference thanking the DA for bringing charges against Johnson and asking him to prosecute Johnson to the fullest extent possible by law. LCA also asked L.A. Fire Chief P. Michael Freeman to fire Johnson and to severely restrict his retirement pension.

Johnson's trial began on January 6, 2010. District Attorney Will Robinson's opening statement was made in front of bloody photos of Karley, telling the judge and jury that Johnson attacked Karley in vengeance, after years of fighting with the Toole family. Over the years, Johnson had engaged in shouting matches with the Toole's using a bullhorn and had placed dog excrement in their mailbox. "This was not an isolated event. There was a long history of anger and frustration beyond the typical neighbor dispute," Robinson stated.

The D.A. questioned Johnson about his violent past, bringing up an incident which is documented in police reports where Glynn attacked his 14 year old daughter Amber in their backyard after an argument. Johnson pushed his daughter to the ground, hitting her with the buckle end of his belt several times. He then dragged his daughter back into the house where he proceeded to beat her again, shouting "I wish you were dead."

"Without LCA's involvement, we could not have gone on with this case. LCA has given us the strength to keep going. It was from the demonstrations and vigils that LCA organized that convinced the DA to take this case and prosecute," said Shelley Toole. Fellow firefighters showed up at Johnson's trial with the slogan "Firefighters against Animal Abuse" on their t-shirts. Supporters of Karley will now be focusing on getting *Karley's law* passed now that Johnson has been found guilty.

Johnson's sentencing has been scheduled for March 8, 2010. He faces up to four years in prison.

Last Chance for Animals (LCA), a national animal rights organization based in Los Angeles, has been active for more than two decades. Founded and led by animal expert, author, and actor, Chris DeRose, LCA's roots began in exposing the inherent cruelty of vivisection. LCA fights for the rights of animals by conducting investigations that expose animal cruelty, launching public awareness campaigns, pushing animal friendly legislation and helping prosecute animal abusers.

For more information, visit www.LCAanimal.org

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