



3 Charged In Suspected Fayette Co. Dog Fighting Ring

By [Ross Guidotti](#) September 14, 2017 at 6:37 am

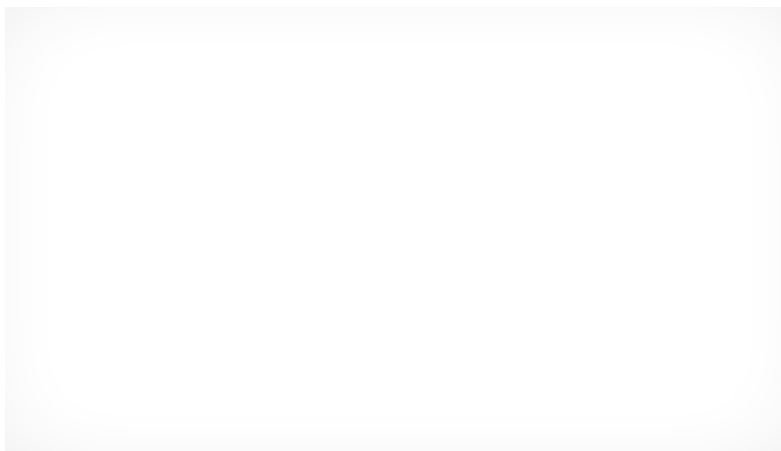
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SMITHFIELD (KDKA) – Three people are facing charges in connection with an alleged dog fighting ring in Fayette County.

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Last month, state police had been following up on a rash of ATV thefts in the Smithfield area when they made the discovery.

As troopers followed some tracks, they [found 29 pit bulls on a remote farm](#) in Nicholson Township and suspected it was a breeding ground for the purpose of dog fighting. Two of the dogs were puppies.

On Wednesday, three people were charged: Edward Harris, who was already in jail on separate charges in Perry County, Regis Grooms and Melisha Robinson, who is a Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission employee.



(Source: Pennsylvania State Police)

Investigators say Harris, who is from Uniontown, is the owner of the dogs and that he is known to raise, train and fight pit bulls.

Grooms and Robinson are said to have been taking care of the animals while Harris is in jail.

According to officials, the day state police found the dogs, Robinson had just arrived to feed them.

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“As Robinson showed up on scene that day while the troopers were executing a warrant, she had, in her possession, food and water for the animals. At that time, troopers actually used that particular food and water to care for the dogs until the proper authorities could show up and take possession of the animals,” Trooper Robert Broadwater said.

Police say all three had an active role in fighting, training, destroying remains, feeding, housing and shipping pit bulls.

Grooms apparently facilitated the transportation of the dogs to various dog fighting locations. He is not yet in custody.

Three dogs were found dead on the property.

The other 29 dogs were rescued by police. All of them had been tied down with heavy chains and were either starving or in poor condition.

The surviving dogs are apparently thriving, including one that remains at the Camelot Veterinary Facility under the care of Dr. William Sheperd.

“Other than being underweight, he’s done wonderful,” said Dr. Sheperd. “He’s put on probably 12 pounds since he’s been here and he’s doing excellent.”

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