

COUNTY OF SUFFOLK  
DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE



THOMAS J. SPOTA  
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

February 24, 2011

## **Selden mother who tortured pets in front of her kids pleads guilty**

A Selden woman charged with torturing and killing animals in front of her children pleaded guilty Thursday to aggravated cruelty and child endangerment charges, District Attorney Thomas Spota said today.

Sharon McDonough pleaded guilty to the entire 13-count indictment; six charges of endangering the welfare of a child, a class A misdemeanor, two felony charges of aggravated cruelty to animals, and five misdemeanor animal cruelty charges. State Supreme Court Justice C. Randall Hinrichs said he will sentence the defendant to two years incarceration.

McDonough, who turns 45 March 2, has been incarcerated in the Suffolk County jail in lieu of \$100,000 cash bail since December of 2009.

District Attorney Spota said the prosecution will recommend the defendant be sentenced to consecutive time on the aggravated animal cruelty charges, a cumulative sentence of four years imprisonment.

Stating McDonough deserves maximum imprisonment for torturing the animals, the district attorney pointed to the incongruity in current state law.

“For the past five years we have urged state lawmakers to approve legislation that would make child endangerment a felony,” Spota said. “She repeatedly terrified her six daughters by torturing the family pets in their presence and that crime should be a felony punishable by imprisonment in an upstate correctional facility.”

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Every defendant is presumed innocent, unless and until found guilty beyond a reasonable doubt following a trial at which the defendant has all of the trial rights guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution and federal law.