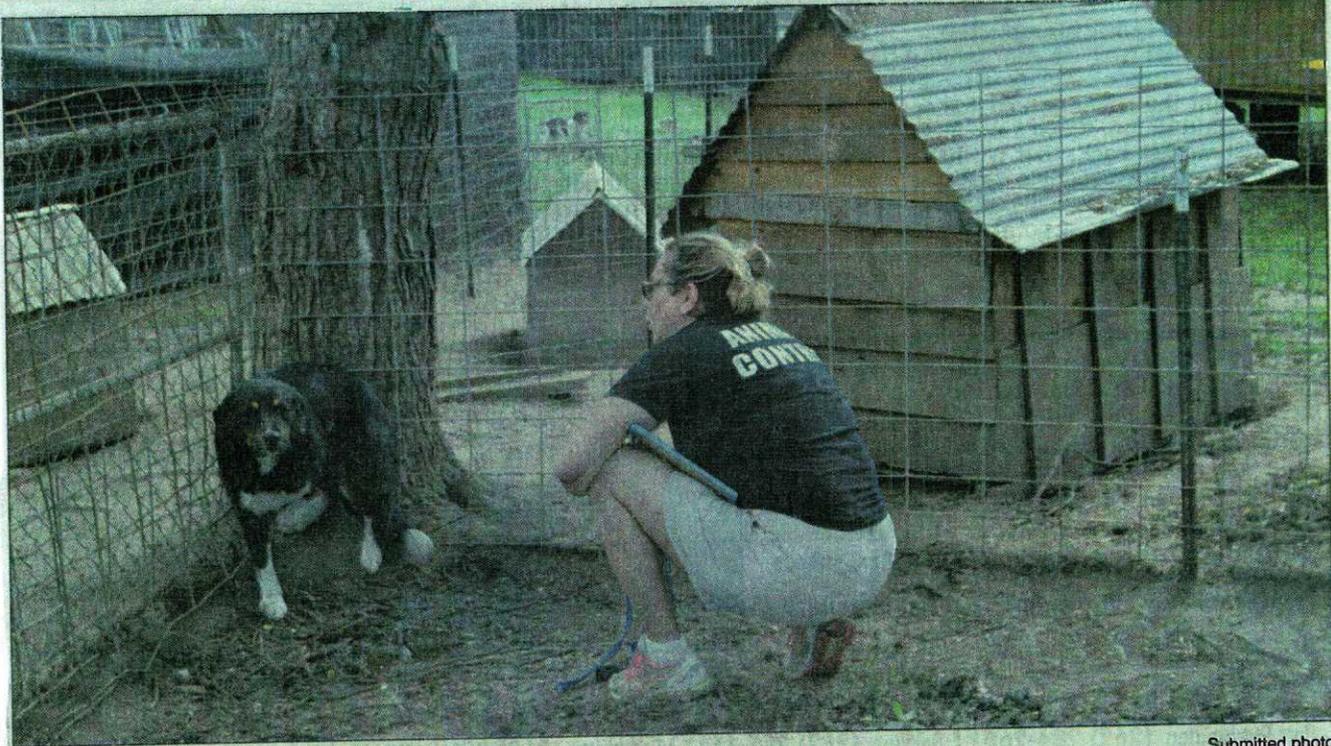


# NEWS GRAPHIC

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Submitted photo

Dawn Boeselager, president of Tailwaggers 911 Dog Rescue, approaches Benny at the site of the puppy mill in Georgia. Benny had no experience with human contact and touch before the dog rescue operation, and was afraid to be handled. He is now staying with Boeselager and learning to socialize, until he is placed in a forever home.

**'I've never seen anything like this'**

# Grafton's Tailwaggers 911 come to rescue of dogs in severe hoarding situation

By Melanie Boyung  
News Graphic Staff

GRAFTON — A Georgia woman was barking up the wrong tree when she turned her property into a puppy mill, but the dogs are safe and sound now, thanks in no small part to a Grafton dog rescue operation.

Tailwaggers 911, run by Dawn Boeselager, has been working as part of the emergency response team dealing with the animals found on a Georgia property. Boeselager said there were more than 290 dogs kept in squalid conditions of severe neglect, unwashed, left in small cages with their own waste. There were also cats, donkeys, geese, rabbits and various

## How to help

To apply to foster or adopt a dog or learn about making a donation, visit [www.tailwaggers911.com](http://www.tailwaggers911.com).

other animals found uncared for on the property.

"I've never seen anything like this, in my entire life," Boeselager said.

She said some dogs were kept crammed in a shed, and on a 90-degree day in Georgia, the heat was on in that shed.

Tailwaggers has a partnership with the Habasham County shelter in Georgia; Boeselager was already in Georgia when she got the call about the puppy mill. She and other responders rescued the dogs, washing and grooming them, feeding them and giving them immediate medical attention.

"It (the mill) was so horrific ... I just don't get people," Boeselager said.

Last weekend, Tailwaggers brought 68 dogs to Wisconsin, to help them find good homes where they will be loved and safe. Boeselager said many of the dogs have never been socialized; having been penned alone and neglected, they are not used to contact or the normal sounds of a home.

She and Tailwaggers 911 volunteers are fostering the dogs now — most of them small-sized dogs and some still puppies — helping them acclimate while finding them forever homes quickly.

There are still many dogs in need of homes in Georgia; Boeselager said the Tailwaggers 911 team will return to the site and bring

back more dogs soon.

The property where the puppy mill was found was visited and then raided after barking complaints. It was visited by officials three months ago due to similar complaints, and at that time, the woman who owns the property had 12 dogs, all registered properly.

"She had a puppy mill up in Kentucky, and for three months she was bringing them down there," Boeselager said.

The woman was not selling the dogs. Boeselager said she simply ran the puppy mill and kept all the animals in a hoarder situation. Information posted by the Humane Society United States, which has also been involved in rescue efforts, said many of the dogs and skin and eye conditions.

Tailwaggers has about 20 families lined up to be visited this week in preparation for adopting a rescued dog, according to Boeselager, but there are many more than 20 animals. The needs of the animals in Georgia exceed Tailwaggers 911's current resources and capacity. The dogs need medical attention, examination and places to go.

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Submitted photos

Many of the dogs rescued from the Georgia puppy mill, including Bob Marley, **right top and bottom**, needed comprehensive medical examination, care and extensive grooming. Bob Marley, so named by the animal rescue workers who thought his extra fur looked like dreadlocks. Prior to grooming, he carried 18 pounds of matted fur; afterward he weighed 6 pounds.

