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ORANGE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA
TODD SPITZER

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PRESS RELEASE

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**Irvine Dog Trainer Charged with Animal Cruelty, Destruction
of Evidence in Connection with Deaths of 11 Dogs**
*Trainers' girlfriend charged with assisting in cover-up,
destroying evidence by dropping off dogs to be cremated*

Santa Ana – An Irvine dog trainer and his girlfriend have been charged in connection with the deaths of 11 dogs left in their care, along with destroying evidence by impersonating the pets' owners to have the bodies cremated in an attempt to conceal how the dogs died in their custody. The couple is accused of dropping off the dogs' bodies off at different crematoriums in the area in an apparent attempt to avoid suspicion.

Kwong (Tony) Chun Sit, 53, of Irvine, and his girlfriend, Tingfeng Liu, 23 of Vista, are currently being held in lieu of \$550,000 bail each after Orange County prosecutors successfully argued a significant deviation from the \$20,000 bail schedule was warranted given the fact that the couple was packed and ready to flee when they were arrested Thursday. The couple was ordered to surrender their passports, not have access to any animals, and stay away from the victims' families.

Irvine police began investigating the couple after one of the dead dogs' owners contacted police Wednesday to report that they had received a message from their dog trainer saying their dog had died in its sleep and had been cremated.

Based on the call from one of the dog owners, the Irvine Police Department's Animal Services Unit immediately opened an investigation and was able to recover the bodies of multiple dogs at different crematoriums that had been dropped off by either Sit or Liu. The owners of the dead dogs were notified via text that their pet had passed away and had been cremated.

Sit, who operated Happy K9 Academy, has been charged with 11 felony counts of animal cruelty, 11 felony counts of animal abuse by a caretaker, seven misdemeanor counts of attempting to destroy evidence, and one misdemeanor count of destroying evidence. Liu is charged with one felony count of accessory to a felony, one misdemeanor count of destruction of evidence, and two misdemeanor counts of attempted destruction of evidence.

Sit faces a maximum sentence of 13 years and 11 months, and Liu faces a maximum sentence of four years in custody if convicted on all charges.

Necropsies performed on three of the dogs revealed that two of the dogs died from heat stroke and the third dog died from blunt force trauma. Two of the dogs were cremated before they could be recovered, and necropsies are pending on the remaining six animals. All but one of the dogs was dropped off at crematoriums on June 18, 2025. The body of the first dog was dropped off on June 13, 2025.

K9 Academy advertised online a variety of boarded dog training services, including one-to-four-week training sessions ranging from \$999 to \$3,399 offering an assortment of behavioral training along with daily videos sent to the dogs' owners.

"Our dogs love us unconditionally, and to have someone who advertised himself as a dog lover who would treat his clients' dogs as his own be not only responsible for the deaths of these pets but then to enlist his girlfriend to cover up the animal abuse is beyond repulsive," said Orange County District Attorney Todd Spitzer. "No animal deserves to be killed and then tossed aside like a piece of garbage. The abuse of any animal will not be tolerated, and we will prosecute this case and every case of animal abuse to the fullest extent of the law."

Anyone who has additional information is asked to contact the Irvine Police Department at rsteen@cityofirvine.org.

Deputy District Attorney Danica Drotman of the Environmental Protection Unit is prosecuting this case.