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**TOP STORIES**

**Outlawed Stouffville dog saving lives in United States**

Feb 15, 2006  
John Slykhuis, Staff Writer  
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A Stouffville pit bull terrier facing death is now saving lives in the United States.

The future looked bleak for Neville, an American pit bull that was given up by his owner after he was caught by canine patrol running loose in Stouffville last summer.

The dog was taken to the Georgina animal shelter, which handles Whitchurch-Stouffville's canines.

Because of legislation in Ontario banning pit bulls and slapping numerous restrictions on the dogs already here, the owner decided it wasn't worth the bother and said he didn't want Neville back.

If he didn't find someone to adopt him, Neville was in line to be destroyed.

Impressed by the two-year-old dog's good temperament, shelter staff pulled out the stops and embarked on a desperate search to find someone to adopt Neville.

"He was such a sweetheart," shelter supervisor Angie Closs said. "Very intelligent and friendly."

They turned to the Toronto animal rescue organization, Bullies In Need, which is working to find homes for unwanted Ontario pit bulls.



Neville, an American pit bull unwanted in Stouffville now sniffs out bombs in Washington State.

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CELEBRATE



The group has contacts with dog adoption agencies in the United States that found him a foster home in Seattle, Washington.

Neville was driven to Buffalo and a donor paid for his flight to Seattle.

Neville's new American foster mother (whose identity was not released for security reasons) immediately saw there was something special about the Canadian dog.

"Neville was full of surprises," she said. "He was unreactive to other dogs, ignored my cats, loved my kids and was just a joy to have around."

What's more, Neville was very well behaved, had good manners and was completely unflappable -- the opposite of how pit bulls were portrayed by supporters of Ontario's anti-pit bull law.

The search for a new home ended when his foster mother contacted Diane Jessup, who runs a program called Law Dogs that tests pit bull terriers for work as drug and bomb detection dogs.

They are in great demand for the U.S. war on terrorism.

It turned out Ms Jessup was looking for suitable canine candidates for the Washington State patrol detection dog program.

She liked what she saw in Neville and contacted the patrol detection program. Neville passed his tests with flying colours and was accepted into the program.

"We were so excited when we found out," Ms Closs said. "It was such a happy ending."

Today, Officer Neville screens more than 200 cars arriving on the Washington State ferry system to sniff out any bomb materials, potentially saving lives.

For more information, see [www.pitbulllovers.com](http://www.pitbulllovers.com) For the Georgina animal shelter and dogs available for adoption, see [www.petfinder.org/shelters/ON53.html](http://www.petfinder.org/shelters/ON53.html)

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