

Dog rescued from mine shaft



XAVIER GALLEGOS/Tucson Citizen

Northwest Fire District technical rescue unit members (from left) Capt. Bill Worden, Jose Gonzales and Leigh Gethmann tend a starving dog rescued from a mine shaft.

Chow trapped for several days

By LINDA WITT
Citizen Staff Writer

A male chow chow - hungry, thirsty and too weak to stand - was rescued last night from an abandoned mine shaft where firefighters say the dog may have been trapped up to a week.

Two hikers had found the dog and called 911. Ten firefighters and rescue workers from Northwest Fire District worked for nearly 90 minutes to lift it safely from the 30-foot-deep pit in Avra Valley.

The animal, weak from dehydration, lay listless and silent as firefighters strapped it to a board and lifted it from the hole.

"He is skin and bones and just didn't have the energy to do any-

thing," Capt. Bill Worden said.

The dog's muzzle was speckled with blood and its eyes were nearly crusted shut with dirt.

Pima County Animal Control Officer P. Alonzo, who took the dog to the county shelter, said it hadn't eaten in at least a week.

"He is ill and very thin. I could count his vertebrae."

The dog is being treated for dehydration, malnutrition, infections in both eyes and minor injuries it received from the fall into the shaft.

Anyone with information about the dog is asked to call the Pima Animal Control Center, 743-7550. The dog was not wearing a collar.

Jim Posedly, 53, and Dan Kleman, 60, discovered the dog

about 3:30 p.m. as they were hiking near the 6900 block of North Yuma Mine Road, a block south of West Ina Road.

The men said they looked into the shaft out of curiosity.

Battalion Chief Matt Shobert responded first to their 911 call.

"When I saw the dog lying down in the shaft, I knew we had to do something," Shobert said.

More firefighters and rescue workers arrived about 7 p.m., and firefighters Jose Gonzales and Troy Kluth were lowered into the hole with ropes.

"Not only were we able to save the dog, but it was a training experience for rescue techs, giving them real-situation rescue experience," Shobert said.

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