

POLICE OFFICER SHOOTS DOG, PROMPTS PROTESTS

In Springfield on Tuesday, Aug. 12, a dog named Kiki was shot in the head by a Springfield police officer responding to what police say was a vicious dog call. Such shootings have happened all over the country — in July, a police officer in Idaho shot a Labrador through the glass window of a van it was sitting in. The window was partially open and the officer thought it was lunging at him.

Local animal advocates didn't think such a shooting could happen in Lane County. Now that it has, they want to ensure family pets are not shot and that police make an effort to avoid firing guns in local neighborhoods.

Although the situations vary, along with breed and police officer repercussions, a few facts remain constant: Dog shootings that happen all over the country are in residential neighborhoods, generally involve large dogs and have witness statements that contradict the official police report, challenging the meaning of "threatening" and "aggressive."

According to the Springfield Police Department, two people called in at around 7 pm to report a pit bull on the loose. After an officer arrived on the scene and saw the barking dog on the sidewalk, he tried to contact the owners by going to the house that bystanders had pointed out. The police department says this was when the dog became aggressive and came at the officer, charging at the retreating officer and lunging. The officer shot her in the face. Kiki survived.

"Two feet away from the animal with a 40 caliber gun? She shouldn't be here right now. The way he shot her, he was aiming to kill her," says Kiki's owner Breonna Kerr, who may receive a citation from the city of Springfield because the dog got out of her yard. Kerr says that the



KIKI THE PIT BULL SHOT BY POLICE

PHOTO BY BREANNA KERR

police response alarmed neighbors who were outside at the time. "They're upset that the dog was shot in the head, but they're also upset that a cop would use such excessive force with a gun in a residential neighborhood with kids present."

No animal control officers were available at the time of the shooting, and multiple witnesses contradict the official police statement, according to TV station KEZI and Kerr, saying Kiki was only barking and not acting aggressively.

A protest held by Springfield citizens outside the police department on Aug. 14 supported Kiki and her owner, Kerr, as well as pit bulls as a misrepresented breed.

"We'd like to see more education and less full-force gun power to stop the dog," says Darla Waldrip, who attended the protest and works with dogs locally through her business, Connecting with K9s. "A lot of dogs that have been shot have been kill shots straight to the head. They haven't been shots to the shoulder or something to deter the dog; they're wanting to stop the dog permanently."

Waldrip, Kerr and other animal advocates call for police training on how to deal with domesticated dogs using nonlethal methods like catchpoles, pepper spray or Tasers. In Roseburg, the Douglas County Low-Cost Veterinary Services provided care for a dog shot by Myrtle Creek police last month. The group launched a campaign called "Don't Shoot" to address the problem of police officers shooting pets rather than using nonlethal control.

Springfield Chief of Police Tim Doney says he supports his officer's actions and the department is interested in revamping its training, including animal control and police interaction with domesticated animals.

The bullet went through Kiki's left temple, where it became lodged into her left shoulder, and will require a \$2,000 surgery to remove it. To make a tax-deductible donation, contact Save the Pets at savethepets.net. For more on "Don't Shoot" go to wkly.ws/1sy. — Anna V. Smith



HAPPENING PEOPLE

BY PAUL NEEVEL

FRANK GIBSON

In Greenville, Michigan, where Frank Gibson grew up, the major local employer was the Gibson Refrigerator Company. "My great-grandfather, my grandfather and my father ran the company," Gibson says, but the factory was sold when he was a child.

After high school, he dropped out of Kalamazoo College, moved to California and spent four years as a hot-air balloonist. It took 10 hours of training to get a license," he says. "I flew charter flights, promotions and training, all over the U.S., Mexico and Central America." He returned to school at UC Irvine for a degree in English and then entered law school at the UO. "I remembered Oregon from an Outward Bound program when I was 17," says Gibson, who has worked in private practice law in Eugene since graduation in 1979. Also a trained mediator, he encourages mediation to settle disputes.

Inspired by the Oscar-winning short film *Teenage Father*, Gibson got involved with Planned Parenthood in 1980. "I felt I could help counsel young men," he says. "But they asked me to serve on the board." He served on the national board from 1986-92 and has since chaired local and statewide boards. In 2013, Planned Parenthood of SW Oregon gave him the Margaret Sanger Award, named for the movement's founder. He also won last year's Joseph M. Kosydar Award for Professionalism, presented by the Lane County Bar Association.

ACTIVIST ALERT

• A free gathering to commemorate the **94th anniversary of women's suffrage** will be at 3 pm Saturday, Aug. 23, at the Eugene Public Library. Kirk Taylor and Livvie Taylor-Young will present a scripted Power Point documentary complete with original music and photographs dating as far back as the 1800s.

• "**Tacos Not Tar Sands**" will feature a short documentary about the Unist'ot'en Camp, tacos and more at The Boreal (450 W. 3rd) from 6 to 9pm. Entry is free but a donation of \$5-\$10 is suggested. The camp in Canada is led by the Wet'suwet'en First Nation, "who have reclaimed traditional territories and are asserting control over their hereditary lands," and it seeks to protect the land from massive LNG and tar sands pipelines.