

ANIMAL SERVICES EUTHANIZES MOTHER DOG, DRAWS CRITICISM

A female dog euthanized in late December at 1st Avenue Shelter is the subject of some online uproar. City of Eugene Animal Services and 1st Avenue Shelter say the pregnant dog had a bite record and repeatedly demonstrated aggressive behavior, while advocacy group No Kill Lane County maintains that the dog could have been rehabilitated.

Molly Monette, animal welfare supervisor with City of Eugene Animal Services, says a Eugene citizen picked up the stray boxer on Nov. 20. While in that person's custody, the dog escaped from her enclosure.

On Dec. 16, Monette says, Animal Services received a call from a man who said the dog bit his legs and chased him. While responding to that call, Animal Services received another call from a mother whose daughter was attacked and bitten twice while walking home from school the previous day.

Since the dog had bitten a person, Animal Services classified her as a Level 4 dangerous dog, the second highest classification, according to Eugene City Code.

"We spoke to the owners at the property and they stated that this dog was a stray," Monette says. "They surrendered possession of the dog on Dec. 19."

Animals Services brought the dog to 1st Avenue Shelter, where she was put on a 10-day bite quarantine, as required by state law. Monette says 1st Avenue Shelter posted online and looked for the boxer's owners on Craigslist, but no one came forward to claim her.

Robyn Broadbent, an animal advocate with No Kill Lane County, says she attempted to contact Greenhill Humane Society and Animal Control about the status of the boxer before she was euthanized, but Broadbent says her calls were never returned.

Since Greenhill is in part taxpayer funded via 1st Avenue, Broadbent says, "I wanted to see the records on this dog. I asked for status and records, and I was ignored. There should have been more outreach and more answering of questions."

Between Dec. 24 and Dec. 25, the boxer gave birth to two puppies, one stillborn and one living. The living puppy was with her mother until Dec. 30, says Lauren Merge, communications and events manager for Greenhill, which operates 1st Avenue Shelter.

During this time, Monette says, the mother dog "was not able to be handled at all by the shelter staff" due to aggression.

After looking at the options, Monette says, Animal Services and 1st Avenue Shelter concluded that "the mom demonstrated some really concerning behavior outside of the shelter," adding that "we do not adopt out or release potentially dangerous dogs to the public."

Merge says that "based on the behavior inside and outside of the shelter, we determined that euthanasia was going to be the best decision."

Broadbent says that pregnant dogs, especially under stress, are more prone to aggression, and despite the dog's bite history "there are tons of rescues that would have taken her. They should have handed the dog over to a rescue that was capable of rehabilitating her."

"Ultimately," Monette says, "we're the only ones responsible if this dog hurts somebody else. It was a really difficult thing for us to do, but public safety is number one."

The surviving puppy was placed in foster care, Merge says, and she will be bottle fed until she is old enough to eat on her own. When ready, 1st Avenue will place her for adoption. — Amy Schneider

ACTIVIST ALERT

• The political film *Merchants of Doubt* will be shown at 6 pm Thursday, Jan. 7, at Bijou Art Cinemas on 13th Avenue. The film looks at the secretive group of pundits-for-hire who dispute the science of climate change and toxic chemicals.

• A Lane County town hall on **human rights, equity and access** is planned for 5:30 to 7:30 pm Thursday, Jan. 7, at the Baker Center, 975 High Street. The county is looking at how a new advisory board can improve the county's "long-term efforts to implement its new human rights and equity plan."

• Neighborhood activist **Paul Conte** will speak on "An Introduction to Community-Based Planning" at a gathering from 7 to 10 pm Wednesday, Jan. 13, at Tsunami Books, 2585 Willamette Street. The event is free but donations will be accepted for Community Supported Shelters. Conte will talk about citizen involvement in practical terms and how it applies to South Willamette Street plans, Envision Eugene and other local issues.

• Springfield Alliance for Equality and Respect (SAFER) is inviting nominations for a **Human Rights Leadership Award** to be presented during Springfield's Martin Luther King Jr. celebration Jan. 18. Nominees must be someone who lives and/or works in Springfield and is actively involved in human rights issues. Deadline for submitting nominations is 5 pm Monday, Jan. 11. Email safer1214@gmail.com.

• **350 Eugene** is having a New Year's meet-up from 7 to 9 pm Thursday, Jan. 14, at the First United Methodist Church, 1367 Olive Street. The agenda includes an expert panel on Oregon's Healthy Climate Bill, Puppet Brigade organizing and updates on climate campaigns and activities.

• A **rally for raising the minimum wage** to \$15 will be at 2 pm Thursday, Jan. 14, at the Oregon State Capitol. A public hearing will be at 4 pm that day with opportunities to sign up to testify. Carpooling is planned from Eugene and elsewhere in Oregon. See 15noworegon.org to get on the mailing list.

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