

Aurora police kill two dogs after girl attacked

By Matt Hanley
Staff Writer

AURORA — An Aurora police officer fatally shot two dogs during the weekend, after one of the animals bit a 15-year-old girl.

According to a city spokesman, the dogs — a Labrador mix and a pit bull mix — had been fighting with each other after the lab bit the girl at about 9:30 a.m. Saturday on Blue Spruce Lane near Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory in the northeast section of the city.

When police and Aurora Animal Control workers responded to the scene shortly after the bite, the dogs had run into nearby Butterfield Park.

The girl was treated and released for two minor puncture wounds, according to city spokesman Carie Anne Ergo. The girl had not gone onto the property, but was bitten while the dogs were loose.

Meanwhile, a police officer followed the Lab and pit bull into the park, where the Lab turned on the officer in an aggressive manner, Ergo said. The officer shot the dog once and both animals ran back to the house in the 2500 block of Blue Spruce Lane where the pit bull and another dog, a spaniel mix, lived.

Officers finally cornered the animals at the house, where the Lab and pit bull were each shot twice, killing both animals. Ergo said that the officer "absolutely" behaved appropriately.

"The issue is the dogs were fighting, acting aggressively and running loose," Ergo said. "The dog had just bitten a little girl."

"There was a high danger of the a dog attacking someone else, so the officers did what they had to do," police spokesman Dan Ferrelli said.

The dogs' owners were not home at the time, Ergo said, but later said the Lab was not theirs. The Lab's owner has not been located, Ergo said.

The cocker spaniel was taken by the Animal Control where it was being held pending the owners paying a fine.

The owner of the cocker spaniel and the pit bull could not be reached Monday. Their house, which backs up to Butterfield Park, has a makeshift fenced-in area and signs indicating it has an "invisible fence" which is supposed to keep the animals on the property.

Neighbors were frustrated by the situation, which they say has been simmering for a while.

"It was an absolute fiasco," neighbor Tim Brinlee said. Brinlee said he saw officers chasing the dogs through his neighborhood. "This should have never even gotten to this point."

Brinlee said he has made previous complaints about the dogs running loose in the neighborhood.

The city confirmed there was a previous dog incident at the same address. According to the city, in 2004, two dogs were removed from the residence after someone was bitten. One of those dogs had to be put down and the other animal was not returned to the owners, city records said.

There have been no other complaints at that address since 2004, Ergo said.

After two women were bitten by a dog in June, Aurora Mayor Tom Weisner proposed strengthening the local dog laws, including a proposed fine for leaving dogs unattended outside. That ordinance is expected to be introduced to the City Council next month, Ergo said.

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