

Pit Bull in limbo after attack on Acton woman, dogs

By Frances Niblock

A female Pit Bull that attacked a rural Acton woman and savaged her three dogs will "most likely" be put down if its owner does not come forward to the Oakville Humane Society.

During the attack at her 25 Side Road home last Tuesday morning, Frances Turk, a Naturopathic Doctor, thought that she or her dogs would be seriously injured by the snappy, snarling Pit Bull that would not stop attacking, even when Turk hit it several times on the head with a shovel.

The attack began when Turk walked outside her house and saw a small – 40 to 50-pound – brown and black Pit Bull outside on her rural property. A workman in the area told her that the dog had been hanging around, but was gone, so Turk headed out the front door with her three dogs, one of them on a leash.

"The Pit Bull attacked Sam (a Shepherd-Great Dane) and he started to fight back and then the Pit Bull turned and grabbed onto Patches (a 14-year-old mix)



SAVAGED BY PIT BULL: Rural Acton's Frances Turk and her three dogs are recovering from injuries suffered when a stray female Pit Bull attacked them outside their home last Tuesday. At press time the Pit Bull was unclaimed and in the care of the Oakville and District Humane Society and will likely be put down. – Frances Niblock photo

and he just started screaming as the dog went for his neck and started shaking him," Turk recounted on Friday.

"At this point I grabbed a shovel from the garden and just started wailing on the Pit Bull's head, but it didn't

seem to make much difference until I put the spade between my dog's neck and the dog's mouth and it finally let go and then went after Sydney again," Turk said, adding the frenzied attack continued on Sydney, a 9-year-old Lab/Hound cross, almost ripping her tail off.

"Sam has a really large gash on the side of his body because he kept trying to put himself between the Pit Bull and us," Turk said, estimated that the attack lasted about 10 minutes until the workman heard her screams and came to help.

"He grabbed a two by four when the dog went after him, but he managed to get Sam and Sydney into

the garage and I got the Pit Bull to chase me to the house and it sat at the front door, waiting for us to come back out," Turk said, adding she called 911 and it took about 15 minutes for police to arrive.

"I felt like it was a episode of Cujo – this dog wasn't salivating or anything, but it just went crazy," Turk said adding her father-in-law managed to corral the Pit Bull and tied it to the porch until animal control officers arrived.

Turk was able to get her dogs to the garage and into her car and take them to the Rockwood Veterinary Clinic where two were operated on, and one stitched up, for a total bill of \$1,300,

\$300 of which was covered by Animals Homeward Bound.

When Turk got home she found several of the Pit Bull's teeth had grazed her upper leg, causing scrapes and several large bruises.

"I felt bad about whacking it with the shovel every time it came near, but I didn't want to get hurt, and my dogs come first and I didn't want them to die that way," Turk said.

The Pit Bull was taken to the Oakville and District Humane Society where it was put in quarantine where, by law, it can be held for five business days and if no owner comes forward, the dog then becomes property of the Society.

Society executive director Johanne Golder said they believe that the Pit bull in question is not spayed, and if that's the case, the dog is

illegal under Ontario law, and "may be euthanized."

"I don't know how it will all end up – we don't know if it is spayed," Golder said, adding a vet could shave its belly and look for a scar from spaying, but that might not be done if the dog is "not a nice dog to start with."

"Right now, all we are doing is holding this dog, pending an owner coming forward, we haven't investigated this case. In all likelihood if no one claims this dog. I would expect this dog doesn't have a future because that's the way it is for Pit Bulls in Ontario," she said."

The Society's manager of animal protective services, Rob Bauer said the redemption period for the Pit Bull expired on July 4 and officials would then begin to determine the dog's fate.

TOWN DIGEST

Green fees questioned

The Town may spend \$125 per hour to hire engineer Maureen McCauley as the project manager to complete a work plan and budget for the new Halton Hills Sustainable Green Plan Task Force.

At the last council meeting, Georgetown Councillor Moya Johnson said she found it a "bit unusual" that the consultant hiring report would come to Council for approval without an upset limit.

"It seems a little open-ended," Johnson said, adding she was in no way questioning the importance of the Green Task Force project.

CAO Dennis Perlin said it will take a few more meetings of the Task Force to get a handle on how much it will cost to complete the work plan, information he will bring to the July 9 council meeting.

NEC permits

Halton Hills Council will tell the Niagara Escarpment Commission (NEC)

it has no objections to an application by Halton Place – an equestrian centre on 15 Side Road between the Third and Fourth Lines – to stage a series of horse tournaments from June 1 to November 1 each year and to use four shelter tents during the events.

As to a plan to broaden the uses of the centre to include a BMX rally, beach volleyball tournament or car show – the Town recommends that Halton Place apply for a site specific NEC plan amendment.

Halton Place officials also want to use an existing storage building – built without final inspections being done and subsequently damaged in a fire – for hosting and staging events, but officials say the building can't be repaired for those uses without a NEC development permit and a change or use permit.

At the last council meeting, Mayor Rick Bonnette noted that the equestrian centre has helped draw tourists and competitors from all over the world to events.

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