



---

Posted on Thu, Dec. 15, 2005

## Infant in critical condition after dog bite; authorities looking for dog

By Cassondra Kirby  
HERALD-LEADER STAFF WRITER

Animal control employees, deputy sheriffs and road workers are scouring Harrison County, searching for a dog that escaped from authorities after biting a newborn.

Ethan Vest, 10 days old today, was listed in critical but stable condition today after being bitten on the head by the family dog, Harrison County Sheriff Bruce Hampton said.

"I don't want an all-out war here," Hampton said. "I don't want people who are upset with the dog running around with guns. I have people that I trust and who are trained handling this situation."

The Harrison County Sheriff's department were called to the home of Josh and Alicia Vest on Ky. 353, also known as Russell Cave Road, at 4:53 p.m. Wednesday.

Police found Ethan — the first child for Josh and Alicia — with a bleeding wound on his head. The dog, a husky-German shepherd mix, has been with the family for four years.

Emergency workers took Ethan to Harrison Memorial Hospital, where a helicopter took him to University of Kentucky Hospital.

Hampton said doctors operated on the baby's head immediately. He did not know exactly how the dog came to bite Ethan, but he said he suspects the baby was briefly left alone with it.

No charges have been filed against the couple, but police are still investigating, Hampton said.

In a bizarre twist Wednesday, the dog, which was caged in the back of a truck, escaped while Animal Control officials were taking it to be quarantined.

Several agencies are searching for the dog, but as of 2 p.m. today, it had not been found. If it is captured, Hampton said, health department officials will decide whether the dog is a safety risk and should be killed.

The Vests had moved to Cynthiana within the last year.

Shortly after their move, Hampton said, he visited and welcomed them to the community.

"They were excited about having their first child and were asking about the school system and things," Hampton said. "They seem like really nice people."

Hampton also petted the dog, which he said was friendly.

Hampton said several such dog-bite cases have occurred in Kentucky in recent years after small children were left alone with dogs. This is the first for Harrison County.

"People need to understand that an animal is still an animal — it is not human," Hampton said. "Everybody is mad at this dog, but I think the responsibility for what happened reflects back to the parents."

Reach Cassondra Kirby at (859) 231-3266 or [ckirby@herald-leader.com](mailto:ckirby@herald-leader.com).

---

© 2005 Lexington Herald-Leader and wire service sources. All Rights Reserved.  
<http://www.kentucky.com>