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Police: Stray dog report fabricated Suspected animals came from inside the home

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School recess may reconvene.

Two stray dogs that reportedly mauled a woman Sunday in her own home apparently do not exist.

"The two dogs described in the paper and in the news media are fabrication," Marion Deputy Police Chief David Day said late Wednesday evening. "They aren't there.

"There are no dogs from the outside. The dogs that did attack the woman were dogs from inside of the house owned by those living there."

The victim of the Sunday attack - 87-year-old Julia Beck - remained unconscious and in critical condition Wednesday night in Fort Wayne's Parkview Hospital.

"Her physical condition remains unchanged," Day said. "The woman is basically in a coma."

Since Sunday's attack, at least one elementary school, Southeast Elementary, has canceled outdoor recess. Scores of stray dogs have been picked up by the Humane Society, responding to a community on edge.

Police responded to a call Sunday night from Linda and Michael Kitchen, Beck's daughter and son-in-law. They reported Beck had been attacked by two dogs they described as a dark-colored Rottweiler and a white dog that gained entry to the home from a door that was ajar.

Beck had been sitting in her living room and was attached to an oxygen machine to help her breathe, according to police. The Kitchens were at home during the attack.

Police are questioning and investigating the details of that report.

According to Day, not only were the descriptions of the dogs false, but the suggested breed of one of the animals - Rottweiler - also was fabricated.

"The dogs that were inside of the residence were a Labrador breed and a Dachshund," Day said.

Day also said the two dogs that resided in the residence are not dogs that commonly attack people.

"Definitely not Dachshund," Day said. "A Labrador is a larger dog, but it is a gentle variety."

Beck's injuries, particularly to one of her arms, had doctors most worried. It also created more questions for investigators, who are looking into why two dogs not known for their viciousness would attack a defenseless woman.

"We, at some point, hope to verify that it was or was not a dog attack," Day said. "We have to look into every possibility."

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Day said the home at 832 E. 28th St. that Beck and the Kitchens reside in was empty as of 10 p.m. Wednesday night. Day said the Kitchens may have been in Fort Wayne visiting Beck.

Day also said that two dogs kept in the home are no longer in the residence.

"We have reason to believe that the dogs aren't in the home, and that they are actually out of the county," Day said.




Day said since the report of the attacks first surfaced, the police department dispatchers have been flooded with calls.

"Each day they've told me they've taken a lot of calls," Day said. "I've spoken to the manager of the shelter and the president of the humane society who say their call volume's up."

Police said late Wednesday night that they want the community to know that the threat of the stray, loose dogs is no longer legitimate.

"We are pleased that the community can feel safer than earlier in the week, particularly with animals moving in certain areas," Police Chief David Gilbert said. "We still caution everyone to be cautious with whatever dogs they encounter."

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