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Statewide

Dogs allegedly maul cat, lunge at men

By [Diana Bowley](#)

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Cynthia Boelens (left) hold one of their six dogs while her husband Shawn talk about his encounter with two large dogs that attacked and killed their cat. The Dover-Foxcroft residents said that those dogs have been a problem before as several neighbors also complained about them to town officials. (Bangor Daily News/Gabor Degre) [Buy this photo](#)

DOVER-FOXCROFT - The owners of two dogs that allegedly mauled a cat and lunged at the cat's owner and a police officer Sunday afternoon have been summoned for keeping dangerous animals and for allowing the dogs to roam at large.

Shawn Boelens was so upset that the two dogs had apparently killed his cat Persephone on Sunday that he placed its mangled body in a box Monday and took it to the Dover-Foxcroft town office, the Dover-Foxcroft Police Department and the Piscataquis County Sheriff's Department.

"I did it for the impact so they could see the same thing I had to see when I walked out my door," Boelens said Monday. He admitted it was irrational behavior, but he wanted the message to be heard that the victim could very well have been a small child in the neighborhood. "I brought reality to them."

Dover-Foxcroft Police Chief Dennis Dyer said the owners of the dogs, Stacey and Irvin Peterson, could face a fine of not less than \$250 and not more than \$1,000, none of which can be suspended. If a judge finds the animals are dangerous, he or she can order the dogs to be muzzled or restrained or be euthanized, he said Monday.

The Petersons are scheduled to appear in 13th District Court on July 23.

Boelens said he was first alerted about the dogs when his own dogs inside his house started congregating at a sliding glass door and were in a barking frenzy. It was then he spotted the two dogs digging holes in his screen on the porch. When he went outside to check them out, one of them lunged at him and he retreated into the house.

the porch. When he went outside to shoo them away, one of them lunged at him and he retreated into the house.

A few seconds later when he went to check on his 6-year-old cat, he discovered its mangled body behind the barn.

"They mauled her and just covered her with spit," Boelens said.

Boelens said he dialed 911, grabbed a gun and went back outside and waited for Dover-Foxcroft police Officer Mike Curtis to arrive. "The Dover-Foxcroft police responded immediately," he said. Curtis advised Boelens to put the gun away, which he did, he said.

"I was protecting my own life after they killed my cat," Boelens said.

A few seconds later, the dogs reappeared, and the same dog that had lunged at Boelens went for Curtis, according to a police report filed at the Dover-Foxcroft Police Department. With some help from passers-by, the two dogs were corralled and taken to a local veterinarian, where they were kept overnight until the owners could be identified. The dogs are now back in their kennel at the Petersons' home.

While Boelens said one of the dogs was a pit bull, it was actually a bull mastiff and the other was a shepherd, husky and Labrador retriever mix, according to Stacey Peterson, who owns the dogs. Peterson said her son had been so excited about going fishing Sunday with his dad, Irvin Peterson, that he forgot to lock the bottom lock to the kennel.

"It was an honest mistake," Stacey Peterson said Monday. "I really feel bad for the owner and I sympathize with him." She said her 11-year-old son is devastated and is worried his dogs may have to be euthanized. Peterson said she doesn't understand why they attacked the cat since she has pet cats or why the dogs lunged at the men.

Boelens had little sympathy for the Petersons' dogs, especially since other neighbors had reported that the dogs had been loose before, he said. He said he and his wife, Cynthia, have six dogs, the majority of which are small Chinese crested hairless dogs, which they take outside on leashes to relieve themselves and for exercise. Now they worry the Petersons' dogs will get loose again and come back for them.

Owners need to be held responsible for the actions of their pets, according to Boelens. Even though the dogs lunged at the officer and him, Boelens said he bet the owner would get nothing more than a warning, which was not acceptable in his mind.

"If these dogs are bold enough to come up on a porch and then lunge at two grown men, they won't be afraid to attack a woman or a child," Cynthia Boelens said Monday.

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