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## Horse mauling mystery man now has a face

Investigation in first attack now keying on non-pit bull

By Gus Thomson, Journal Staff Writer



Placer County Sheriff's Department illustration

This photo composite was made by the Placer County Sheriff's Department from witness descriptions of the man who fled with his dog after an attack April 3 on a horse near Auburn.

Investigators are hoping a composite photo will jog people's memories and help crack the case of a dog owner who fled the scene of a horse attack near Auburn.

Placer County Animal Control released a photo- illustration Thursday showing a stocky, balding man believed to be about 20 years old, 200 pounds and about 5 feet 9 inches tall.

At the same time, authorities and witnesses from the April 3 attack are now more sure that the dog was not a pit bull and could have been a crossbreed or boxer because of its 100-pound size.

The attack took place on a public trail about 4 miles east of Auburn. The off-leash pit bull bit the horse in the face and flank during an unprovoked assault just after noon, near Driver's Flat.

The man fled after the attack in a silver SUV that Tim Goffa, Placer County senior supervising animal control officer, said Thursday was possibly a 2000 Honda CRV.

Animal Control, working with Auburn State Recreation Area park rangers, have established a tip line at (530) 886-5544 for people to provide confidential information on the suspect.

A separate, private fund has been established for information leading to bringing the man to justice in connection with the attack and the reward has grown to more than \$4,000.

Odetta Parker, an experienced trail rider who was able to get off the horse uninjured during the attack, said that she and a fellow rider had initially thought the dog was a pit bull-boxer cross or boxer after the attack but now are more certain that it was a mixed-breed boxer because it had the black mask of a boxer on its face.

"All the pit bulls we've observed are relatively small dogs," Parker said Thursday.

Parker said she's hoping the composite photo will help bring witnesses forward who were on Foresthill Road after the attack and saw the man pick up his dog. She recalls two cars besides the silver SUV were parked where the dog was taken into the vehicle before the man fled.

"There were at least two people at those cars," Parker said.

Parker said her horse - a 900-pound Morgan-Arabian - is close to recovering physically but she's uncertain about the amount of psychological scarring it has sustained.

Parker said she carries Mace on her trail rides and one took her to the place where a second dog attack - involving a pit bull and another horse - took place last Sunday. In that incident, the dog owner tried to stop the attack and stayed to talk to law enforcement.

Parker rode that trail days before the attack and said she was in shock when she heard about the second incident within three weeks.

Goffa said the dog owner in the second attack had his pit bull impounded but has since taken it back. He faces a citation, a fine yet to be determined by a Placer County superior court judge, and court costs for having a dog running at large in public.

The man in the second attack was initially from San Diego and a check with San Diego County found no history of violence with the dog, Goffa said.

A second act of aggression could result in the dog being labeled as potentially dangerous and terms of ownership could be instituted, including housing the dog in a specially built kennel.

The investigation of the April 3 attack continues with two Animal Control employees assigned to the case and working with the state Parks Department. The attack took place on a trail in the Auburn State Recreation Area.

"It's a No. 1 priority on our list," Goffa said.

The Journal's Gus Thomson can be reached at [gust@goldcountrymedia.com](mailto:gust@goldcountrymedia.com).

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On 4/24/08 at 11:16 PM, [mollyrambo57](#) wrote:

WHEN IT IS ENOUGH GOING TO BE ENOUGH, i just redid my google page to include pit bull attacks and had it do the maximum number of stories 9 and you know there were 9 stories that came up that ALL HAPPENED TODAY, i don't think that they should be banned but what i think should have to happen is that there needs to be a federal law so that it is consistent all over and that law should state that someone that wants to have one of these guided furry missles should have to be specially licensed, NOT A REGULAR DOG LICENSE BUT THE PERSON ALSO SHOULD HAVE TO BE LICENSED and they should have to pass an inspection of where and how they keep their dogs, and they should have to have special insurance, and every single dog should have to be micro chipped, and the paper trail needs to be followed, and it should have to be looked at every year if they want to keep these unpreidible animals and every since owner should have to view a film on just what and how

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