

<http://www.journal-news.net/news/articles.asp?articleID=3104>

Toddler injured in dog attack

By BETH HENRY / Journal Staff Writer

CHARLES TOWN — A pet dog bit a toddler in Jefferson County Monday morning, causing a head wound to the child that required treatment at a children's hospital in Washington.

However, the investigating officer said paramedics on the scene didn't think the little girl's injury was life-threatening.

The girl, who will turn 2 years old on Friday, was at her home in the community of Silver Grove when her family's black Labrador retriever bit her on the head, according to Jefferson County Sheriff's Deputy G.W. Bradshaw, who is investigating the incident.

"It wasn't a mauling or anything like that — (the dog) just snapped at her," Bradshaw said in a phone interview Monday afternoon.

The dog was on the family's porch, and when the girl went outside it bit her. It happened at about 10:45 a.m., and Bradshaw said no one knew why the dog snapped at her.

The little girl's head wound was bleeding quite a bit, but Bradshaw said sometimes those types of injuries can look a lot worse than they actually are.

He also said the dog, which had been a family pet since it was a puppy, was friendly to other family members and everyone at the scene.

"They've never had any issues with the dog before," he said, adding he felt bad about the whole situation. He said the dog will be quarantined for at least 10 days by animal control as a standard procedure to make sure it doesn't have any diseases.

However, Bradshaw said the girl's mother indicated that she doesn't want to keep the dog anymore. If that's the case, the dog's ownership could be relinquished and it could be euthanized.

The girl was taken to a children's hospital in Washington by a Maryland State Police helicopter, and her mother went with her. The names of the girl and her family were not available from police Monday.

Jefferson County Animal Control Supervisor Bill Polk said his office does keep records of dog bites, although the specific number of bites this year was not available from the office Monday.

Polk said a dog that bites someone once isn't necessarily vicious, because things happen and dogs do occasionally nip and snap at people. He confirmed that quarantining a dog

after it bites someone is a standard procedure, although pet owners sometimes can quarantine their pet at their own home. It is also usually up to the owners to decide whether the dog will be euthanized, and it is not always necessary in a one-time instance.

— Staff writer Beth Henry can be reached at 725-6581 or bhenry@journal-news.net