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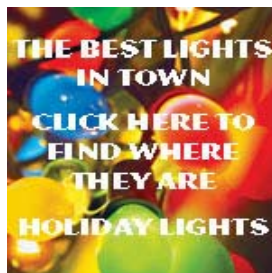
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UPDATED: FRIDAY, DECEMBER 08, 2006

Neighbors to go to trial over attack by five Dobermans in Wantage

By Tom Hoffman and Mike Celizic

Wantage -WANTAGE - Tammy Terranova's pug puppy, Romeo, is dead, killed by five Dobermans belonging to her neighbor, Leigh Allen, and Terranova still has an open wound suffered during the same attack. That much no one is debating.

But how it happened and who is to blame won't be decided until Monday afternoon in Wantage Municipal Court, where each woman said she will testify that it was the other woman's fault.

The incident happened more than a month ago, on Oct. 30. Both women agreed that Allen was the first to see her dogs attacking the five-month-old pug in her driveway on Holland Road. Allen said that Romeo must have wandered out of his own yard. Terranova said that isn't possible, as she has an underground fence on her property to keep her dogs - she has two other pugs - from straying. Instead, she said the Dobermans had to cross into her yard and drag her dog back to their own territory to attack.

Both women also agreed that Allen saw the attack from her house and called Terranova to tell her. Terranova ran to rescue her puppy. She in turn was attacked, being knocked to the ground and suffering nine puncture wounds. Romeo was eviscerated in the attack and died.

Terranova said the Dobermans have shock collars that can be activated by a remote control. She said Allen continually zapped her dogs, but they continued the attack.

Terranova was able to finally get free - she said she kept the dogs from getting to her throat by putting up her forearm. In the meantime, her four-year-old son, Nicholas, had followed her from their house, and she was able to pick him up and run back to her house, being bitter one more time in the back on the way.

Since then, Terranova, who broke down at the meeting and had to leave the room, said, "I'm scared to leave my house. My son has been having nightmares ever since. I can't live in this town."

"My wife was basically mauled by our neighbors dogs," Joe Terranova, Tammy's husband, told the Wantage Township Committee at it's meeting last Thursday, Nov. 30. The couple had come to the meeting to ask why the Allens were allowed to keep their dogs at home and they haven't been impounded. The town's animal control officer, John Abate, issued a summons to the Allens after the attack and put the animals under quarantine, which means that they must all stay indoors, and the Allens can walk one outdoors

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