

# 2 dogs attack retired fireman

The judge got the injured man into her house and called an ambulance.

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VINDICATOR CRIME REPORTER

YOUNGSTOWN — A retired firefighter out walking his small dog near Mill Creek Park was attacked by two large Cane Corso dogs who were then shot and killed by police — one in the backyard of a Mahoning County Common Pleas judge.

David Roch, 55, who suffered a serious hand injury around 8 a.m. Wednesday, required surgery. Fire Chief John J. O'Neill Jr. said Roch, who lives on the West Side, retired in 2006 with 18 years' service.

City Patrolman Tony Tulipano said that Roch lifted his dog to protect it when the Corsos (a mastiff breed) approached to attack it. The bigger dogs — the male weighed 170 pounds, and the female weighed 140 — then concentrated on Roch.

Caroline Grimaldi, a Mill Creek MetroParks police officer, used a shotgun to kill one dog behind Judge Maureen A. Cronin's house on Canfield Road. The second dog ran near Kiawatha Drive and was shot and killed by city Patrolman Matt Willis.

Rabies tests

Deputy Dog Warden Sean Toohey said both Corsos were wearing silver choke chains. The dead dogs were taken to a vet in Boardman for rabies tests, which should be available Friday, he said.

Toohey said he's trying to determine whether both dogs were owned by the same person. He expects the charges, once reviewed by the city prosecutor, to be failure to confine.

Judge Cronin said she was outside bringing in the bed of her dog Simba when she saw the huge Corsos go after Roch's tiny dog. She went to call park police.

Once back outside, she saw the attack on Roch, who was bleeding heavily, and managed to get him into her garage. She said the Corsos followed and then became distracted, possibly following her dog's scent in the yard.

Judge Cronin said she got Roch into her house and called for an ambulance. She said his dog had run off during the mauling and was brought back by two people passing by.

"Simba was in the house the whole time," Judge Cronin said. "If he had been on his chain, he would have been chewed."

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