

Dog walks death row after killing goat

By Philip Mallory | Friday, March 21, 2008 | <http://www.bostonherald.com> | Local Coverage

A Rowley pooch has been sentenced to death for slaughtering a pet goat in what one Bay State animal advocate characterized as cruel and unusual punishment for an animal-on-animal killing.

Town selectmen handed down the sentence Monday for the Feb. 13 attack by Niko, a 6-year-old black lab mix, on "Miss Daisy," a neighbor's pet goat. Niko is in custody pending a possible appeal.

"I don't care if it's a dog or what it is, it's a family pet," said Miss Daisy's owner Richard Lebel, who described his late goat as a gentle animal who frolicked with his children.

Niko's death sentence struck Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals spokesman Brian Adams as excessive. The board is "dealing with an irrevocable outcome," Adams said.

David Petersen, chairman of the Rowley Board of Selectmen, said the panel acted on the recommendation of a local animal control officer. "We make a decision and if anyone is unsatisfied, they can go to district court," Petersen said.

Niko's owner, Mike Passanisi of Rowley, acknowledged Niko may have killed Miss Daisy but insisted the dog did not receive a fair shake from the selectmen at the hearing.

"Their minds were made up before I walked in that room," Passanisi said.

Passanisi also offered an alternative theory to Miss Daisy's slaying, saying it was possible a coyote was the real culprit, and that Niko happened along after the killing.

But Lebel, Miss Daisy's owner, discounted that notion.

"Coyotes would have eaten the animal. That did not occur," he said.

Passanisi said he has not decided whether he will take the matter to court. In the meantime, he said the ordeal has soured him on the small North Shore farming town, where he moved just a little over a month ago.

"It's just been very emotional," he said.

Article URL: <http://www.bostonherald.com/news/regional/general/view.bg?articleid=1081791>



Photo by Courtesy

[Contact us](#) | [Print advertising](#) | [Online advertising](#) | [Herald history](#) | [News tips](#) | [Electronic edition](#) | [Browser upgrade](#) | [Home delivery](#) | [Herald wireless](#)

Save on Boston Herald Home Delivery

For back copy information and more information on other collectible copies please call 617-426-3000 Ext. 7714. [Click here for Patriots and Red Sox back copies](#)



© Copyright by the Boston Herald and Herald Media.
No portion of BostonHerald.com or its content may be reproduced without the owner's written permission. [Privacy Commitment](#)