

News-Sun

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Pit bull who escaped from yard euthanized after being shot in eyes, ears and back Family mourns loss of pet in 'heartless' shooting

Napolean, a pit bull, snuggles with his family. Napolean was euthanized Thursday after being wounded numerous times with a BB gun.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

BETH HAHN
NEWS-SUN

Pete Aguilar had only been awake for about an hour when Napolean escaped from his yard on West Midwest Thursday morning.

Aguilar didn't find out until Hobbs police and animal control officers showed up at his door and asked him to describe his dog.

"The lady down the street found him in her yard," he said.

Napolean had been shot several times with

a BB gun.

"There were BBs in his ears and all in his back," Aguilar said.

And in Napolean's eyes.

The friendly four-year-old pit bull Aguilar described as "a big ol' baby" would be put to sleep Thursday evening.

A local veterinarian told Aguilar it appeared someone fired BBs into Napolean's eyes at almost point-blank range.

"An animal doesn't just let you stand there and shoot it," he said. "Somebody had to chase him down and hold him down to do this."

While Napolean's breed may have a reputation for violence and aggression, Aguilar said the dog slept with his children and would allow them to dress him up in T-shirts, sunglasses and bandanas.

Losing the pet was like losing a member of

Dog

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the family, he said.

Aguilar's fiancée, Cynthia Gaona, said she is heartbroken over the loss of the dog.

"He wasn't a mean dog, he was very loving," she said. "They become family members, you know."

Both Gaona and Aguilar said they do not want revenge on whoever tortured Napoleon.

"We just want this person to know it's wrong to be so heartless," she said.

Aguilar said he is hoping someone in the neighborhood

will give information to police or animal control officers.

"We can't think of someone who would want to do this," he said.

The neighborhood has several dogs and strays, Aguilar said.

Aguilar and Gaona do not want another dog at this time.

"(Gaona) asked me not to bring home another puppy, not right now," he said.

Gaona and Aguilar were both emotional in talking about Napoleon and what the pit bull meant to the family.

Aguilar's sons, ages 15 and 16, are "pretty mad," he said.

His 12-year-old daughter does not know about Napoleon's death yet because she is out of town.

"They can't understand why someone would want to do this," he said.

Monica Garcia, a communications manager for Animal Protection of New Mexico, said the group is offering a reward of up to \$10,000 for information that leads to the arrest and conviction of whoever shot Napoleon.

"We do this for any case where the perpetrator is unknown," she said. "We want people to provide information in cases such as this."

Garcia said tips can be called in to Animal Protection of New Mexico at 1-877-548-6263 or to Hobbs Animal Control at 397-9232.

General Hospital. She was born Nov. 2, 1920.

held 1-3 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 4, at Belvue Baptist Church under

Our view

Animal torturer needs intervention

THE ISSUE: *A family's pit bull was euthanized after being subjected to torture.*

WE SAY: *Torture of an animal often signals a tendency toward violent behavior, against animals or humans.*

Numerous BB pellets in the back, eyes and ears. A blind dog unable to move after being tortured by a sick human being. A friendly pit bull named Napoleon who could sleep with children. Only 4 years old when the torture ensued.

Only 4 years old and he was put to sleep.

Stories about animals grab the public's attention, and stories about animals being hurt or neglected enrage the public. But a story about a dog that was preyed upon causes a recoil response — almost flat-out disbelief, especially if it happens locally. The shocking nature of Napoleon's death stems from his near helpless nature, of course, but there's also a quality in the attacker that's hard to acknowledge.

The attacker has not been identified, but he or she needs intervention. The younger the attacker, the more important it is to intervene. According to various sources, children and teens who enjoy torturing animals are headed toward a dark future. They are likely to commit violent crimes against people and in some cases they become serial killers.

An incident of torture also suggests a bleak situation at home regardless of the perpetrator's age.

"In a study of 57 families being treated for incidents of child abuse, 88 percent also abused animals. In two-thirds of the cases, it was the abusive parent who had killed or injured the animals to control a child. In one-third, the children had abused the animals, using them as scapegoats for their anger," according to the American Humane Association.

In many families, losing a pet is not much different from losing a human member of the family. It comes with a similar sense of loss. But with Napoleon, the loss was much worse due to what occurred in the final hours before it.

If you have information relating to Napoleon's torture, call Animal Protection of New Mexico at (505) 265-2322 or the Hobbs Police Department at 397-9265.