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STRAY DOGS MAUL 2 IN ROCKAWAYS

Vicious & bloody boardwalk frenzy

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DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITERS

A mangy pack of vicious stray dogs attacked a jogger yesterday on a Queens boardwalk, nearly ripping his arm off before mauling another jogger when she tried to help, police said.

The maimed man, who carried no identification, was in extremely critical condition last night at Jamaica Hospital, where he underwent hours of surgery and was barely clinging to life, a hospital spokeswoman said.

"His face and scalp are gone," said a source familiar with the investigation, who added that the man's arm might have to be amputated.

Marlene Fils-Aime, 51, rushed to save the man when she saw him being attacked by five bloodthirsty dogs just after 8 a.m. on the boardwalk in Arverne.

"She ran over there to help him, and then they started attacking her," Fils-Aime's son, Marc, 17, said last night.

"She ran over there to help him and then they started attacking her."

MARC FILS-AIME

The dogs clamped their jaws around the woman's legs before two more good Samaritans beat off the snarling pack with sticks, police said. Fils-Aime was in stable condition last night at Jamaica Hospital with bites to her legs, officials said.

Cops who rushed to the bloody scene at Beach 70th St. and Ocean Promenade in the Rockaways managed to hunt down the dogs and tranquilize them.

The canines were identified as two Rottweilers, a pit bull and two mutts — strays apparently dumped in the neighborhood by heartless owners. The dogs were being tested for rabies last night at the city's Center for Animal Care and Control.

Linked to homeless man

Police were questioning Wilfredo Velez, 47, a homeless man who told them that one dog, which he named Boobie, lives with him in a tentlike shanty on Beach 75th St. between Beach Channel Drive and Rockaway Beach Blvd.

Velez did not claim ownership of the other dogs but admitted feeding them and naming them Tiger, Doggie, Whisky and Sulu.

Fils-Aimes' younger son, Arlen Benoit, 12, said his mother, who lives four blocks from the scene of yesterday's attack, called him from the hospital with details of her horrifying ordeal.

"She was walking on the boardwalk, and she saw these dogs feasting on this man," Arlen said. "They saw her and attacked her. They started biting her legs, and she screamed for help. She said she could see the bone in her leg."

Arlen said his mother — a secretary at Columbia Button and Nailhead Corp. in Brooklyn — normally jogs on weekends but went out to exercise yesterday because she was off work for the holidays.

Police were trying to learn the identity of the critically injured man, described as Hispanic and about 50 years old, who was unconscious when cops reached him.

Nagging problem

As detectives searched the attack scene, picking up torn pieces of clothing, people who live in the area said they have been terrorized for months by dogs that roam the boardwalk, sometimes in packs of up to 30 canines.

"They take over the area," said Leola Clark, 48, adding that she sometimes walks blocks out of her way to avoid the dogs. "Those dogs look dangerous, hungry and disheveled."

Samuel Rivera, 70, said he rides his bicycle along the boardwalk daily and has had several close calls with vicious packs of dogs.

"I see these dogs every day, and I've been complaining to the police for months," he said. "I've been chased twice. It's nothing new. It's just terrible that someone got hurt."

Larry Avin, 78, said he has learned to arm himself with a big stick when he takes his daily strolls on the boardwalk.

"I'm down here every day, and there's no avoiding these dogs," he said. "I don't take any chances. I've seen them run around, 20 or 30 deep. They're all throwaways, and some of them are really big dogs."

With Melissa Grace

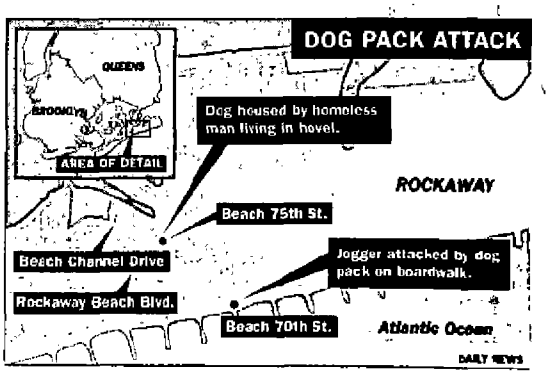


1000 MARBEL DAILY NEWS

HELPING OUT Man who police said is homeless owner of stray dog assists in rounding up of roaming pack that attacked two joggers yesterday in Arverne, Queens.



Marlene Fils-Aime



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