

ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER

In the past fiscal year, only 11 dogs were impounded for violations of the Shaftsbury Dog Ordinance. In contrast, a much higher than usual number of written warnings and tickets were issued to the owners of dogs, either formally complained about or otherwise found to be in violation of local and/or State law. The written warnings are not only helpful in cases where future ticketing may end up in court where written documentation will prove to be good evidence, but are also more clearly defined and less likely to be misinterpreted by the recipient as opposed to a verbal warning. My phone number is listed on the warning form, and dog owners are urged to call to discuss the situation if there are any questions or if I might be able to offer suggestions to rectify problems.

This year, as already mentioned, there were an unusually high number of tickets issued and these fines, in addition to those collected on impounded dogs, totaled \$1,345. A good portion of these fines were levied against a single owner with multiple dogs that were also involved in repeated offenses. Five of the impounded dogs were claimed by owners and, in the case of the sixth, the owner refused to claim him. Tickets were issued for the dog both running at large and being unlicensed, and the dog was eventually adopted. Of the remaining five dogs, three were adopted and the other two were euthanized due to health issues. One of these dogs was an ancient tiny poodle found spinning in the middle of a secondary road. He was not only infested with fleas, but totally blind and seemingly totally deaf as well. I cannot imagine, or do not want to, who would abandon this sweet and vulnerable old-timer to have to deal with the very real possibility of a tragic accident and ending. "Man's inhumanity to man is exceeded only by man's inhumanity to animals." Unfortunately this famous quote is something I have seen too often proven, and this little fellow was certainly one of those examples.

Reported animal bite cases were down for the year with only two reported. As always, I can be reached at 375-6121. A machine is always on to ensure that you can reach me as promptly as possible since I am so often in and out the door. PLEASE use the machine if you should get it rather than waiting in hopes of getting me more quickly in person. This often allows me to contact you much sooner and to also better organize the trip calls for various situations in the three towns I work for.

Respectfully submitted

Traci Mulligan, Animal Control Officer