

**Fitness to Own
David Vanschaick
2731 Park ln. Palm Bay**

Summary:

On December 23, 2009 Animal Services and Enforcement received a call from an anonymous citizen that the dog named "Molly" living at this address has a severe skin condition. Officer Denise Karlton responded to 273 Park ln. and upon arrival observed a black Labrador retriever she knew from previous calls as "Molly", come out the open front door. Officer Karlton observed that "Molly" had a severe skin condition where the skin was inflamed and bleeding. "Molly" has significant hair loss and was constantly scratching. Officer Karlton also observed that when "Molly" shook you could see pieces of skin coming off. Officer Karlton had dealt with "Molly" and her owner David Vanschaick before for the same issue, but not as severe as today. There was no sign of the Mr. Vanschaick and the neighbors advised they had seen Mr. Vanschaick earlier in the day. Officer Karlton contacted Captain Brown for authorization to remove "Molly" due to the seriousness of her condition as well as the fact this is not the first time "Molly" has had this condition. Captain Brown gave authorization to remove "Molly" and Palm Bay police were contacted to respond and stand by as we confiscated "Molly". Officer Bill Andera ID #154 arrived and secured the scene while Officer Karlton removed "Molly". Officer Karlton transported "Molly" to the Animal Emergency clinic at 2281 W. Eau Gallie Blvd. for evaluation and treatment. "Molly" was treated and taken to the South Animal Care Center where she received further treatment for Demodicosis and remains pending the outcome of the fitness to own.

Investigation:

On May 22, 2009 Animal Services received an anonymous complaint that there are two dogs in bad shape with mange and sores at 2731 Park ln. Palm Bay. Officer Karlton was sent to investigate and upon arrival address made contact with the owner of the two dogs, David Vanschaick.

Officer Karlton observed a yellow lab named "Toby" with tumor like growths on him and a black lab named "Molly" with severe skin issues. Neither of the dogs had been seen by a vet and there were no rabies shots and county tags. Officer Karlton issued Mr. Vanschaick a warning for the shots and tags and asked Mr. Vanschaick to take the dogs to the vet for treatment. Photos were taken of the dogs.

On June 3, 2009 Officer Karlton responded back to 2731 Park ln. for a follow up. Both "Molly" and "Toby" were in the front yard and neither looked any better. Officer Karlton contacted the Animal Medical Clinic and was advised that "Molly" was seen on May 26, 2009 and treated for mange, however the suggested treatment had to be altered due to the owners financial situation. "Toby" was not seen for the growth on his chest, now the size of a softball. "Molly" did receive rabies shots and county tag on her visit. Officer Karlton took photos of the dogs and left a notice for Mr. Vanschaick to contact her.

On June 4, 2009 Officer Karlton made contact with the Animal Medical Clinic to fax over reports pertaining to "Molly". Officer Karlton spoke to a Kelly who advised that the report on "Molly" has been faxed over to our office.

On June 5, 2009 officer Karlton again spoke with Kelly about the report and was told that Mr. Vanschaick could not afford the treatment and just took "Molly" home.

On June 18, 2009 Officer Mercer responded for a follow up and observed "Molly" and "Toby" in the fenced yard. "Molly" appeared to have new hair growth on her head and legs. She did not appear to be uncomfortable at this time. "Toby's" left eye has green pus across his eye. Mr. Vanschaick was not home and Officer Mercer left a door tag on his gate. Neither dog had water that Officer Mercer could see and provided some for the dogs.

On June 20, 2009 Mr. Vanschaick contacted Officer Mercer and advised "Molly's" skin condition is improving and he has a recheck with the vet the following week.

On August 1, 2009 Officer Mercer responded for a recheck, but no one was home and the dogs were not seen. Officer Mercer left a door tag on the gate. Officer Mercer received a voice message from Mr. Vanschaick that "Molly" is doing better.

On August 5, 2009 Officer Mercer again responded for a follow up and again no one appeared home and no dogs were seen. A door tag was left on the front gate. Mr. Vanschaick called and left a message on Officer Mercer's voice mail that the dogs now stay inside.

On August 6, 2009 Officer Mercer received a call from Mr. Vanschaick explaining that he has not had the money to take the dog back to the vet for a recheck. Mr. Vanschaick has a medicated shampoo and advantage treatment for the flea infestation and the yard has been treated with Ortho.

On August 12, 2009 Officer Mercer received a call from Mr. Vanschaick updating her that the antibiotic he is giving "Molly" is working great with the sores from the fleas.

On August 29, 2009 Officer Mercer responded again to try and see the dogs and again no one appeared to be home, but "Molly" was seen standing in the open door way and the hair on her head appeared to have filled in.

On October 9, 2009 Officer Karlton made contact with Mr. Vanschaick and observed "Molly" and she looked very good. All skin issues appeared to be gone and her hair had grown back in. Photos were taken and attached to the case.

On October 23, 2009 Animal Service received an anonymous complaint that a black dog named "Molly" has a skin condition. Officer Karlton responded and observed "Molly" come out the open front door and up to the fence. "Molly" had severe skin condition again and she was clearly suffering and in pain. "Molly's" skin was inflamed and bleeding and her hair loss was significant. The owner, David Vanschaick, was not present. Officer Karlton contacted Captain Brown about confiscating the dog due to the severity and the fact this was a repeat issue. Captain Brown authorized removal and officer Karlton transported "Molly" to the Animal Emergency Clinic for treatment. "Molly" was treated and then taken to the South Animal Care Center for hold and further care. Officer Karlton then made contact with Mr. Vanschaick and met up with him with Palm Bay Police Officer Bill Andera. Officer Andera placed Mr. Vanschaick under arrest for Cruelty to Animals and he was transported for booking.

Conclusion:

Based on the evidence discovered during the investigation, the previous history and the injuries to “Molly”, we believe that Mr. Vanschaick did in fact fail to provide medical treatment for his dog “Molly” and it resulted in the excessive and repeated infliction of unnecessary pain and suffering and has violated State Statute 828.12 Cruelty to Animals and is guilty of a misdemeanor of the first degree. We also believe that Mr. Vanschaick has shown that he is not fit to own “Molly” and should not be permitted to own, care, or harbor any animals as set forth in State Statute 828.073. We ask that “Molly” be remanded to the custody of Brevard County Animal Services and Enforcement and Mr. Vanschaick be ordered to have no further custody of “Molly” and be enjoined further possession or custody of other animals and be required to reimburse Brevard County Animal Services and Enforcement for costs to provide care to “Molly” while in their custody.