



TIMES COLONIST

Saturday, November 2, 2024

Victoria, British Columbia

Showers. High 10. Low 7. Details, B8

timescolonist.com

Senior attacked by two dogs

Pinned down on Sidney sidewalk: 'The most traumatic thing I've ever seen'

DARRON KLOSTER
Times Colonist

A woman who saw two dogs viciously attacking a senior on a sidewalk outside her business in Sidney on Friday said she is horrified such a thing could happen.

"It was the most traumatic thing I've ever seen," said Katherine Margetts, who owns The Shop at 9719 First St.

She said just before noon, a senior who lives in the condo above her store was pounced upon by two dogs who apparently escaped from a nearby home and yard. She said the woman, whom she knows as Sherry, was pinned down and the dogs were biting into her arms as she defended herself.

Margetts, who was with a friend in front of her store at the time, said she first heard a commotion behind her, then turned around, saw the attack and screamed.

That's when one of the dogs turned its sights on her as she rushed through the open door of her store, thinking

that she and her friend would also be attacked.

"But someone called the dog off." Margetts, who called 911, said two other witnesses were able to help the injured woman and bring her into Seaside Cabinetry and Design next door. Police and fire rescue responded within a few minutes and then paramedics arrived. B.C. Emergency Health Services said an ambulance with primary care paramedics responded to the scene and provided emergency medical treatment to the victim, who was transported to hospital in stable condition.

The Capital Regional District animal control unit confirmed late Friday it is investigating.

Margetts said the woman was wearing a heavier coat, which likely helped her, but when it was removed she could see blood and it "was obvious she was going to need a lot of stitches, probably rabies shots, tetanus shots. It was extreme ... and it's just a shame. She was very traumatized. She was just shaking."

Margetts said the owner of the dogs was not outside the home when the dogs escaped, but he rushed out soon after the attack and got hold of the dogs.

"What really disappointed me was all he kept saying was, 'oh, they've never done this before' over and over. Not once did he ask how the woman was."

Margetts said hours after the attack that she was still shaking and in a state of disbelief.

"She kept saying: I need some help. It was so shocking. She just put her arms up to defend herself and they were just on top of her."

Margetts estimated the senior to be about 80 years old, "but she wasn't frail. She was sturdy, but she still couldn't defend herself against those dogs. I wouldn't have been able to, either."

Town of Sidney bylaws, administered through the CRD animal control unit, can deem a dog "dangerous" if it has seriously injured a person, or has aggressively pursued or harassed a person without provocation.

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It's time to change clocks

Daylight time ends and standard time begins at 2 a.m. on Sunday morning. Clocks go back an hour. Standard time is in effect until March 9, when we'll spring ahead an hour to daylight time.

TRAVEL For Kim Pemberton, it's Heidi-Heidi-ho in Switzerland >C1
Rick Steves tells a tale of two stony villages in the hills of Tuscany >C4

HOMES Big, bold art ideas >D1
Tony Gioventu takes on insurance >D1

On 900-block Pandora, more fencing put up, tents gone: 'It feels hopeful'



Victoria workers install fencing around the tented area in front of Our Place on Pandora Avenue. The fencing has cost about \$10,000. ADRIAN LAM, TIMES COLONIST

VIU trans basketball player comes out of her safe space to talk about mistreatment

GEMMA KARSTENS-SMITH
The Canadian Press

Basketball was Harriette Mackenzie's safe space growing up. She knew from an early age that she was different, and the basketball court was where she could escape.

"I didn't have a lot of times when I didn't feel very burdened or sad. And I remember basketball was just a place that was an outlet," Mackenzie told The Canadian Press.

"It was nice to be good at something, I guess." "Now a star player at Vancouver Island University in Nanaimo, Mackenzie is speaking up about the treatment she said she's received as a transgender athlete, hoping her voice and experience can create a safe space for others.

The six-foot-two, 21-year-old forward took to social media this week to detail what happened during and after a pair of home games against Columbia Bible College.

"I'm proud of my story. And I want to make something very clear — queer, trans and nonbinary people belong in sport," she said in the video. "And there is zero space in this league for hate, violence and bigotry."

See **SPEAKING OUT**, page A2

ROXANNE EGAN-ELLIOTT
Times Colonist

More fencing went up on Pandora Avenue this week as the City of Victoria moves forward with a plan to clear an encampment on the 900-block.

The city began installing fencing around the boulevard in the 900-block of Pandora in September in an effort to prevent camping. It was a phased approach, with fencing first at the ends of the block and eventually meeting in the middle to close off the boulevard and allow the grassy area to recover, said Mayor Marianne Alto.

The fencing, which has cost around \$10,000, will remain for the foreseeable future, she said. The city will give the grass time to grow and will then likely begin landscaping the area.

While sheltering is not allowed on the boulevard, the city turned a blind eye to an encampment that began during the pandemic, Alto said.

"There's a point at which that type of use is simply no longer tenable," she said. "The threshold for the city has been there is no point in simply

saying, 'You have to go,' unless there's some place to go."

B.C. Housing and community partners have assessed 62 people who were sheltering on the block and offered them all a shelter space, a B.C. Housing spokesperson said. Of those people, 29 had moved into a shelter as of Oct. 25.

No tents remain on the block, and Our Place shelters are now full, said Grant McKenzie, director of communications for Our Place Society.

There are still people hanging around the block, but it's feeling quieter than it has since camping on the block exploded during the pandemic, he said.

Demand for meals at Our Place is up about 30 per cent, and McKenzie attributes the increase to people feeling safer. Staff are seeing familiar faces who have been absent for a while and the centre is starting to expand its programming to match its pre-pandemic offerings, including yoga, music and craft workshops.

"It feels hopeful," McKenzie said, adding he thinks the block will look very different by the end of the year.

Plans for a city-owned lot at 926 and 930 Pandora Ave. are moving forward, with a proposal for a 20-storey development with 205 new homes.

The proposal, a partnership between the city, B.C. Housing and the Capital Region Housing Corporation, would include 158 affordable rental homes, 47 supportive housing units and a 16,000-square-foot community space.

B.C. plans to operate the supportive housing through a non-profit service provider and it would include supports such as meals, counselling, health care referrals and life skills training. Residents are assessed and selected by B.C. Housing based on the services they need.

Eligibility for affordable housing is based on income. The project is awaiting a building permit and is expected to start construction in early 2025.

"It's a couple of years before it's actually finished, but it will be a really significant difference there, and a lot of people are going to come into the area," Alto said.

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SATURDAY SECTIONS

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