

Police Shoot Rottweiler In Hawthorne California

On July 1, 2013 police in Hawthorne California shoot and kill a Rottweiler during the arrest of his owner. To read about the incident and see some videos (some very graphic) go to:

http://www.dailybreeze.com/news/ci_23578147/hawthorne-police-kill-dog-during-arrest-owner

The Board of the American Rottweiler Club sent the following letter to the Mayor of Hawthorne. It was also sent to all City Council Members, the City Manager and the Chief of Police.



**American Rottweiler Club, Inc.
16005 Pine Creek Way
Magnolia, TX 77358**

July 10, 2013

Mayor Daniel Juarez
City of Hawthorne
4455 West 126th Street
Hawthorne, CA 90250

Dear Mayor Juarez:

This letter is being written on behalf of the American Rottweiler Club, a Club of a Thousand members in almost every state with numerous members in California. Many are writing about the July 1st shooting of the Rottweiler "Max", and are asking that a full and complete investigation be conducted and the results made public as soon as possible. We are not writing solely to complain, but offer assistance to make sure such incidents never happen again. All too often we read of family pets being shot, by accident or as "incidental" damage during other police activities. In most cases these tragedies need not happen. It only serves to promote the positive appearance of law enforcement if you take available steps to not only prosecute wrongful actions, such as we believe happened with Max, but also be proactive in striving to not have officers place themselves in such situations needlessly.

We certainly understand and support the needs of law enforcement and its officers in dealing with situations such as those that were taking place prior to this incident. Sadly, we have watched the videotapes to make sure we understood what was happening before writing this letter. It appears there were numerous chances for this situation to be defused without it resulting in Max's brutal killing on a public street. Whether or not Max's owner had a right to be driving by with his dog in the car, stop and walk his dog on a leash, while filming with his cell phone is a question we will not address. However, it is the responsibility of police departments and their officers to be trained and have an understanding of animal behavior and how to deal with situations such as those that occurred. We are offering our assistance at this time to provide any information you think might be helpful to your department to better equip it and its officers for dealing with animal related issues. Our members have hundreds of years of experience in training in animal behavior specifically related to the Rottweiler.

It is pretty clear from watching the video the officers knew they were going to talk to, if not arrest the owner, and may even have directed him to put the dog in the vehicle. Regardless, they clearly saw the owner placing the dog in an open vehicle. Further, it is obvious they could hear the dog becoming agitated and barking while talking to the owner and then hand-cuffing him and moving him toward the police vehicle. The biggest question we have is if there was any plan on arresting or confronting a man knowing he had his Rottweiler in an open vehicle, why was Animal Control not called ahead of time to make sure the dog was safely secured in a temperature controlled environment (unlike a car with the windows closed)? Clearly, the owner could not have approached the officers with the dog as that would have been a problem in all likelihood. His only option was to place him in the vehicle, which he did. There appeared to be no urgency in arresting the owner, placing him in the vehicle, or taking any other action that would have precluded Animal Control being called to secure Max whether the officer was simply going to question the owner or he was going to be arrested. Had the arrest taken place and Max remained in the vehicle, would not Animal Control have been called in any event to take care of Max?

These are but a few of the questions and concerns our members have expressed and ask that we express to you. We find no justification for the manner in which this was handled resulting in the brutal shooting on a public street of an animal whose behavior on videotape, both before and during the incident, displayed nothing out of the ordinary for any canine. It appears that the dog only made a move toward the officers when one of them reached for the dog to control it. After the dog was shot multiple times no action was taken to care for the dog or cease its suffering. The videotapes speak for themselves and are sickening to watch, but we felt it necessary to be able to discuss this matter with you. The United States Department of Justice and other law enforcement regulatory agencies already have available material and training on the very issues we are discussing. If you do not have access to them we can certainly provide the material for you.

On behalf of our members and Rottweiler owners across the country, who as you know are expressing outrage over this incident, we ask, in fact demand a full investigation and published results as soon as possible. Again, if we may offer any assistance for your department with information related to animal behavior or the Rottweiler as a breed, please let us know. Our goal is to promote the health and safety of our dogs and their responsible interaction with the public. Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

Jeff Shaver, President
For The American Rottweiler Club
On Behalf of Its Members,
Officers, and Directors