

Pup's death sparks call for change in laws

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LAS CRUCES - Animal rights activists and supporters across Las Cruces have said enough is enough, following the violent weekend death of a 4-month-old female border collie mix.

They are incensed the puppy died after Richard Nelson McCord, of the 800 block of Parkview Drive, allegedly stepped on its throat for several minutes Saturday after earlier grabbing the puppy by its neck, placing it against a fence and repeatedly kicking it until the dog stopped yelping.

McCord was arrested Sunday and charged with one count of extreme animal cruelty, a fourth-degree felony. He was jailed at the Do-a Ana County Detention Center, with bond set at \$5,000.

"We should focus on changing the laws that are in place," said Las Cruces Dee Dougail, an animal rights supporter. "Situations and circumstances like this have been going on for a long time. These laws we currently have in place are 50 years old and older. The laws need to be changed."

Las Cruces who aren't actively involved in animal rights activities agreed with Dougail. They said there's no place, or justification, for violent actions to be taken on any animal or person.

"I just don't understand it," said Juana Lueras, a retired dental technician. "How does someone do something like that to anybody or anything? It's sad, because we've seemed to become a society that puts so little value on life of any kind, ours or the lives of animals. There's no reason at all that someone should attack an animal or another person like that."

McCord told an animal control officer that the dog's injuries were caused when it was hit by a car.

Frank Bryce, president of the Humane Society of Southern New Mexico, said he is a bit surprised by Las Cruces' reactions to the puppy's death.

"I cannot believe the anger in the community," Bryce said. "But in fairness to everyone, we need to emphasize that we have to let the law take care of the actions and go from there.

"But this has become a very serious issue."

Bryce added he is concerned about the link between animal abuse and human violence. He said the kind of abuse the dog was subjected to has also been apparent in numerous reports of child abuse and domestic violence.

"We don't know all the fact, but anger and cruelty in any sense is a very serious issue that needs to be addressed," Bryce said.

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