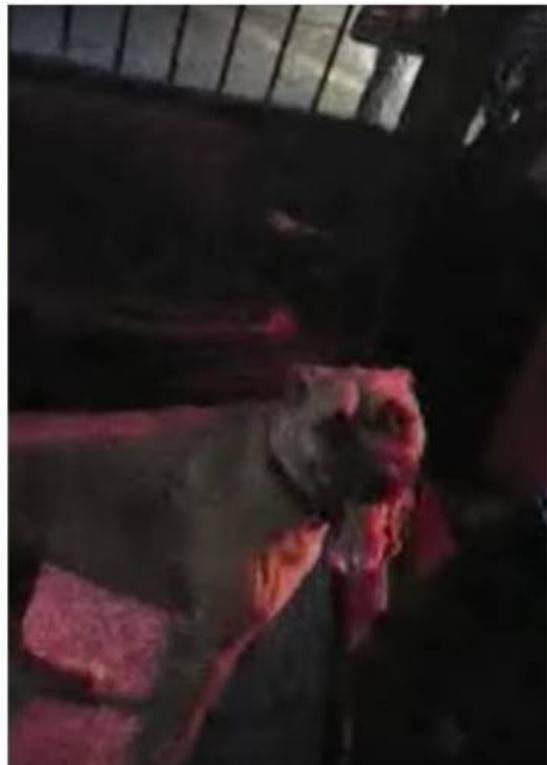
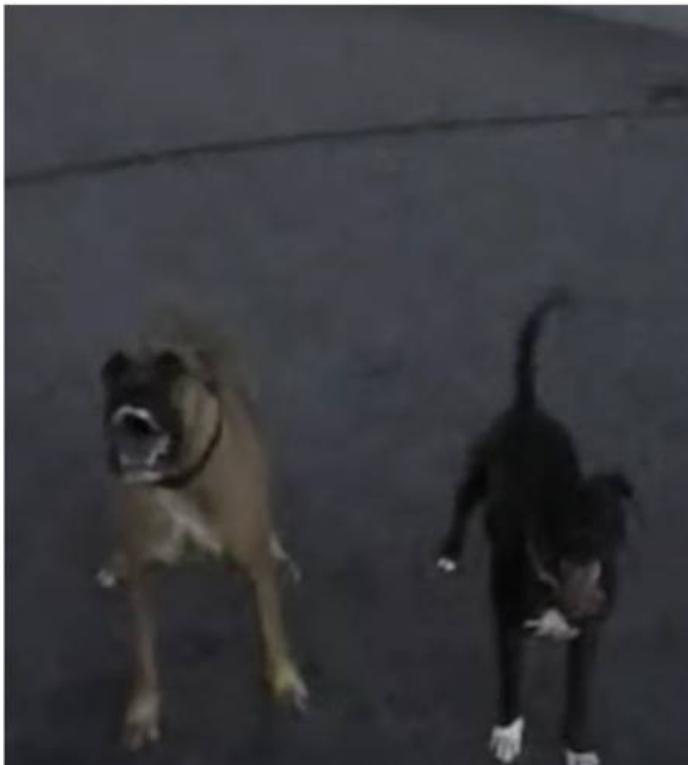




Cop Meets Two Seemingly Aggressive Dogs And Responds In The Most Perfect Way

By Arin Greenwood – June 14, 2016



Body camera footage shows what happened when an Idaho police officer responded to a call about a couple of aggressive dogs on the loose — and what it shows, is wonderful:

The Christian Science Monitor reports on a promising trend: cops taking classes on how to interact with dogs, in an attempt to reduce the encounters that, with depressing frequency, lead to what's known as “puppycide.”

Some members of the Meridian Police Department took such a class two years ago, with Jim Osorio of Canine Encounters Law Enforcement Training. Officer David Gomez from the video wasn't one of them — but one of the department members who did take the course came back with tips, techniques, and ideas to share with the others. He taught them well.

This video was shot last summer, though the footage was just released.

Officer Gomez tells us that the black dog in the video bit his leg a couple of times, and “I was probably a little scared.”

But he was also eager to try out what he'd learned, and “when it happened, it worked beautifully.”

Osorio says that the video indeed shows Officer Gomez behaving perfectly: staying calm, speaking in a soft voice, maneuvering the baton to repel the dogs when they get worked up. He is paying attention to the dogs' body language, and making sure not to act afraid, which would escalate the situation.

In short, the video shows this officer deploying every technique in the book to keep this a non-lethal encounter.

“The training did help me so that I did not have to use lethal force on them,” Officer Gomez told TV station KBOI2.

The dogs went home that night. Their humans were issued a citation. It's so easy to imagine how much worse this all could have gone.

Osorio's aim is that this video — which was edited and published by Edith Williams, of the group Idaho for Nonlethal Canine Encounters — will do more than just demonstrate great technique.

He'd like to see it encourage more police departments to release their own bodycam footage and to seek out the kind of training that leads to these great results.

“I'm hoping,” said Osorio.

Williams hopes so, too. Idaho for Nonlethal Canine Encounters is now holding a fundraiser for more officers to be trained.

She already knew that canine training for law enforcement officers would lead to fewer deaths, better community relations, and protect police departments from lawsuits and bad publicity, as well as preventing “the painful loss of an animal family member.”

The video, she thinks, helps spread awareness about these classes exist, and that they are effective.

“It shows that community members and law enforcement can work together to identify problems and find solutions that will keep everyone safer, officers, bystanders and canine companions,” Williams said.

There’s reason for optimism, that the awareness will lead to results. After all, every time a cop shoots a dog, it leads to public outrage, lawsuits, and calls for change.

The existence and popularity of Officer Gomez’s video — which had been viewed some 300,000 times, as of Monday evening — should, by corollary, lead to calls for more well-trained police officers, and more dogs staying alive.

This video ends with Officer Gomez inviting the dogs to hop into his police car.

“Let’s go for a ride,” he says. “Come on! Let’s go for a ride.”

The dogs approach the car. The black dog hops right on in. The brown one takes a little coaxing, but eventually climbs up onto the seat. Then, the rather pleased-sounding cop says, “How do you like me now?”

We can answer that question: A lot.