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Seized dogs not known to bite

[STATE Edition]

St. Petersburg Times - St. Petersburg, Fla.

Author: WILLIAM YARDLEY; JORGE SANCHEZ
Date: Jul 16, 1999
Start Page: 1
Section: CITRUS TIMES
Text Word Count: 1402

Abstract (Document Summary)

The attack by pit bullterriers that killed Melissa Hunt - the first fatal dog attack in Citrus County - left many people wondering how a girl so small could be left alone to supervise four animals so potentially fierce.

"They're just ferocious dogs," Citrus County Animal Control Director Hank Baggett said Thursday. Baggett said no small child should play with pit bulls without supervision.

Baggett said the four dogs captured at the house Wednesday night will remain impounded until the Citrus County Sheriff's Office completes its investigation into Melissa's death. But with preliminary autopsy results indicating it was the dogs, and not alligators, that killed Melissa, the dogs likely will be euthanized.

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5-year-old's death blamed on dogs, drowning

[SOUTH PINELLAS Edition]

St. Petersburg Times - St. Petersburg, Fla.

Author: WILLIAM YARDLEY

Date: Jul 16, 1999

Start Page: 1.A

Section: NATIONAL

Text Word Count: 854

Abstract (Document Summary)

The bite wounds that punctured 5-year-old Melissa Hunt's body and disfigured her face were inflicted by one or more of the four pit bullterriers she had been playing with behind her home, according to a preliminary autopsy report released Thursday.

Melissa, found Wednesday evening floating in a shallow, swampy cove in the Tsala Apopka lake chain, died from a combination of severe bites and drowning, the report said. Medical examiners dismissed the possibility that alligators had attacked the girl.

"She was the last of my grandchildren, the only one I'll ever have," Pansy Berlin, Melissa's grandmother, said as she sobbed at the door of her Inverness home.

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POLICE: GIRL, 5, LIKELY KILLED BY BITES FROM FOUR PIT BULLS

The lifeless body of a 5-year-old Florida girl, found covered in animal bites, was likely killed by as many as four pit bull terriers, police said. The dog's owner and his brother found Melissa Hunt floating by the banks of the Tsala Apopka lake Wednesday afternoon, hours after she had been playing with the dogs. The girl's face was partly torn away. Police found the girl's ripped and frayed blue pants on the banks of the lake. Animal control...

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