

James W. Crosby MS PhD
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Ventura County Animal Services
600 Aviation Dr.
Camarillo, CA 93010

RE: A dog named "Bruce", described as a male mixed breed dog, possibly of German Shepherd/Great Pyrenees/Mastiff background. Bruce is cataloged under Ventura County Animal Services animal number A842188, and is owned by Claire Birgy.

All my opinions and recommendations herein are rendered to a reasonable degree of scientific certainty and are informed by the type of evidence on which professionals in my field typically rely.

I have been retained to provide professional and expert opinion in the case of Ventura County Animal Services v. Birgy.

Attached to this document is my full CV. However, to summarize my qualifications:

I am a Research Associate at Harvard University in the Department of Human Evolutionary Biology. I am the lead investigator for their Canine Aggression Initiative, under the Canine Brain Project as supervised by Dr. Erin Hecht, PhD.

I have been recognized as an expert on dog behavior, dog aggression, and dog bite investigation in many courts based on my extensive experience and training. I hold a Ph.D. in Veterinary Medical Science from the College of Veterinary Medicine, University of Florida, with specialization in Veterinary Forensics, a Master of Science degree from the College of Veterinary Medicine, University of Florida, with specialization in Veterinary Forensics. I am a Certified Behavior Consultant-Canine-Knowledge Assessed. I have been working with aggressive and dangerous dogs for over fifteen years. I provide training for police departments and animal control agencies regarding dangerous dogs, dog aggression, use of force in canine encounters and the investigation of dog-related incidents. Agencies that I have instructed have included the Florida Animal Control Association, the Alabama Animal Control Association, the National Animal Control Association, the Alberta Animal Control and Bylaw Officers' Association, the London Metropolitan Police and their Status Dog Unit, and I have presented at other public and private conferences. My sworn reports and testimony have been accepted as expert materials in many states, US Federal Courts, and in the Crown Court of the United Kingdom.

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I have received academic training and attended many seminars and training sessions addressing canine behavior and training. These are listed in the attached CV and include, but are not limited to, advanced canine behavior training, obedience instructor training, dog behavior evaluation, Bite Prevention for Law Enforcement Officers, and course work taken through the University of Florida on Forensic Animal Behavior Analysis and other related subjects.

I have trained police departments in the proper and effective use of less- and non-lethal force; recognition of canine body language, behavior, and dog bite risk analysis; methods for the investigation of serious and fatal dog attacks; and methods for safe engagement with domestic dogs across the United States.

During my studies at the College of Veterinary Medicine, University of Florida, I completed coursework in Forensic Animal Behavior Analysis, Animal Crime Scenes/Clandestine Grave Investigation, Bite Mark Analysis, Interpersonal Violence and Animal Abuse, Veterinary Forensic Pathology, Veterinary Forensic Osteology, Animal Law, Scientific and Legal Principles of Evidence, Veterinary Pathology in Practice (Advanced), Forensic Animal Crime Scene Analysis, and related course topics. I have taught canine behavior and assessing canine behavior problems and aggression across the United States, England, Italy, Poland, Australia, Singapore, and Canada.

I served as the acting Chief of Animal Care and Protective Services for the City of Jacksonville, Florida from March through December of 2016. My duties included, but were not limited to, overall management and oversight of Jacksonville Animal Care and Protective Services (ACPS); supervision of all Animal Control Enforcement personnel; oversight and approval of criminal investigations; oversight of the Veterinary Department of ACPS; oversight and supervision of the behavior section of ACPS; sitting as Special Hearing Officer for any and all appeals of Dangerous Dog declarations for the City of Jacksonville; interaction with other City divisions and outside agencies, civil and Law Enforcement; accountability and responsibility for the lawful and proper operation of the agency, and other duties as they arose.

I have been a Certified Animal Control Officer in the State of Florida, and I served as the Animal Control Division Manager for Bay County, Florida, from February 2008 to September 2010. During my tenure at Bay County Animal Control, my duties included daily shelter management, assuring the safe handling and humane treatment of animals in the care of Bay County Animal Control, investigating complaints of animal neglect and cruelty, overseeing and assisting in animal rescue and capture, response to calls to assist police in animal related calls, and performing investigations and making findings of fact regarding the declaration of Dangerous Dogs under Florida Statute. My training and

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experience includes Animal Control operating standards, proper administrative processes, Animal Code Enforcement, and policy development and implementation regarding Dangerous Dog investigation and enforcement. From my experience and training in Animal Control Enforcement and my training duties as a police officer over my twenty-two-year Law Enforcement career I am extremely familiar and capable in the understanding and application of State Statutes, Municipal and County Code, and other legislative and regulatory processes.

Both of my agencies were members of the Florida Animal Control Officers' Association. I taught portions of the Florida Animal Control Association curriculum for the certification of Animal Control Officers including perception of threat and use of force in animal cases. I was a member of the Board of Directors of the Florida Animal Control Association and, as such, was privy to the discussions regarding establishment of Standards regarding the curriculum. I continue to provide training to members of various Animal Control Associations and other agencies. I am a Charter Member of the International Veterinary Forensic Science Association and an Associate Member of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences.

I served as a Police Officer with the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office from 1977 to 1999, completing twenty-two years of active service. During my career, I served as a Patrolman, a Sergeant, and a Lieutenant. My duties as a Patrolman included patrol duties, emergency response, and investigations.

As a Sergeant, my duties involved day to day on-scene supervision of call response, major calls and investigations, allegations of misconduct, critical incident response and accountability, and investigating complaints regarding issues such as the use of force by my officers.

As a Lieutenant, my immediate span of control as a Watch Commander ranged up to four (4) Sergeants and forty (40) officers, plus officers in training, at any one time. I have attached a CV to this report detailing my work experience.

As both a Sergeant and a Lieutenant, I was trained and designated as a Field Training Officer Supervisor and had day to day responsibility to oversee the training of new officers and new supervisors in Department procedures, job tasks, and supervisory issues.

FACTS OF THIS CASE

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Bruce is a dog described as a possible German Shepherd/Great Pyrenees/Mastiff mixed breed who is currently in the custody of Ventura County Animal Services.

Bruce has a documented history of biting humans. On four occasions documented Bruce did bite humans causing significant injuries. These cases have been investigated by Ventura County Animal Services and other local agencies. Bruce has been identified and declared vicious under Ventura County Code 4470.

I have reviewed the series of incidents that has led up to this point in Bruce's life. It does appear that there have been multiple negative encounters, including bites, that involved Bruce. Ventura County has been placed in the unenviable position of having to address the risks that have been presented by Bruce.

Yet we must recognize that improper or inadequate management or training of a large dog such as Bruce can have consequences that are beyond the dog's control. As humane and compassionate caretakers of our animals companions we must recognize that there is an affirmative duty to provide the best care we can, whilst also protecting the public. In many cases, due to the limited availability of secure and competent sanctuary placement, we have no other choice than destruction for those dogs placed in our care.

Bruce's difficulties have been, in my professional opinion, unaddressed and in fact likely exacerbated by human failures. These failures have included inadequate or faulty training, improper and unsafe management, and human failure to mitigate the potential hazard Bruce has presented to the public.

However, at this time there is an additional option beyond simply destroying Bruce. Hanna Thompson, the owner and primary trainer at West Coast Cane Corso Rescue (11950 Shepard Rd., Smartsville, CA 95977) has been contacted and has agreed to take full and permanent custody of Bruce for the purposes of training, managing, and keeping Bruce in safe, secure, human and healthy conditions for the remainder of Bruce's life.

I spoke directly to Ms. Thompson for quite some time. I am convinced of several important factors:

- 1) Ms. Thompson is a professional dog trainer and has years of experience with training, handling, and managing dogs.
- 2) Ms. Thompson has extensive experience with large and potentially challenging dogs as clients and residents of her facility.
- 3) Ms. Thompson is a recognized Rescue Partner with Ventura County Animal Services and has taken into her custody other challenging animals, such as a large domestic dogs

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known as "Jack", and has successfully managed and provided proper care for Jack and other dogs of this type.

4) Ms. Thompson understands and fully agrees that Bruce is to never leave her facility, must never be offered for foster, adoption, or placement, and that her commitment to Bruce's safe care and maintenance is unwavering.

5) Ms. Thompson assures me directly that she has the financial ability and the presence of long-term resources to ensure Bruce's safe care for the rest of his natural life. Ms. Thompson also agrees and understands that if for any reason she or her heirs or survivors cannot, at any time, for any reason, continue to safely care for Bruce he must be immediately returned to Ventura County Animal Services or their representative(s) for immediate destruction.

6) Ms. Thompson is willing to sign and be bound by an agreement detailing the above conditions and other conditions that may be required by Ventura County and its assigns.

7) As a professional Ms. Thompson understands the potential risks a dog like Bruce may present to herself, her staff, or others. It is common in our field that, like me, Ms. Thompson understands the objective risks better than the public and even most trainers. Ms. Thompson agrees that she knowingly accepts those risks, which is common professional practice within our field.

8) Ms. Thompson's facility is over four hundred (400) miles from Ventura County in a remote area of California, and the only substantial population near her is Beale Air Force Base. Beale is known publicly as a secure government facility that houses many significant confidential programs and thereby has extremely competent security in place. Therefore it is extremely unlikely that Bruce would present any reasonable risk to the members of that Service, even if Bruce somehow became at-large. Bruce would not be able to travel back to Ventura County to pose any danger to the Citizens of Ventura County.

CONCLUSION

Considering Ms. Thompson's professional standing, her recognition by Ventura County as a Rescue Partner trusted with challenging dogs, and considering the extensive safety and management capabilities present at her facility, I have no reservations recommending that in my professional opinion Bruce should be transferred forthwith to Ms. Thompson for lifetime care and management.

All the opinions expressed in this report are to the standard of more probable than not, to a reasonable degree of scientific and professional certainty.

I explicitly reserve the right and ability to amend, modify, or expand this opinion based on the introduction of additional evidence or items not in my possession. I also reserve

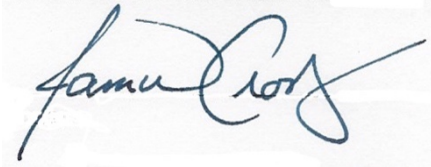
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the right to research and examine other materials not listed above to assist in establishing further opinions as such may become known or necessary.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "James Crosby", is written over a light gray rectangular background.

Dr. James W. Crosby, M.S., PhD.