

# Family's pet burro, 23, suffers chemical attack

Incident under investigation by Placer County Animal Services

By Joyia Emard Gold Country News Service



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Bob McClurg, of Penryn, visits with Betsy, a 23-year-old burro that is recovering from chemical burns to her leg, while her mate, Jesse James, looks on. McClurg surmises someone sprayed the animal with a caustic liquid during the night of July 12.

Placer County Animal Services is investigating an attack on a Penryn burro that suffered chemical burns.

Betsy, a 23-year-old burro, is owned by Shannon and Bob McClurg, of Penryn, and has been treated by Loomis Basin Equine Medical Center for chemical burns to one of its legs.

"She's been our pet for 22 years. She follows us around like a dog," Shannon McClurg said.

According to Anita Yoder, spokesperson for Placer County Animal Services, the department was notified on July 13 about the incident.

Bob McClurg said Betsy is recovering and has required antibiotics and twice-daily salve applications. He said the caustic chemicals burned Betsy's hair off and burned through two layers of skin from her lower shoulder to her hoof.

"She's not out of the woods yet. Over the next two weeks we have to watch for infection and make sure the wound heals properly," Bob McClurg said.

"You just can't figure in this day and age where people are coming from," Bob McClurg added. "I have no words for the person who could do this."

The McClurgs surmise someone came up to the fence along their 5-acre property during the night and sprayed chemicals on the burro.

"People need to know this person is out there," Shannon McClurg said. "You need to be more watchful. Someone is out there who could bring harm to our animals and possibly our kids."

"I think they're sick," Shannon McClurg said. "They have no compassion, no regard for life."

The McClurgs said this is the second time Betsy has been treated for chemical burns. Bob McClurg said five years ago Betsy suffered what were deemed acid burns to her shoulder. She was treated by Loomis Basin veterinarians and the incident was investigated by Animal Services with no results.

Bob McClurg said Betsy's medical bills will probably be more than \$1,000 and it will take a year or more before the burro returns to normal.

Shannon McClurg said they adopted Betsy from the Bureau of Land Management. The burro had been captured as a baby in the San Gabriel Mountains of Southern California and spent her first year of life at Disneyland living in the petting zoo at the old Frontierland.

Bob McClurg said Betsy was too rambunctious and was returned to the Bureau. The couple adopted a male burro, named Jesse James, a few years later. He said the incident has affected both animals.

"They're very close. She was quite unhappy and depressed. You could tell the wound was bothering her a lot. Jesse was very upset, too," Bob McClurg said.

The couple has asked that anyone with information contact Steve McNally with Animal Services at (530) 886-5541.