



Daisy Moore tends to her injured cockapoo, Brandi, who was mauled by a pit bull during a walk in their Grand Island neighborhood in early September. Daisy is the second cockapoo Moore has owned that was attacked by a pit bull. (Derek Gee/Buffalo News)

## Second pit bull attack magnifies Grand Island woman's concerns about the breed

By [Dan Herbeck](#) | Published September 9, 2017 | Updated September 9, 2017

A neighbor's pit bull attacked Daisy Moore's cockapoo two years ago near her Grand Island home, and the dog suffered serious injuries. Her dog, little Maggie, recovered after expensive treatment by a veterinarian.

But Maggie died a few months later of cancer.

So Moore, a 76-year-old widow and retiree, got another cockapoo, this one named Brandi. Once again, a neighbor's pit bull – a different one – attacked Brandi. This dog, too, is recovering.

Moore is having a hard time accepting that two of her beloved pets have been attacked and mauled by pit bulls in the same neighborhood, in very similar situations.

"Both of these incidents, were very upsetting to me ... I would say traumatic," Moore said. "Younger people may not understand, but when you get older and you live by yourself, and you have a pet, that pet becomes part of your family. What hurts them hurts you, too."

The latest attack was like *déjà vu*, Moore said.

"My two cockapoos are almost identical to each other," she said. "Both were attacked on the same street, a couple of blocks from each other. You just can't believe all of this is happening to you again."

Brandi was attacked Sept. 1 while a close friend and neighbor, Luigi "Louie" D'Orazio, 88, was taking the cockapoo for a morning walk on Wallace Road, Moore said.

"Louie was walking Brandi on the sidewalk, and a man across the street was walking two pit bulls – an adult pit bull wearing a muzzle, and a pit bull puppy that was eight months old," Moore said. "The puppy got away from the man and ran across the street and went right for Brandi's throat. ... The dog's owner came running over and pulled his pit bull away, but the damage had already been done."

The pit bull's owner was extremely apologetic and immediately agreed to pay for the veterinary care bill – for \$539 – that Brandi received for wounds suffered in the attack, Moore said.

She said the pit bull's owner has since told her that the puppy has been sent to live with a family in a rural area of the Southern Tier, and that the animal will not return to Grand Island.

"The owner is a very nice man, and he has been very decent about the whole thing," Moore said. "But my very strong feeling is that people should not own pit bulldogs or other powerful dogs if they can't keep them under control."



Luigi D'Orazio walks his friend Daisy Moore's dog, Brandi, on Huth Road in Grand Island on Sept. 8. He was walking the cockapoo when she was mauled by a pit bull in their neighborhood a week earlier. (Derek Gee/Buffalo News)

D'Orazio also was the dog walker on the same road in August 2015 when a pit bull inside a nearby home pushed its way through a window screen, ran outside and attacked the smaller dog. In that incident, a younger man who lives in the neighborhood came to D'Orazio's aid and was able to fight off the pit bull.

Maggie lost two ribs, suffered deep bite wounds that required numerous stitches, and had to stay in the vet's clinic for 10 days. Her care cost Moore just under \$2,900.

A Grand Island town judge allowed the pit bull's owner – a different owner than the one involved in the attack this month – to keep the dog, but the judge required him to reimburse Moore for the veterinary bill.

"He did finally pay me what he owed me," Moore said.

Maggie died of cancer in January 2016, five months after she was attacked, and then Moore got Brandi. Now, the latest attack.

"Physically, it looks like Brandi will be OK," Moore said. "She had six bite marks on her chest and throat. She had to get stitches. The vet tells me she is going to be OK, but she's really not herself. She just sits in the window all day. She's been very lethargic since she was attacked, but when a cat walked by the house today, she barked like crazy. For a few minutes, she was like her old self."

She said the latest incident made her fearful about the safety of children and other small dogs in the neighborhood. She reported the incident to the Erie County Sheriff's Office and the Grand Island Animal Control office. She said she will be talking to an animal control officer again within the next few days.

Moore said she is really not looking for any punishment of the pit bull's owner, and she declined to name him.

"He has been so nice about the whole thing, and he's sent the dog down to the Southern Tier," she said. "I'm not saying all pit bulls are bad. I think it depends on their breeding and the environment they are raised in. I just have very strong feelings that people who own these big, aggressive dogs need to control them. If they can't control them, they shouldn't own them."

A spokesman for the Erie County Sheriff's Office said a deputy interviewed Moore and others about the incident and turned the case over to the town of Grand Island's animal control officer. The town office said the investigation is continuing.

In recent years, there has been a growing controversy – both locally and nationally – regarding aggressive attacks by some pit bulls.

A national organization called DogsBite.org calls the pit bull the most dangerous and lethal of all dog breed and varieties. The organization said pit bulls were responsible for 65 percent of all the fatal dog attacks against humans in the United States in the years 2005 through 2016. Dogs killed 392 Americans during that period, and 254 of those attacks involved pit bulls, the organization says.

More than 900 communities in the United States have adopted laws declaring pit bulls “dangerous” or “vicious” animals and putting restrictions on ownership of the dogs. Some cities, including Miami, Fla.; Denver, Colo. and Pawtucket, R.I., have banned pit bull ownership altogether.

Support organizations such as the National Pit Bull Foundation say the vast majority of pit bulls are sweet, loyal and harmless pets. The foundation says the pit bull gets unfair bad publicity, and it denies that the animals are aggressive by nature. The group also maintains that some pit bulls have problems caused by abusive or inattentive owners.

"We do not view pit bulls as being inherently dangerous or vicious," said Gina Browning, spokeswoman for the Erie County SPCA. "Not to minimize in any way what happened to this woman and her dogs, but we hear many more of the wonderful, happy stories about pit bulls and their families. At the same time, we're not going to say that every pit bull terrier is right for every family."

Any person who owns any powerfully built dog needs to make sure they can control their dog, Browning said. They need to watch for any kind of "trigger" that causes their dog – whether a pit bull or any other variety – to become aggressive.

"If your dog shows aggressive behavior toward other dogs or people, you need to contact a professional dog handler and find out what it is that stresses or triggers your dog," Browning said. "These situations need to be addressed early, while the dog is a puppy."