



Pitbull attacked with machete in domestic dispute prepares for a new life

While walking his dogs on the eve of Thanksgiving, KodiakCare Co-Founder Glenn Shapiro received an urgent call for help. An executive at the University of Illinois' Veterinary Teaching Hospital passed along a heartbreaking story.

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During an incident of domestic violence, an angry man picked up a machete and attacked the family dog. A single blow delivered to the hindquarters had left a gaping wound, fractured the pelvis and caused a massive loss of blood.

After police intervened, the female owner surrendered the dog permanently, and when the stricken pup arrived in a squad car at the veterinary hospital, staff worked to stop the bleeding and control the pain. The youthful Pitbull, dubbed Hambone by the emergency-room nurses, had a loving attitude despite his ordeal, wagging his tail even as blood sprayed from it, licking and cuddling as staffers took turns comforting him.

But the pup's future was bleak. He had no owner and local animal control had no funds for repairing the severe damage he suffered. His situation went outside the normal criteria for KodiakCare grants. Humane euthanasia was the likely option, and Dr. Julia Whittington, director of the hospital, said she was preparing to make the sad decision when, after an emotional phone call to Shapiro, KodiakCare came to Hambone's rescue after all.

"At first, my tears were just the outrage and sadness to think someone could do this to a dog, to a member of their family who trusts them," Shapiro recalled. "But then it shifted to being so glad we created this organization, so that we can help."

With KodiakCare's pledge of funding, Hambone's vet team swung into action, providing a transfusion, medication, surgical wound repair and a drainage tube. "He was a tough guy," said Dr. Monica Chen, who worked on Hambone. Despite the severity of the wound, she said, "He had a good prognosis."

Sure enough, Hambone recovered swiftly. The drainage tube was removed, and Hambone went to recuperate at a temporary foster home that animal control arranged for him, "acting like nothing happened," as Chen put it. He already has a tentative adoption teed up for after he's fully recovered.

Whittington said she was relieved she didn't have to make the decision to euthanize him. "It was down to the wire," she said. "I'm the one who has to be the bearer of bad news. It is truly traumatic. I was so grateful we didn't have to do that to Hambone. The fact we have access to [KodiakCare] is such a tremendous gift."

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The woman involved in the incident also reportedly escaped her dangerous domestic situation. It was not the first time that KodiakCare’s role in saving dogs has helped their human owners as well. “We are no doubt making only a small dent in the overall issue, but it is a dent nonetheless,” said Shapiro. “Each of the 600 dogs we have saved is a life that continued, and impacted other lives along the way.”



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