

## It's A Dog-Eat-Dog World

**M**y wife was never concerned about walking around the neighborhood after dark with our 135-pound male Rottweiler. No two-legged predator would dare go near her. The problem, however, was the four-legged predators. On two separate walks our

dog was attacked by unleashed dogs. The third attack came on my watch.

One evening as I neared a dilapidated Volkswagen bus, our dog became very alert. Without warning, two pit bulls emerged from behind the bus and attacked in unison. I started yelling for the owner (the interior light of the bus was on) and out came a retro 1960s hippie who ran over and literally pulled his dogs off our dog's neck. I tried to move to a position where I could read the license plate, but the owner threatened to release the dogs. I got out of there fast, called the police, but by the time they investigated, the owner was long gone.

The vet bills from these three attacks totaled a whopping \$350. I vowed never again and put my concealed weapons permit to use. I bought a fanny pack for a can of pepper spray and my S&W Centennial.

The next series of attacks came soon afterwards. The lead dog of a pack of two large strays was instantly neutralized with a shot of spray. Next, a leashed Irish Setter got away from its elderly owner. Finally, a Boxer was stopped cold. Several days later I walked by the house of the owner who came out to complain that I had maced his Boxer through the back fence. After calming him down I explained what happened and he realized his son had

made up the story to cover his tracks for allowing the dog to run free.

Our dog has since gone to doggie heaven and we now have another. Other dogs instantly sense that she is timid and they just want to smell, not attack. Regardless, I would not dream of going for a walk without my trusty S&W and pepper spray.

Lessons learned—people lie. If that kid had more cleverly covered his tracks by calling the police, I may have had a lot of explaining to do. If you suspect trouble, get your call in first. Shooting a dog in front of the owner is both a tragedy and risky—animal cruelty, discharging a firearm within the city limits, reckless endangerment; ricochets, brandishing, etc. It is your word against the owner, and what do you do if the owner becomes enraged when you shoot their dog? Shoot them too?

That's exactly what happened recently in Arizona. The incident will, as a minimum, cost the shooter thousands in legal fees as he awaits the grand jury's decision. TS from Texas (Man's Best Friend's Best Friend, Aug04 CH) was proud that he prevented injury to his dog by shooting a stray, but his actions were totally unnecessary and under a slightly different set of circumstances, he could be in jail now.—**RM, AZ** ●