

MEDIATE THIS !

THE LONELY, BARKING DOGS AND THE DISRUPTED WORKSPACE

BY STEVEN P. DINKIN

Dear Mediator:

For the past six months, I have dealt with my neighbor's dogs barking all day long. I work from home and need to be able to focus. I have confronted my neighbor about this problem; he is apologetic, but has taken no action. I don't want to use legal threats to solve this, but I feel like I don't have many options. Please help!

Exhausted in North Park

Dear Exhausted:

This may be a time when we can see that man's best friend can turn into man's worst annoyance. While many of us are perfectly happy with the presence of a furry companion, we certainly don't need them to follow us to work every day, especially when the canine in focus is not ours.

Barking dogs are, in fact, a very common source of contention between neighbors, given that more than 60 million households in the U.S. are proud dog owners. Americans spent \$8 billion last year in the pet boarding

and grooming industry, precisely so issues like this could be avoided.

When exploring the legal side of this issue, we come to San Diego Municipal Code Section 59.5.0502, which states that, "The noise from any such animal or animals that disturbs two or more residents residing in separate residences adjacent to any part of the property on which the subject animal or animals are kept or maintained...shall be evidence of a violation of this section."

Code enforcement personnel can only take action when two or more neighbors take issue with the barking. Even if that criteria is met, an administrative fine is only levied in the most extreme cases.

While the option to embark on a legal journey is always available, the ability to maintain a favorable relationship with your neighbor can quickly slip through your grasp if a dispute is handled this way.

Your neighbor's apologetic disposition during your first conversation is a hopeful sign that he would



GETTY IMAGES

This week's problem involves a person who works from home and suffers from hearing the neighbor's dogs bark throughout the day.

like to work with you. It may serve you well to speak to your neighbor again. In our mediation training, we emphasize active listening and acknowledging the impact that an issue has on the affected person. Your neighbor may be aware that

his dogs' barking all day is annoying, but he may not be aware that you work from home or that your work is suffering because of his beloved pets.

Often, dogs bark out of boredom, and, in turn, hard work indoors can be broken

up with a brisk walk outside. A possible solution could be for you to offer to walk the dogs during a break from work -- the dogs are entertained and you get a bit of exercise. There are also a wide range of dog-walking services available

that allow people to schedule walks for their pets. If his dogs are barking because they can hear or see you, try blocking their vision using curtains or closing the window to prevent noise from escaping.

James Cromwell, the famous actor who once played a stoic man won over by the charm of a pet pig named Babe, once said, "Pets are humanizing. They remind us we have an obligation and responsibility to preserve and nurture and care for all life." Just as with our pets, we all have the responsibility of nurturing and preserving the societal civility that allows conflicts and disagreements to come to a peaceful resolution.

Steven P. Dinkin is a professional mediator who has served as president of the San Diego-based National Conflict Resolution Center since 2003. Do you have a conflict that needs a resolution? Share your story with The Mediator via email at mediatethis@ncrconline.com or as an online submission by visiting www.ncrconline.com/MediateThis. All submissions will be kept anonymous.

NOTEBOOKS

From Union-Tribune reporting staff

OUTDOORS: ERNIE COWAN

Know poison oak, avoid misery

San Diego County trails can lead the nature lover to breathtaking places that will provide a lifetime of memories, or if you are not careful, about three weeks of misery.

This dawned on me last week while wandering about enjoying the arrival of spring wildflowers and noticing a fellow photographer pushing into a thicket of bright green foliage.

"Excuse me, but you might want to be a bit careful. That's poison oak," I told the photographer.

As the name implies, poison oak is a widely distributed native plant in the western United States that can turn a wonderful day outside into a very unpleasant experience.

In San Diego the pesky plant can be found from sea level to our highest mountains in just about any habitat, including chaparral, forests, oak woodlands and riparian thickets.

Exposure of bare skin to poison oak can result in severe itching, rash and a generally miserable period of about three to five weeks.

To make matters even worse, the contact can happen days later by handling clothing that was exposed or petting that furry companion who was dashing about in the pretty green shrubs that turned out to be poison oak.

According to Dr. Ghazala Sharieff, an emergency room physician at Scripps Health in San Diego, about 80 percent of humans have a reaction to the sap found in poison oak. Reactions can vary from mild to severe.

The oily sap is known as urushiol, and it can create a rash within a few hours of exposure or as long as three to five days later. Even dead plants or fallen leaves contain the oil.

People who enjoy outdoor activity in San Diego should understand several things when it comes to poison oak. That education would include identification, how to avoid or minimize exposure and treatment if you are exposed.

One key to identification is to remember, "leaves of three, let it be."

The stems of the plant are bare in the winter but begin to sprout clusters of leaves grouped in threes in the spring. Spring leaves are shiny and generally bright green and will produce tiny greenish-white flowers where leaves attach to the stem.

As summer temperatures warm, poison



Poison oak warning to avoid the awful itch: Leaves of three, let it be.

oak leaves will change to orange and red and drop off as winter approaches.

If you are hiking off trail or in areas particularly thick with poison oak, you should avoid having bare skin. Wear long pants and long-sleeve shirts, gloves and gaiters to minimize skin contact.

Keep pets under control and consider bathing them after an outdoor adventure. While they will not be affected by poison oak, they can carry the urushiol sap.

Pam Medhurst is the leader of the Sheriff's Search and Rescue canine unit and must deal with search dogs that are frequently working in thick stands of poison oak.

"We carry a decon kit of Dawn detergent in a spray bottle that we spray on the dogs and then rinse off," Medhurst said. "When we come back, we don't pet the dogs."

Search team members will also change into clean clothing when returning and seal their field gear in plastic bags until it can be washed. Team members frequently use a product known as Tecnu, an outdoor skin cleanser specifically designed for poison oak.

If you are exposed, Dr. Sharieff advises to immediately wash the affected area with large amounts of water for at least 15 to 30 minutes to remove the urushiol sap.

Over-the-counter corticosteroid creams and calamine lotion can help, along with oral antihistamines and cool, wet compresses several times a day.

Dr. Sharieff said a doctor should be seen if there is difficulty in breathing, facial or tongue swelling or signs of infection, spreading redness or fever.

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THE READERS' REPRESENTATIVE: ADRIAN VORE

Almanac will highlight county history

Readers next month will see the third installment of the popular Community Almanac.

The almanac, scheduled to appear June 30, presents data and historical facts on the county's cities and communities.

The almanac features a map of each city or community, a photo, and snippets that include how the areas acquired their names and extensive data on population, demographics, median household income and median home price.

The county has more than 300 cities and communities, so not every one can make it into the almanac. But each year the almanac, produced by the newsroom, grows to include more.

The first year, 2017, the almanac was 146 pages and featured 75 cities and communities.

In 2018 it was 156 pages and featured 102 cities and communities. This year Encanto and Skyline/Paradise Hills will be added.

It also will grow by eight pages — because the 2019 almanac will highlight the history of the region through the use of the U-T's extensive archives.

The historical hook is that 2019 marks the 250th anniversary of the development of San Diego and California.

"Although this area has been Kumeyaay



The 2018 almanac

territory for thousands of years, the city of San Diego we know today began on July 16, 1769, with the dedication of Mission San Diego de Alcalá by Spanish friars," said U-T archivist and researcher Merrie Monteagudo, who pored through file after file of U-T photos from the paper's 151 years. "The 250th commemoration gives us a chance to look back at some of the milestones of the city's growth and development."

The almanac will begin with an essay from recently retired and longtime U-T reporter Roger Showley, a third-generation San Diegan.

Monteagudo said historical tidbits are sprinkled throughout the pages, including vintage San Diego photos. Also significant historical sites will be highlighted on maps for each community.

The amount of material is daunting.

"Two-hundred and fifty years is a lot of history to cover," said Monteagudo. "San Diego existed a good 100 years before photography was invented, but even so there were a lot of images to choose from. It's been difficult to select photos from around the county that will give readers clear sense of time and place."

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U-T ARCHIVES

The Alpine Store housed the post office in the small town in 1952.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

40 YEARS AGO, AMERICA'S DEADLIEST PLANE CRASH KILLED 273 PEOPLE

American Airlines Flight 191 crashed after takeoff from O'Hare International Airport in Chicago on May 25, 1979, killing all 271 aboard, including seven San Diego-based flight attendants. (The death toll was revised after the initial report; the crash killed two others on the ground.) It occurred eight months after the Pacific Southwest Airlines Flight 182 crash in North Park. Before Chicago, the PSA crash had been the nation's deadliest air disaster.

From The San Diego Union, Saturday, May 26, 1979:

270 ON L.A.-BOUND JET DIE IN CHICAGO CRASH

Airline's Toll Highest In U.S.

7 in Crew, Passenger From Area

By Mike Klein, Special to The San Diego Union

CHICAGO — An American Airlines DC-10 jumbo jetliner loaded with Memorial Day weekend travelers rose a few hundred feet above the ground here yesterday, then plunged to the earth and exploded, killing all 270 persons aboard.

It was the nation's worst domestic crash in history. Seven flight attendants from San Diego died.

"It looked like an atomic explosion," said one shocked witness. "Nobody had a chance," said another.

Yesterday's mid-afternoon disaster just

outside the world's busiest airport, O'Hare International, came exactly eight months after 144 persons died when a Pacific Southwest Airlines jetliner crashed while on approach to San Diego's Lindbergh Field. That crash had been the nation's worst air disaster until yesterday.

Robert Anderson, a passing motorist, said of yesterday's crash, "I looked up and I could see that a plane was banking. It was almost vertical and I almost started to scream because I knew it would not come out of it. It continued almost upside down. As it impacted, flames shot out to where I thought my face was going to be singed."



Initial reports that the downed jetliner was a cargo plane proved false within a very few minutes as the Federal Aviation Administration said a commercial jetliner was down, and American Airlines confirmed that one of its planes had crashed.

American identified the seven San Diego-based flight attendants as Linda L. Bundens, Paula M. Burns, James T. DeHart, Michael W. Schassburger, Nancy T. Sullivan, Sally Jo Titterington and Carmen Fowler.

The only San Diego passenger identified by the airline last night was Robert Morrow Gardner, 33, of the Del Cerro area. Airline officials warned, however, that the toll of San Diegans could grow as more identities are confirmed.

Flight attendants Linda Prince of Canyon Lake, Calif., and Katherine Heibert and Carol M. Ohm, of Los Angeles, also died. Captain Walter H. Lux, was based in

Phoenix. First officer James R. Dillard and flight engineer Alfred F. Udovich were both based in Chicago. Several deceased also were from Chicago.

Coroners from the Cook County Medical Examiner's Office prepared to work all night at the crash site in northwest suburban Elk Grove Village. Bodies were taken to a temporary morgue inside an American Airlines hangar at O'Hare. Initial plans to establish another morgue at a nearby high school were canceled.

At least three persons on the ground were injured by flying debris and fire, but none was known to be dead late Friday night. One man was admitted to the Loyola University hospital burn unit with third degree burns. Two others were admitted to suburban hospitals.

As midnight approached, crash site workers were saying it make take them two weeks to sort through the debris. They were driving stakes into the blackened ground, each one marking the site of a yellow body bag.

A stunned and shaken Chicago Mayor Jane M. Byrne raced with a police escort from her City Hall office to the crash site, about 20 miles away.

"I didn't expect when I left that it would be this bad," said Byrne, whose first husband died 20 years ago in an airplane crash. "I thought there would be some survivors. I lived through it once myself. It's a terribly empty, lonely, final thing."

HISTORICAL PHOTOS AND ARTICLES FROM THE SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE ARCHIVES ARE COMPILED BY MERRIE MONTEAGUDO. SEARCH THE U-T HISTORIC ARCHIVES AT NEWSLIBRARY.COM/SITES/SDUB.