

Arlington Citizen



Baseball: Wayne tops Arlington in Eagles' opener 9

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Family pleads case for keeping pit bull

Breed banned under village ordinance

BY TERESA HOFFMAN
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Saying her dog is not mean and, in fact, "is really a baby," an Arlington woman and her family appeared before the Village Board of Trustees on Monday asking that he be able to return home.

The village ordinance states that it is unlawful for residents to keep, shelter or harbor any animal exhibiting pit bull or wolf-hybrid characteristics.

Autumn Vitamvas believes the pit bull ban is unfair. She doesn't believe every pit bull is dangerous.

"It's not the breed, it's the dog, it's the owner," she said. "I feel like we should be given a fair

chance to have our dog."

Vitamvas said there are other breeds of dog that are just as dangerous. She said she has been attacked by a chihuahua in town.

"If we want to get down to technicalities, little dogs are very mean," she said. "I have a little dog, she's not mean, but she's very mouthy and very protective. Dogs are meant to protect their families."

She also noted that she's had problems with yellow labs and rottweilers in the past as well.

Vitamvas offered suggestions for rules she believes would allow pit bulls to remain in the village and keep people safe. They included proper fencing, use of a proper harness and a rule that they be accompanied by owners

at all times and, though not her favorite idea, having the owner install a cable that allows the dog to run outside in a yard without supervision.

"I'm sure there are people out there who would be willing to do any of these stipulations to have their loved one, which at this time, my pit bull, my son's pit bull, is."

In addition to her children being around her pit bull, Vitamvas said her young grandson also plays with him.

"There's not a mean bone in his body," she said.

The family previously told officials that the dog is licensed as an emotional support animal.

"If it were a service animal, it would be different thing," Chair-

man Paul Krause said. "A therapy dog, we have been told by our lawyer that we don't have to allow because (the breed) is against our ordinance."

Vitamvas said she'd just like to see the board do more research on pit bulls.

"(The website) pitbull.org tells you all the statistics," she said. "A lot of the hype is media induced and wrongful reporting."

Krause said every time this issue has come before the board, he looks at the statistics from the top websites and they all say the same.

"By far and away, pit bulls are the most dangerous dogs when it comes to fatalities," he said. "They are always in the top three with rottweilers and dobermans."

The research Krause looked at shows the last 10 years.

Krause said the village has the ordinance for a reason, including an incident last year where a young child was injured and needed stitches. Under village ordinance, anytime a dog bites someone, no matter what the breed, it is banned from the village.

"We all understand that family pets can feel just like a family member for people and nobody wants to break up a family, but these are our rules, these are our laws," he said.

He also understands that that pit bull owners see it as unfair.

SEE BAN, 16

St. Paul's hosts Easter Family Fun Day



Payton and Cohen Hunter pose while grandmother, Mary Hunter, takes a picture during St. Paul's Easter Festivities.

STAFF REPORTS

Fun, games and even some small animals greeted guests at the Easter Family Fun Day on Sunday at St. Paul's Lutheran Church north of Arlington.

This was the fifth year for the celebration, which included a chance for visitors to pet a bunny and baby chicks.

There were also games, like bean bag toss and Plinko, and tables filled with the materials to make a sun catcher, bracelets or necklaces.

Children could also have their photos taken underneath a "Happy Easter" sign and then decorate a picture frame to display it.



Kaleb Royuk and mother, Deanna, hold Kaleb's decorated frame that has his picture in it.

PHOTOS BY JOE BURNS | CITIZEN

County Road 30 closure catches residents off guard

BY TERESA HOFFMAN
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Tom Vogt has driven the curved road that connects County Roads 15 and 30 nearly every day of his life.

So, when he saw a road closed sign last fall, he was taken aback because notification was not given to people in the area.

"I guess I was surprised that we hadn't heard anything about it," said Vogt, who lives east of the former missile base.

The road was built for the base, Washington County Highway Superintendent Bill Hansel said.

"The trucks weren't able to make the sharp turn," Hansel said.

But with the base long closed and concerns about safety, Hansel made the decision to permanently close the two-way curve.

His biggest concern is traffic coming off of CR 30, going south on CR 15.

"As you come from the east, and want to go south, you come to that curve and at the stop sign, you have to look

over your right shoulder, basically through the back window of your vehicle to see if anything is coming south on CR15," Hansel said. "It's just a hazard because you can't pull up parallel to look north."

John O'Dell, who owns the former missile base property, called the closing "a bunch of nonsense," noting that people who drive in that area know they have to turn their car better to see when they come to the stop sign.

"I take my truck out there and have had no problems," he said.

Both O'Dell and Vogt don't see the safety concern.

"I've basically lived here all my life and I don't know if there have been any accidents," Vogt said. "I've never had any issues and I drive it every day."

Hansel understands there haven't been any accidents and he wants to keep it that way.

"If that's one accident I can prevent and save a

SEE ROAD, 16



Signs mark the closure of a curve that connects county roads 15 and 30. Neighbors say the road has been closed since last fall.

TERESA HOFFMAN | CITIZEN

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