



NEWS

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Montco Public Health Officials Find Good Samaritans; They Are Safe From Rabies

Norristown, PA (February 7, 2016) – Officials at the Montgomery County Health Department have identified and interviewed the two men who came to the aid of a young girl who was being attacked by a rabid raccoon Thursday in Lower Merion, and both men have assured the officials they did not come in contact with the animal’s saliva, which makes them safe from contracting rabies.

It was originally believed that one man had come to the aid of the young girl, but it was later determined that two friends, James Myers and Rick Turnbull, both of Northeast Philadelphia, saw the young girl in distress and came to her assistance.

“Both men assured us they had not come in contact with the raccoon’s saliva,” said Julie Paoline, director of the Montgomery County Health Department’s Division of Communicable Disease Control. “One apparently stood on the animal’s tail while the other beat the raccoon with a hockey stick until it let go of the girl’s leg.”

The Good Samaritans came to the aid of the young girl when she was walking home from school on Thursday, February 4th at approximately 4:00pm through a wooded area on the Bridlewild Trail near Dodds Lane in Gladwyne. After coming to her aid, the men drove the girl home to her parents, but left before anyone found out their identities.

The raccoon was later captured by the Lower Merion Animal Control Officer and submitted for rabies testing. When rabies was confirmed, the Montgomery County Health Department issued a press release and used social media to try to locate the men.

“We would like to sincerely thank the media for getting the news out and those who helped spread the information on social media,” said Commissioner Valerie Arkoosh, who also serves as the Interim Medical Director of the Montgomery County Health Department.

Myers called the newsroom of Channel 29 Saturday night, and a newsroom staffer, in turn, contacted county officials. They spoke to Myers immediately, but did not make contact with Turnbull until late Sunday morning.

NOTE: Frank Custer, Montgomery County Director of Communications, can be reached at 215-527-5928.