

# Dad, son attacked by pit bull mix

By [Long Hwa-shu Hlong@scn1.com](mailto:Long Hwa-shu Hlong@scn1.com)

ZION — In the last 20 years, dog attacks have killed 238 Americans. Shane Colbert was afraid he and his son might be added to the list.

Colbert was walking home Sunday afternoon with his 6-year-old son from the Zion-Benton Public Library when they were attacked by a pit bull mix.

The dog, he said, climbed out of a hole in a wooden fence in an alley in the 2400 block of Gilead Avenue and jumped at them.

Colbert, who underwent surgery a week ago for a broken left wrist, defended the boy with his still-mending left arm.

"I was trying to defend my son with my left arm (that) I was not supposed to use. Otherwise, he would have been bitten," he said.

Colbert's intercession was fortuitous.

Children, according to a 2000 federal study by the Centers for Disease Control and Accident Prevention, are the most vulnerable victims in dog attacks. Those under the age of 14 account for 42 percent of dog bite injuries. The highest rate of injuries was to children between the ages of 5 and 9.

"I got seven screws there with a pin hanging out," Colbert said of the wrist surgery.

Colbert was treated at Vista East Medical Center in Waukegan for scratches on his right arm. There were no injuries on his left arm. His son, Kyle, was unharmed.

"He was crying and didn't know what to do," the father said of his frightened son.

He said they have walked in the alley many times on their way to the library and back. They were aware of the dog behind the fence, but there was no hole there before.

"They should have patched the hole up. It could happen to anybody. There are kids walking in the alley," he said.

Colbert was bitter that the owners of the dog offered no aid after the incident.

"I was sitting on the ground. The owner walked by and didn't give me any help," he said.

Len Hackl, Lake County animal control officer, said the owners have agreed to take the dog to a veterinarian of their choice for a rabies test, which, he said, "is perfectly acceptable." He said they have to report the findings.

According to Hackl, the nearly two-year-old muscular dog is "under home confinement."

"It had a rabies shot. If it didn't have the shot, it would have to be impounded for 10 days for tests and observation," he said.

08/25/06