



## KEEP THOSE BARKING DOGS QUIET!

By Jan Lorimer, Editor

My “Poopetrators” article has brought a rash of complaints from people being tortured by other people who allow their dogs to bark on and on and on!

Not everyone who owns a pet is rude, selfish, and thoughtless. This article is aimed at the few who are – the people who will NOT for whatever reason quiet their barking dogs.

First, excessive noise from pets is against the law! It even states this is our CC&Rs, so there is NO reason why you law-breaking pet owners don't know this. Clearly, you just don't care, making you rude and selfish! Oh, did I just say that? Well, I'm saying it again, just for emphasis.

Just to define our terms, a noisy animal disturbs “the public peace, quiet or comfort of the neighboring inhabitants,” to quote from the County Ordinance. Unfortunately, it's the person who makes the complaint who has to provide proof of this.

**Jim Ellis**, our Deed Adherence Officer, indicated at the Annual Meeting that complaints about barking dogs are high on the list of calls he receives from members.

So, if you are having a problem with a neighbor's barking dog, here's what you can do:

First, you should probably try talking to your neighbor to let him or her know how annoyed you are. Be civil! You can catch more flies (or quiet more barking dogs) with honey than with vinegar.

If the dog's owner doesn't respond well, call **Jim Ellis** at **625-3199**. Jim will most likely pay a visit to the offending neighbor and have one of his quiet little chats.

If the dog continues to be a noise nuisance, call Pima Animal Care Enforcement (sometimes called Animal Control) at 243-5900. They will notify both you and the animal owner, in writing, warning the owner that the problem must be resolved in 7 – 10 days.

If that does not resolve the problem, the person making the complaint will have to contact a **Noise Complaint Specialist** at **243-5910** to ask for further investigation. At that time, the person making the complaint and the animal owner will be offered mediation, but it is not required.

If the owner and the complainant (person making the complaint) accept mediation, the mediator will most likely suggest ways for the animal owner to quiet his/her pet. One suggested method is using electronic “shock” collars. This has its detractors and its defenders, and pet owners may decide to look into other forms of training to quiet a noisy pet.

However, if mediation is either declined or is not successful, the complainant can ask for a **noise log** to record animal noise incidents. It is up to the person who made the complaint to fill out the log. So the person who is being tortured by the barking dog probably feels as if he or she is really being punished at this point!

However, citations can and will be issued if:

- the person making the complaint turns in a completed animal noise log **OR**
- complaints are made from two or more non-related neighbors who live in separate neighboring properties and who are willing to sign a statement and testify in court that the noise is occurring **OR**
- the enforcement officer hears any animal from the same property make any sounds (such as barking, meowing, squawking, etc.) continuously for 15 minutes.

If the animal owner is given a citation for violating the Noise Law, he/she will have to appear before a Judge or Hearing Officer. The person making the complaint must also appear at any hearing that is held. Fines for the animal owner range from \$50 to \$2,500 per offense, depending on the jurisdiction.

In the case of anonymous complaints, Animal Control will contact only the animal owner. If a second anonymous complaint is received, an enforcement officer is sent to interview the owner and the neighbors, and to monitor for animal noise. If the evidence supports a violation, a citation is issued.

The person making the complaint may also wish to pursue civil action on his/her own.

Keep this in mind! Green Valley Fairways is an age-restricted community for a reason. People who move here really want a good measure of peace and quiet. So we ask residents to keep noise levels down. And that includes controlling noisy pets!

**For a KGUN report on this and a possible new county ordinance go to.....**

**<http://www.kgun9.com/Global/story.asp?S=12278741>**