

## **Allentown couple sue over dog attack that left woman with serious injuries**

*Lehigh Valley Express Times*

Two Allentown residents are suing their neighbors over a March 2012 dog attack that left one of them with serious injuries, according to a Lehigh County lawsuit filed Thursday.

Brenda L. Fernandez de Cordova was leash-walking a friend's Wheaten Terrier on March 20, 2012, on East Clair Street in Allentown when an American Bulldog-pit bull mix attacked both of them, the suit says.

Fernandez de Cordova and her husband, Julio Fernandez de Cordova, both of the 500 block of North Fenwick Street, are suing the bulldog-pit bull mix's owners, Jamil and Ibtissan Hanna, for damages in excess of \$50,000.

The attack resulted in summary charges against Jamil Hanna and District Judge Michael D'Amore on Nov. 30 found him guilty of harboring a dangerous dog and confinement of dogs, court records say.

The suit, filed by attorney Thomas Newell, says the Hannas, of the 700 block of East Liberty Street in Allentown, were negligent and careless in their failure to properly restrain and supervise the dog, which has a history of aggressive behavior.

Reached by phone this afternoon, Ibtissan Hanna said the Fernandez de Cordovas' accusations are false, but declined further comment until after she spoke with husband Jamil Hanna, who was not home.

The bulldog-pit bull mix was running loose and unsupervised when it bit the terrier's rear end and then its neck, the suit says. The bulldog-pit bull mix turned on Brenda Fernandez de Cordova, biting her hands multiple times when she moved to defend the terrier, the suit says.

The bulldog-pit bull mix bit Fernandez de Cordova's left hand eight times and her right hand three times, the suit says, requiring a tetanus shot and additional medical treatment for swelling and infection.

The injuries have left Fernandez de Cordova with permanent scarring, as well as numbness, tingling, diminished range of motion and diminished strength that could prove permanent, the suit says. She suffered psychological trauma because the Hannas were slow to supply law enforcement authorities with proof that their dog was inoculated for rabies, the suit says, and has difficulty sleeping due to nightmares about the attack.

Fernandez de Cordova incurred expenses for medical care after the attack and may require additional medical care in the future, the suit says. She's also suffered lost wages and a depreciation in her earning capacity that could continue indefinitely, the suit says.

The suit says the Hannas were aware their bulldog-pit bull mix is aggressive toward people and other animals, but failed to curb that behavior or ensure the dog did not escape a fence on their property.

The bulldog-pit bull mix allegedly attacked a woman and her leashed, small dog on June 14, 2010, as they walked past the Hannas' home. Several times before the March 2012 attack, the bulldog-pit bull mix got loose and attacked a neighborhood dog that was confined to its owner's property, the suit says.