

## For Immediate Release

At approximately 9:15 P.M. on Friday, June 25, 2010, a six year old girl was in the front yard of her home in the Glen Oaks neighborhood of the City of Rye with several other girls. She was reportedly running on the side of the house when two coyotes ran from a nearby wooded area, jumped on her, and knocked her to the ground. She was bitten on the shoulder and on the thigh, and also sustained scratches to her head, back and neck. The animals fled when an adult approached. The victim declined ambulance transport, and was taken to Greenwich Hospital by her family for treatment of her injuries.

Shortly afterwards, a coyote believed to be involved in the incident was sighted in the vicinity. A police officer chased the animal onto a nearby golf course and was able to fire a shot at it, but we do not believe the animal was hit.

A search of the area was commenced, focusing on the golf course. Officers searched the remote areas in golf carts accompanied by Fire Department personnel equipped with thermal imaging cameras, while Fire trucks were used to light up other areas. The Westchester County Police Aviation Unit searched the area with both high intensity lighting and infra-red heat detection equipment. The search was fruitless.

There have been an increasing number of coyote sightings and interactions in the City of Rye in recent months, including one case in which a small dog was killed. Since that incident, we have been working with a nuisance wildlife removal firm and to date we have captured and relocated nine coyotes – a mother and eight pups. Until now, the animals' activities have reflected common coyote behavior and the normal interaction of people and animals in a suburban setting, and our response has been reasonable and measured, and consistent with the prevailing opinions of wildlife experts. Coyote attacks on humans are extremely rare, and this incident is clearly not normal behavior. We will continue our trapping efforts, and also take an increasingly aggressive approach to dealing with the animals when that can be done safely.

The customary advice to people confronted by coyotes is to act aggressively – to make loud noises or throw objects at them, and not to run away. The animals are typically timid and will flee. In light of this incident, however, we would urge residents to pay particular attention to small children and not leave them outside unsupervised. Coyote sightings should be reported immediately by calling 911 or the Police Department's main number, (914) 967-1234.

General information about coyotes is available on the City of Rye's website, [www.ryeny.gov](http://www.ryeny.gov).