

## MAYOR STUBBS



As has been widely reported, the feline mayor of a small town in Alaska was attacked on August 31st, and his many friends and well-wishers, both locally and from all over the world, waited with bated breath to hear if he would recover.

His Honor, Mayor Stubbs, is an orange part-Manx cat, and has been the highly popular top official in Talkeetna for most of his 16 years. His owner, Lauri Stec, named him Stubbs because when she adopted him as a kitten he had no tail. Shortly thereafter, local residents became disenchanted with the human candidates for mayor, and Stubbs was offered as a write-in choice, winning the election with ease.

Talkeetna is located near the base of Mt. McKinley, the tallest peak in North America. It is in a designated historical district of Alaska, and tourism is a vital part of the economy. Mayor Stubbs attracts considerable attention from tourists, spending his days either strolling from business to business in the community, or relaxing at Nagley's General Store, where

he regularly sips catnip-infused water from a wine glass.

It was therefore horrifying when Stubbs was assaulted by a dog of the town, while he was carrying out his official duties, strolling around, keeping a benevolent eye on his constituency. The assailant apparently dashed across the street and mauled him severely without any provocation. Mayor Stubbs was in very bad shape indeed, and for a time it was touch-and-go as to whether he would even survive.

When I spoke with Lauri, who is the manager of Nagley's, she was in the middle of a busy work day, but she kindly took some time to speak with me about the condition of her beloved cat.

"His injuries included a punctured lung and a fractured sternum," she said. Stubbs had to have some serious surgery, and needed strong pain medication afterward.

"He needs a period of quiet and rest because this was very stressful for him," Stec said. His veterinarian feels that he is likely to heal with a long convalescence.

No more surgery is planned at this time, just plenty of rest. After he came home from the hospital, she said, "I took off his pain patch and he got rather pissed off with me about that.

She expects to keep him in the house for about 2 weeks, at least, hoping he might feel well enough to go back to work after that, at least on a part-time basis. The sternum takes an especially long time to heal, possibly 6 - 8 weeks.





When he is sufficiently recovered, Stubbs will be back in the store. Stec plans to ensconce him in a large fenced-but-see-through enclosure, so his constituents can enjoy his company and pet him, and he can continue the sociable existence he has had all along.

Perhaps Mayor Stubbs will see fit to change the law, but for now it is legal for dogs to have the freedom of the streets in this usually peaceful community. (The offender is now persona non grata and has been officially banned from returning to Talkeetna.)

Stec has been overwhelmed by the outpouring of concern for Stubbs, with people calling from all over to ask after him. She is also grateful for the generosity of those who have sent donations to help her with the medical bills, including one from Morris the Cat's namesake, famed Spokescat for the Nine Lives Cat Food Company.

She emphasized to us that she is not asking for any help. However, if any of our readers would like to contribute, they may send to Lauri Stec, at Mayor Stubbs' office address, Nagley's General Store, 13650 E. Main Street, Talkeetna, Alaska, 99676.

Everything over and above Stubbs' medical needs is going to the local veterinarian in Talkeetna who is just starting a clinic and needs lots of help; the rest will go to the nearby animal shelter.

Update: Mayor Stubbs was reported to be back at work at his office in Nagley's by the third week in October. Needless to say, we are much relieved.