



FRANCINE ORR, Los Angeles Times

**DOG LOVER:** Until Downtown Dog Rescue stepped in to help, Josephs was struggling to care for 10 adult dogs and 40 puppies. After Teri's death, he was left with two: Izzy, left, and Freeway.

## Dog's Shooting Called Unnecessary

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and workers in the industrial neighborhood on the eastern edge of downtown condemned the shooting as unnecessary and officers' actions afterward as unconscionable.

A private security guard stationed in the alley was apparently the only witness to the shooting. On Friday he declined to comment.

Manuel Maldonado, a DHL delivery driver who works from a warehouse next to the shooting site, said he encountered Teri moments before the bicycle patrol pedaled up.

"I'd pulled into the alley and the dog was sleeping. I got out to tell her to move — you pet her and she'll move out of the way. A little later I heard a gunshot and went back to look and she was lying there in the same spot," Maldonado said.

"I don't think she even barked," he added. "This was unnecessary."

Driver Rollee Salgado said the bullet fired at Teri ricocheted into a green car parked in the alley.

"That dog was like a daughter to Benny. We'd give him food, and he'd turn around and give it to her," Salgado said.

Others who work nearby also said they doubted that the 10-year-old pit bull posed a serious threat to the officers.

"She was never aggressive. I never even heard her growl. There's no way she would at-

tack," said Michael Faye, a photographer whose studio is nearby and who had known the dog for three years.

Mark Helf, an art director working at the studio on a sportswear advertising photo shoot, described the scene as heart-wrenching.

"They wouldn't let Benny go to his dog, even to put a compress on the wound. He had to basically watch his dog bleed to death and die over a two-hour period.

"I heard Benny plead, 'Please, please shoot my dog, put it out of its misery.' They wouldn't even do that," Helf said.

Josephs, who heard the gunshot but did not see the shooting, said he tried to aid his wounded dog but was blocked by police.

"Teri tried to get up and kept falling down. They wouldn't let me help her," he said.

The 58-year-old Josephs, who does odd jobs in exchange for permission to live in a small shed in a fenced-in alcove off the alley, was one of Downtown Dog Rescue's first clients when it was created in 1998.

Rescue workers had found him overwhelmed with strays that he had taken in. Eventually, volunteers found new homes for 10 adult dogs and 40 puppies he was struggling to feed. Josephs kept Teri and two other older dogs after the rescue group spayed and neutered them and helped him license them.

On Friday, Josephs used cans of dog food to illustrate where the officers were positioned as they rode through the alley. He said a male officer riding tandem with another rider indicated that he had fired the shot.

"The one officer said he thought the dog was going to do something to the lady" riding at the rear of the group, Josephs said. "He said he was fearful for his partner."

Josephs said police closely inspected the green car that he said was punctured by the ricocheting bullet. He said it belongs to a woman whose name he did not know but who works in the area.

Detectives investigating the shooting would not comment. An LAPD spokeswoman said the report filed after the incident did not indicate that a vehicle had been struck by a bullet. The department's Force Investigation Division is probing the incident.

Organizers of Downtown Dog Rescue, meantime, were calling Friday for a wider investigation.

Rescue founders Lori Weise and Richard Tuttlemondo said Josephs was essentially dismissed as a homeless transient by authorities, even though Teri was licensed to him at the 7th Place address.

She believes the officer's actions were excessive and dangerous to the entire neighborhood.

"If they felt threatened, why didn't they just Mace her?" Weise said. "Postmen do it every day."