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SEPTEMBER 19, 2009

Orioles calendar dog feared stolen in Baltimore



A sort of famous Baltimore dog was nabbed Tuesday night from her backyard.

A two and a half year-old pit bull mix named Cuji, who's Ms. October in the Maryland SPCA's just-released **2010 Oriole's calendar**, was taken from her yard in Belair-Edison, her owners tell Unleashed. Cuji poses in the calendar with the Orioles' Koji Uehara.

Brian Willis, an engineer who adopted the dog in June, said he was out when his fiance called him to ask if the dog was with him -- because he wasn't there. The couple lives in the 3300 block of Brendan Avenue.

Willis said Cuji was last seen in her fenced back yard, wearing a collar that someone snapped off. She weighs about 70 pounds.

"Who knows where she is now," he said Friday.

On Friday, Willis was getting help from the nonprofit group **Dogs finding Dogs**, where trained, retired police dogs help lead searches for missing pets. German Shepherd Heidi was going to be looking for Cuji. Willis has also called a number of area shelters and placed missing dog notices online. Cuji is microchipped.

"We'll send the dog out back and see how far the travel path goes out, possibly where it stops. Somebody local might have the dog," said the group's Anne Willis. "We're trying to get the pieces of his puzzle."

Willis went to check for Cuji at BARCS on Wednesday, where Baltimore Animal Control takes found dogs, and plans to go back every three days in case the dog is found or someone turns her in. He said he called the police, but that the police didn't take a report.

"She's a very special dog," he said.

Aileen Gabbey, executive director of the MD SPCA, said her staff will be on the lookout for Cuji.

"We definitely remember Cuji and hope that she is ok," she said Saturday. "There are Good Samaritans out there who bring us lost animals every day. We do hope that Cuji is found safe and sound."

At top, Cuji, who was stolen from his Baltimore home earlier this week, poses in the 2010 Orioles pet calendar with Koji Uehara. At right is Heidi, the German Shepherd with Dogs Finding Dogs who is trying to help Brian Willis find Cuji.



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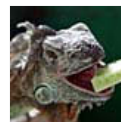


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