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DOG

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Dr. Katy Nelson —
Veterinarian, Animal Advocate,
TV Host & Mom

Pets Get High Blood Pressure, Too
Retired – But Not Out for the Count

*"Hannah," "Sheba,"
& "Pepper" are available
for adoption through Virginia
German Shepherd Rescue (VGSR)*

(details on Page 46)



Don't Despair! Don't Give Up! Rover Can Be Found!

When pets go missing, of course, pet owners sometimes become overwhelmed, sometimes they give up the search, and some people tend to think the worst. Often, when a dog goes missing, seemingly anything can occur, even the illogical.

By Anne Wills

*Photos courtesy of
Dogs Finding Dogs*

Dogs Finding Dogs (DFD), a dog rescue organization based in Maryland, has reunited more than 2,000 missing dogs with their owners. One aspect related to the search for missing dogs is that those conducting the searches must never give up.

Dogs, like any creature, have natural survival instincts that start as soon as they are out on their own. They become more similar to other creatures, such as a fox. Dog owners need to keep this in mind during searches.

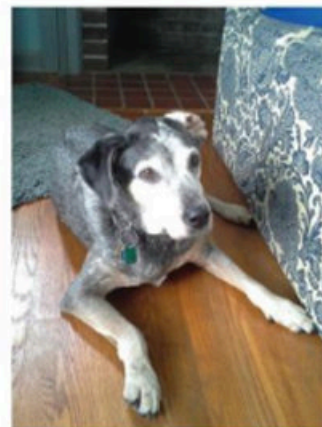
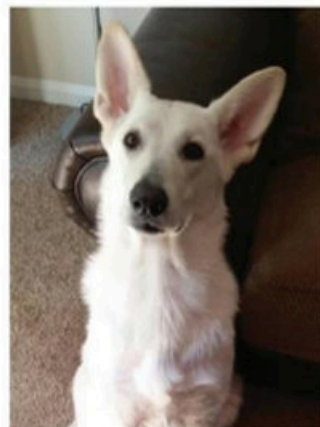
Surviving Harsh Elements

Dogs can often survive through what appears to be incredible odds against them. For instance, there is the tale of Mimi, a Pug and Jack Russell mix who was involved in a fatal boating accident in the town of New Market, located in Frederick County Maryland. The boat she was on plummeted over a local dam, the Lake Linganore dam, tossing all on board

onto the boulders and into the harsh waters. When searchers accessed the scene with search dogs, the situation seemed futile. Some observers thought the search would be a recovery—and not a rescue.

Katherine, Mimi's owner, stated "I knew for sure she was dead! Mimi being so small could have never missed the boulders. I am sure she hit her head and drowned."

The search dogs confirmed Mimi's scent at the edges of the dam. As Heidi, a search dog, and searchers tracked Mimi's scent along the wood line of the dam, Mimi started barking from the woods along the side of the searchers! What appeared to be a grim situation for some of the searchers turned into a moment of rejoice and determination to get little Mimi caught. Mimi's case has extreme circumstances. A dog simply running away is just as emotionally draining. Perseverance often leads to a happy reunion.



Pictured above L to R:
DFD Rescue Team, "Mimi,"
"Chamber," "Bouquet,"
"Colby," "June"

During the middle of the winter, with single digits and snow on the ground, Lisa, of Front Royal, Virginia lost her dog Chamber in the Shenandoah National Park while going to the veterinarian. She was fearful that her dog was going to perish due to the elements.

"We searched for her around the clock for two weeks until we were finally able to find her near one of our traps and lure her back to us with my son's other dog Turbo," Lisa said. "DFD kept me focused on many tear-filled meltdowns and convinced me that the K9 would have taken us to her if she were deceased. Instead, I was given every indication she was still there."

A dog's instinct to survive is very strong. They will find a way to stay warm. With Chamber, there was an abandoned cabin that she found, and Chamber entered the cabin. With snow on the ground, she had water to stay alive. Other aspects from the incident helped Chamber—Lisa's scent on the ground, some free-standing feeding stations and traps. These aspects modified Chamber's behavior to keep her in one place.

A Dog Will Work Off Its Nose

An incident involving a dog named Bouquet demonstrates the use of survival instincts. Bouquet disappeared from a boarding facility for twenty-six days. Often, when a dog is lost for this amount of time, some owners give up and possibly believe that their dog has perished or has been found by another person.

"She pushed open a door and escaped into cornfields half an hour after I dropped her off," said Kyle.

Near the end of the twenty-six days that Bouquet was missing, the dog managed to follow her owners' scent back to their home neighborhood. "I spent

hours walking from my back door out to where she was spotted and back," said Kyle. "After two days of this, she scratched on my back door to be let in at 11:45 p.m.!"

Ran Away, Stolen and Dumped

Kristen, had a similar situation with her dog Colby. Colby was missing for seventeen days. Colby ran fifteen miles across Baltimore, was stolen along the way, and was subsequently dumped in a remote area of Baltimore County. In this situation, it would obviously have been easy for Kristen to have given up. But, once again, a dog's instincts to survive tend to kick in.

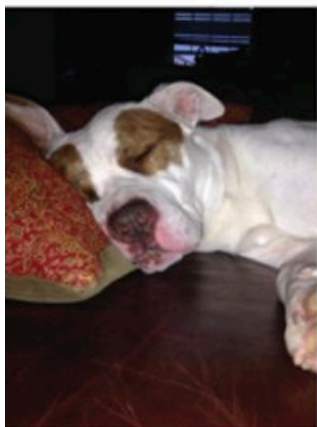
"Colby was finally found on the porch of a family who fed him for two days before seeing our flyers," said Kristen. "He was a little dirty, a little thinner but alive and well!"

Too Scared to Come to The House

Finally, the case of Jennifer of Knoxville, Maryland, and her dog June demonstrates how the survival traits in a dog can be frustrating, even for the dog's owner. June was missing for five days after a door was mistakenly left open while Jennifer was preparing to leave for a camping trip. A K9 was deployed to follow June's footsteps, which lead down a path to the C&O Canal and passed a construction site.

Feeding stations, cameras, and scent trails of the owners were set up along the path that the K9 tracked from Jennifer's house and past the construction site. This generated several sightings.

"I one-hundred percent believe that June followed our scent to find us!" said Jennifer. "I am so thankful that we placed scent strips all over the area. My husband and I walked the path for hours. We even brought her fur brother down to the path for a walk."



June was ultimately found down the path—at the construction site. She had been close to home the entire period that she was missing. Her survival instincts apparently kept her from coming back to the house.

If dog owners stay focused and turn that negative energy into determination, there could indeed be success during a search for a dog.

Inspirational Advice

Dogs become a different animal when they are left to fend for themselves. It is these differing traits that occur in differing situations that keep dogs safe—but also aloof. Just because your dog has not been seen or has come across extreme circumstances does not mean that the dog will perish. For some people, it is hard to fight the emotions of concern and fear for a pet during an incident when a dog goes missing. If dog owners stay focused and turn that negative energy into determination, there could indeed be success during a search for a dog. Dog owners should never give up hope. Dogs are far tougher than their owners sometimes want to believe. 🌟

For more information:

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