

Winter/Holiday 2015

The
**VIRGINIA
MARYLAND
WASHINGTON DC**

DOG

Volume 6 • Issue 4

A **Dog's Nose** is
Amazing,

But a **Dog's Heart**
is a

Miracle

Lessons Dogs Teach Us

Spotlighting Long-Term
Adoption

★ Holiday Gift Guide ★

"Eeney" and *"Morey"* are
seeking a forever home. They are
available through Operation Paws for
Homes, Inc. (OPH). (details pg. 46)



My Dog is Lost! My Heart is Broken! And Now I've Been Scammed!

By Anne Wills

Tragically, there are people and companies posing that they are schooled in finding missing pets, but who are actually scammers—offering services for finding your pet! They also try to get to your reward. They are the lowest of humanity by preying off of your fears! They will gain your trust and interject themselves into your search. They have a hidden agenda—getting your money!

Dogs Finding Dogs (DFD), a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization of highly trained search and rescue dogs and handlers with more than 4000 pets returned, DFD has seen it all. DFD is not trying to dissuade pet owners from having honest volunteers involved in pet searches. DFD want to warn about scams that they have seen that have caused people to never find their pet or worse, have their pet killed!

Uncertified/Untrained SAR Dogs and Handlers

Some people may only know what they watch on television when it comes to using a Search and Rescue (SAR) dog. Some television commercials appear to imply that a SAR dog is the magical tool that immediately finds its target. This is not true. A pet is a moving target. Finding a missing pet takes time.

Scammers know all of this. They will charge pet owners for mileage and expenses, plus a huge hourly rate, usually \$150.00 per hour, or higher than that. Scammers can charge pet owners for an elaborate walk to hike up the bill. The scammers usually leave with the advice of putting up flyers, or your dog has been picked up. For a one-day visit, dog owners can expect to pay \$600 to \$1,500, or more if there is out-of-state travel involved.

For pet owners to insure that they are working with a legitimate SAR team, people should research them thoroughly. Pet owners should contact their local ASPCA and Animal Control. If these officials don't

know the team, then this is a warning that the company could be a scam.

Pet owners should ask to see the SAR team's certification card. Pet owners should then have the card e-mailed to them. Research the agency that certified the team. Be careful about the certification card. There are companies out there that sell invalid identification cards for service dogs with a registration number. For example, teams with Dogs Finding Dogs are certified yearly with the National Tactical Police Dog Association.

What breed of dog is going to be used in the search? Some people are trying to pass off little poodles, mixed small breeds and breeds that are not known for hunting as search dogs. A German Shepherd, Labrador Retriever, a larger-breed hound, or a dog along these types of breeds, is what pet owners should utilize in a search.

Pet owners should be skeptical about any SAR dog team that demands cash only. This is not a team that is working for a legitimate company. This is someone out there who is trying to make quick money. With cash-only transactions, pet owners have no record if there is a problem that needs legal attention.

Lastly, pet owners should make sure that they see formal company literature, that there is a legal contract to sign, and that a receipt is issued. If pet owners do not get all of these, then turn and run.

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Fake Telephone Amber Alert Calling

Findtoto.com and LostMyDoggie.com are recommended. There is a pet alert out there that does not make the calls or they call days later which defeats the purpose of quick action. It uses the Find Toto name in its Google ad to trick you to their site. They bait you by offering a template for a flyer and emailing it to local vets and shelters. When you try to call them back for a refund you can't reach anyone.

We Guarantee to Find Your Pet in 3 Days or Money Back

This is an obnoxious foreign sounding man who gets your information off of Craigslist and Facebook. He offers for X dollars a guarantee of getting numerous people on the ground immediately. They will find your pet in 3 days or your money back. Do not fall for this! This organization has been exposed nationally on the news across the country. Their calls have been traced back out of the country to Brazil.

Sue, with her missing Dachshund experienced this. "Lost pet finder gets your phone number from Craigslist then calls to offer their services. Claims they are a non profit but are not 501c3. When you refuse, they continued to call at least 10 times a day no matter how many times I told them to take me off their list or threatened them. Finally had to block the 10 different phone numbers they called from."

Facebook Lost and Found Pages

Every county and state has lost and found pages that you can post on. Be leery of those that are not named Lost and Found pets of XXX County or State. We have found one page that boasts matching up pets and will make free color flyers for you. How can they afford to make hundreds of free color flyers for you or for all the lost pets? The hidden agenda is to get into

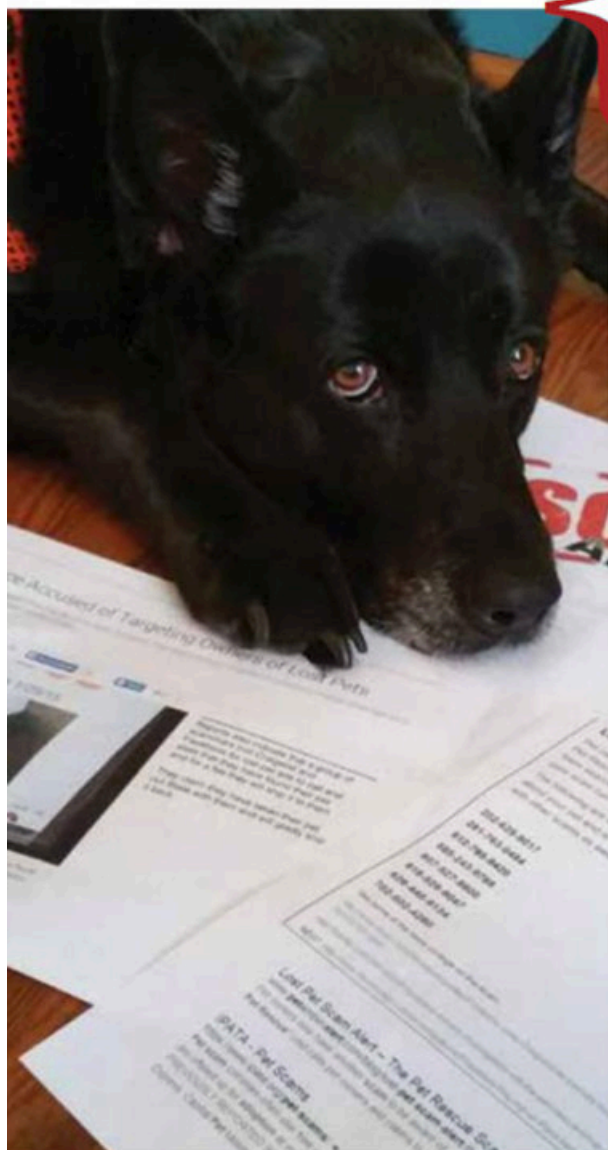
LOST



REWARD

If found please call
01-08-19-88

An anonymous tipster called us and told us where my dog was hidden. It took the police raiding the house to get my dog back!"



your search and go after your reward money. An uncertified tracker is being used which adds legitimacy to their knowledge of finding pets. The tracker demands cash only.

Mike fell victim to this. "I was scammed! I was called clear out of the blue offering free color flyers. They sent out a tracker who demanded me to go to the ATM and get \$250 cash. When I asked for a receipt I was told no. When I asked for a brochure I was told they had none. I was even told they were with another legit tracking company which was a lie. I was so desperate to find my dog that I fell for it! I was told that my dog was right there. It was not! It was picked up and taken to a shelter in less than 10 minutes from where I lost it! I was offering a \$1000.00 reward." states Mike.

I've Found Your Dog in Another State

This scam involves calling you off of your social media postings and stating they have found your dog but took it to another state with them. They say for XX dollars they will ship it back to you! Just hang up the phone.

Holding a Dog for Hostage Money

This is extortion. Some low life people will steal your dog and call you asking for the reward money or they will demand a higher reward. If this happens, call Dogs Finding Dogs immediately. Sixty percent of all of our dog cases wind up stolen. We work with the police. It's advised to NOT specify a dollar amount for your reward when posting on social media or on flyers. Keep the phone numbers so they can be reversed. Never meet anyone with the reward money without having the police there with you!

Jessica had a stolen Yorkie. "I posted up a \$1500.00 reward. The man who had my dog found him running down the street. A police officer saw him stop his truck and pick up my dog. He hid my dog at his girlfriend's house and called me demanding \$2500.00. When I refused he said he will hold the dog until the reward goes up. An anonymous tipster called us and told us where my dog was hidden. It took the police raiding the house to get my dog back!"

For more information:

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Protective Advice

Do your homework. This is your furry child that is missing! Unfortunately there are those out there who will try anything to make a quick buck, no matter how despicable! Try to think rationally through all the turmoil you are going through. It's only through good decisions and employing legitimate agencies and honest volunteers that your odds of finding your pet will be at their peak for a safe return. If you feel you have questions about something that you want to try, please give Dogs Finding Dogs a call at (410) 908-6374. We can help advise you. 🐾