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MISSING SERVICE DOG FOUND SAFE AND SOUND

March 26, 2012 by cpehrson

One of our CPD Consumer Advisory Council members, Ben Ballam, was featured in the Herald Journal because his service dog, Tennessee, was found after being gone for over a week.

Here is the complete story from Friday, March 24th’s Herald Journal article written by Matthew K. Jensen:

Missing dog found weary, safe

Community search effort ends in joyous reunion for animal and her worried owner

A compassionate animal control officer and a pair of construction workers helped reunite a Logan family with their aging pet dog.

Fifteen-year old Tennessee went missing last Wednesday when she wandered from the backyard of a Hyde Park home where she was being watched. Her owners, the Ballam family of Logan, left the dog with a family friend before going on vacation.

Missing dog posters, neighborhood search and messages posted on Facebook, however, didn’t help bring Tennessee home, and the family feared the worst.

The dog is a retired service companion to the Ballam’s 19-year old son, Ben, who has spina bifida and is partially paralyzed. The two have been companions since Ballam was 6 and Tennessee was 2. She regularly helped the boy open doors, pick up things and live a better life.

Ben and his dog Tennessee’s first meeting.

The idea of losing her was heartbreaking to Ballam, he said, but their reunion Thursday was a joyous one.

”Tenny’s” homecoming

”I think it was the happiest I’ve ever felt in my entire life,” he said.

On Thursday, crews building a home in Hyde Park spotted Tennessee lying in a ditch and called North Park Police animal control for help.
Officer Nolan Krebs arrived and did his best to resuscitate the animal.

“When I saw her, she wasn’t moving, I couldn’t see her breathing, and her eyes were closed,” he said. “I went over to the dog and called her name and rubbed her ears, and she lifted her head.”

Krebs said he scooped up the dog and placed her on a nearby lawn before she was taken to Mountain View Vet Clinic. Veterinarian James Isrealen said the animal was in surprisingly good shape, having only lost a little body weight.

“She’s eight pounds lighter but is in remarkably good shape given what’s happened,” he said. “We did some blood work on her, and her organ functions are just fine.”

Ben’s mother, Laurie Ballam, says she’s grateful for the community support.

“In people years, Tennessee’s 105 years old,” said Laurie Ballam. “For her to survive is nothing short of a miracle. We’re so grateful for everyone who sent positive vibes and helped look for her and especially the people that were babysitting her who placed posters everywhere.”

Krebs, who had been looking for the dog since last week, said Tennessee has an implanted electronic chip that helped identify her.

Ben Ballam thanked the staff at the Mountain View Veterinary Clinic for their work in reviving and caring for Tennessee. When she returned home after her ordeal Thursday, she settled down for a long nap.