

Sun-Tribune people

'Monkey' search renewed our faith

Whitchurch-Stouffville residents are welcome to share their life stories. For more information, contact editor Jim Mason at jmason@yrng.com or 905-640-2612.

BY LINDA MUTCH

My faith in humanity has been restored. All it took was for a little dog named Monkey to go missing for 56 hours across three municipalities and untold kilometres.

The adventure started during our regular morning hike in Seaton Trail, near Whitevale in northern Pickering, last month.

We adopted Monkey almost a year ago from a shelter at Hwy. 48 and Progress Road in Scarborough. She had been abandoned for five days without food. At least the human that dropped her there left her by a river so she had water.

Since Monkey has joined our family in Stouffville, she has gained almost 16 pounds and has taken a large chunk of our hearts.

When she went missing, after being startled by other hikers that Sunday at 9:30 a.m., all I could hope was she did not think we had abandoned her, as well.

When something like this happens, you, as a dog owner, do all the things you should. You call the animal control office. You call all local veterinary clinics and give a description of your dog, their dog tag numbers, microchip number and anything more you can think of. And lastly, you hope the phone rings.

After driving for hours that first day, imagining I had seen her in every open field, I could only hope she would be spotted by one of the several people I left my name and number with.

The phone rang at 4 p.m. Monkey had been seen at Steeles Avenue and the Markham/Pickering Town line near Scarborough.

In the few minutes it took to get there, she was gone. Panic started to settle in. It was getting dark and there was freezing rain in the forecast. How was I going to leave her out there overnight? I was to the point of hysteria.

It was getting very dark and there was nothing more we could do, so my partner, Daryl May, and I reluc-



Linda Mutch (from left), Chelsea Mutch, Mackenzie May, Connor May and Ellie Mae (dog at right) welcome Monkey back to their Stouffville home after a 56-hour adventure across municipal boundaries.

tantly decided to go home, but not to sleep or eat, because neither of those things happened that night.

Daryl was on the road again Monday morning, as I had to go to work. We stayed in touch throughout the day and met at 4 p.m. As Daryl said, "It was like looking for a needle in a haystack."

We searched the area with friends and family past dark, with no reward. We went home heavy-hearted for another restless night.

But there was hope in a phone call. A check with animal control informed us a dog matching Monkey's description had been spotted sleeping on the back deck of a house on Radford Avenue in Markham since late Sunday night.

Daryl and I jumped back in the car and headed to Markham to get Monkey, we hoped. But after a few hours of walking through the neighbourhood in the dark calling her, we left empty-handed.

Tuesday morning and a new tactic. Instead of driving around, Daryl suggested alerting as many people as possible in the area.

We sent a picture to Vanessa at Magnum Copy Centres in Stouffville and she put together a great flyer with Monkey's picture and our cellphone numbers, asking anyone who has seen her to call. I picked

SLICE OF LIFE

up the flyers and headed to Markham. Daryl's mom, our neighbor Dan and his father handed out flyers.

I went to William Armstrong Public School where a teacher said she would put up a flyer in each classroom. Every person we saw walking, getting in or out of a vehicle was also handed a flyer.

To our amazement, our phones started to ring.

Monkey had been seen on Major Buttons Drive then Squire Baker's Lane and "30 minutes ago" on Senator Reesor's Drive. The next call said she had been seen behind a plaza on the north side of Wooten Way. We were narrowing the search with the help of complete strangers. The gods were starting to smile down on us and Monkey.

Daryl received a call at 5 p.m. from a man who had been out walking his dog earlier in the day and I had given him a flyer. He had just seen Monkey on Parkway Avenue as he was driving.

They followed her as she ran,

terrified of everything around her, to Markham District High School. I arrived at the back of the school only to see her running through a ravine. I ran back to my car and headed to Church Street as quickly as I could only to see her pass me.

Monkey suddenly turned on to to Jack Court with the caravan of vehicles right behind. I stopped the car and jumped out, calling her to come, but she was so frightened she had no idea who I was.

I dropped to my knees in the middle of the street and gently called her name several times as I removed my toque, praying she would recognize me.

Suddenly, her ears and tail went down, the barking stopped and she ran like the wind to me. I was knocked flat on my back in the middle of the street with Monkey crying and kissing my face with everything she was worth.

We finally had her.

Now, you can imagine the tears of joy that were shed from everyone involved that day.

And that, ladies and gentlemen, is how my faith in humanity was restored. Thank you, thank you, to the many people who searched, phoned or went out of their way to help us find our Monkey.

Together, we did it.

Whitchurch-Stouffville News Digest

Visit yorkregion.com for more on these and other stories

SUV driver rescued from Tenth Line rollover

A man had to be rescued from his SUV with the jaws of life after it rolled on the Tenth Line just north of 19th Avenue Wednesday at 11 p.m.

The vehicle was heading north when the driver lost control and it ended up in the ditch. The driver, the lone occupant, was trapped until Whitchurch-Stouffville firefighters opened the roof. He was taken to hospital by ambulance with unknown injuries.

Bowl for boys, girls sake

Bowl for Kids Sake, the annual fundraiser for Big Brothers Big Sisters of York, takes over the Stouffville Bowling Centre Feb. 24. Openings for bowlers remain.

To register, call 905-895-0289. To sponsor a Sun-Tribune team member, call 905-640-2612 or e-mail jmason@yrng.com

Gas leak closes Woodbine

Woodbine Avenue was closed north of Gormley for a short time last Saturday night after a driver lost control of her car on a snow-covered road and it hit a natural gas line.

Whitchurch-Stouffville firefighters diverted traffic to avoid the possibility of the gas being ignited, Deputy Chief Rob McKenzie said.

Gas company staff shut off the gas and made the necessary repairs.

The area wasn't evacuated since high winds dissipated the gas, York Regional Police spokesperson Kathleen Griffin said.

The driver was not injured.

SOUND OFF

Have something to say about these or other stories?

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