

Humane Society of Elmore County News – 17 Feb ‘25

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Executive Director

One of the most frustrating things in the Shelter world is all the animals that come to us that no one ever reclaims. Almost all (feral cats excepted) of the animals in Shelters were owned by someone as they certainly did not just appear out of blue. Sadly only about 15% of dogs are reclaimed by owners and only about 1% of cats. We are constantly screening the lost (and found) reports that have been called in to see if we might have a match as nothing makes us happier than reuniting a lost pet with its very relieved owner. We are also looking at all the lost and found pages on Facebook daily and the main one for our area is “[Elmore County Alabama Lost & Found Pets](#).” We highly recommend that you post a lost (or found) pet to this page, your personal page and any neighborhood pages for your area as Facebook does truly help in reuniting lost pets.

Probably 90+% of pets coming into our Shelter have no collars and of those with collars only a small fraction have rabies or identification tags. When we get an animal in with a rabies or ID tag the very first things we do is call the veterinarian so they can help us get pet and owner reunited. And it does work – in most cases an animal with a tag can be reunited with its owner the same day. For those who say their pet loses their tags (riveted tags can help) we highly recommend two other methods of identification – microchip and writing your phone number on your pet’s collar. We scan every animal coming into our shelter for a microchip. Microchips are placed by your veterinarian under the skin between the shoulder blades of your pet via a simple injection. If a pet has a microchip our scanners will pick it up, we then contact the chip maker who can then put us in touch with that pet’s owner – it works! Please contact your vet to ask about getting your pet micro chipped – it is simple and only takes a few minutes.

For those who find pets, the same applies – call us with the pet’s description as we have reunited many a lost and found pet without it ever coming into our Shelter. BUT – one very important thing is to take the found pet to the closest Vet or Shelter to be scanned for a microchip. All three Shelters in the River Region microchip our adopted pets so a quick scan can reunite a pet in no time.

And this is very important - a found pet is not the finder’s to just keep or give away as, under Alabama law, any finder must do due diligence to find the proper owner. Keeping a found pet without taking all measures to try and find the owner is called Theft of Lost Property in the Alabama Code. We recently had a dog surrendered to us they had found and ‘decided to keep’ until it proved to not be perfect so they brought to us. We had had a lost report on that dog the entire time and it went home to its very happy owner same day.

One huge reason it can be best to bring a found pet to your supporting Shelter is that we are in the business of safeguarding pets and in reuniting them with their owners. We do this day in and day out and are quite adept at validating ownership before a pet is released (sadly there can sometimes be issues with ownership due to divorce, break-ups, legal matters, etc). One other reason many might not think of is that sadly, some people can be, how shall we say – less than gracious about someone ‘finding’ their pet, so let us deal with those situations at the Shelter where we keep the identity of finders, owners and adopters confidential.