



Maya's Happy Ending - April 2006

We got our dog Maya on Thursday 3/30/06 from a rescue league in CT. They had saved her from a high-kill shelter in Ohio. She's very very timid dog who's just getting used to being around people. We thought it would be good for her to go out with other dogs on a nice walk in the woods. So, on Monday, 4/3(day 5 of our "ownership") she went with her new dog walking group out to the Fells Reservation in Winchester. I got a call at work around 11:30 that Maya had spooked, pulled on her leash unexpectedly and the dog walker dropped her leash! She had bolted into the reservation and they couldn't find her. Needless to say, my husband and I both headed out there, arrived around 1 and searched for about 4 to 5 hours (with the dog walking service owner). Then it got cold and dark so we came home. Yeah, it wasn't a great night.

We posted a missing dog notice on Craig's list and were contacted by Emily from LostDogSearch, who gave us great suggestions on what to do when we resumed our search the next day. We went to work on Tuesday morning, made 200 colored flyers of her with our phone numbers, had the dog walking service start posting them all over the area where she escaped and waited. Around 11 I got my first call that she had been sighted, running with her leash still attached. My husband and I headed back up to Winchester, now with our 22 year old son joining in the search. We spent the next 6 hours going from door to door with flyers, posting them on every telephone poll, driving endlessly around, talking to everyone and anyone we met. Maya was sighted 4 more times, but was absolutely terrified and kept running.

The good news, as Emily and Debbie (from LostDogSearch) explained was that the sightings were all in the same general neighborhood, which was bordering the reservation where Maya had originally been lost. She was staying close, but probably hiding during the day to avoid people. Debbie said she would probably come out at dusk to find food and suggested we set a Have-A-Heart trap to catch her, but we needed to find the right location. Fortunately, having spent so much of the day talking to people in the neighborhood, I remembered a man telling me he had seen her coming out of the woods next to his house. We thought it might be the right spot to set the trap, but again, we weren't sure and we didn't have the trap yet. Finally, around 6pm, my husband and son left (he had to get back to college) and I decided to stay just a little longer. Would she really come out of the woods at dusk searching for food?

Amazingly, as I was standing in the backyard of a house where we would set the trap, overlooking a stream and this massive woods in front of me - I see her way off in the distance in the woods. I called her, she looked right at me - and bolted! She was absolutely terrified, even of me. Here she is in a strange place, has just spent the past day and a half living outside and she's freaked. And remember, she'd only been with us for 5 days before being lost! But Debbie was right, she would come out at dusk and she was probably going to use the same path she'd used before. I stayed in the woods

another 20 minutes or so calling her, then slowly made my way back to my car, feeling pretty dejected. I then get 2 calls about 2 seconds apart that she was sighted, running about 3 blocks from where I was. I jumped in my car, got there in less than a minute, and starting walking around the street calling her name.

Amazingly, it was the exact street where she'd been lost originally. It's now about 6:45, raining, freezing and I'm all alone walking this street, with the forest on one side and houses on the other. I get to the end of the street, turn around and there she is, up on a hill in someone's front yard. I immediately dropped on my knees because I knew that's how you approach her, kept calling and calling her, coaxing her step by step (with a very large dog biscuit clearly visible in my hand). She would slowly advance towards me, then back up, then come forward. I just kept coaxing her, using the sweetest and highest voice I could muster and finally, she walked into my arms.

She's now home save with us, and seemingly none the worse for wear - having spent the past 32 hours running wild in the woods of Winchester. It's been the most stressful 2 days of our lives and we're really glad it's over. We're all totally exhausted and totally elated! Thank you Emily and Debbie for all you do. You really helped us not to lose hope and your suggestions really did work. If people hadn't seen all the posters we plastered the neighborhood with, they wouldn't have called to tell us they saw her. If we hadn't gone door-to-door and talked to so many people, we wouldn't have learned where she came out of the woods. If we hadn't stayed through dusk, we wouldn't have been there when she needed us the most. Thanks again. Connie