

We sure have been taking a lot of reports of lost pets lately and one commonality is the majority of those lost pets were not wearing any kind of identification. We cannot stress the importance of pets having collars and rabies and/or identification tags on them at all times. While microchips are also tremendous assets in reuniting pets, that pet has to be taken to veterinarian or shelter to be scanned. Pets with tags are most often reunited with their owners without ever getting near an animal shelter since the finder can often get the pet safely back home. We want to do our part to help area pet owners and can make custom pet identification tags right at our shelter! We have a wide variety of tag shapes and colors, and yes, have Auburn and Alabama tags! The cost ranges from \$8 to \$12 depending on the tag and it only takes a few minutes for us to make a custom tag. So come to the shelter at 255 Central Plank Road (Hwy 9) in Wetumpka Mon-Fri 10-5 and Sat 9-3 and let us help you protect your pet with a customized identification tag.

The Labor Day weekend is that one last blast of summer when many folks head to beaches and lakes for the three-day weekend. If you are going to be away from home over Labor Day and cannot take your pet with you please make sure you have made plans for your pets' care. If you are not boarding your pet at a professional boarding facility and have a family member or friend caring for your pet, please take the time to ensure that person has all the info they need to not only keep your pet safe and happy, but how to respond in an emergency. Make sure your pet has its collar and tags (remember, we can make ID tags for your pet at our shelter) on so that it can be reunited with you in the event it becomes lost. Microchips are a great backup to tags so you have a couple of weeks to get your pet to your veterinarian to be chipped.

While we hope this isn't needed, leaving signed instructions with your pet sitter in regards to medical treatment authorization could be vital in the event of an emergency when you cannot be reached. Of course leaving contact info with your pet sitter is vital, but phone connectivity is often sparse in many vacation areas, so please plan for the worst case, perhaps having another person as a contact in the event of an emergency.

Whenever you leave your pet in someone else's care, please leave written information about your pet such as physical description, collar color and tags, name, food requirements, medications and behavioral issues that a sitter or veterinarian needs to know. All of this will help in the event of an emergency as your sitter just may not know everything there is to know about your pet. And if you come home and your pet is missing, please call our shelter at 334-567-3377 first thing so that we can either take a lost report and be on the lookout for your pet or reunite you if your pet is safely with us.

In this day and age of technology we also advise having photos of your pet on your phone and also on your Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest or other social media. This way you can quickly get your pet's photo circulating in the event it becomes lost via your smart phone or computer. And if you are traveling with your pet and it is microchipped, perhaps store that microchip number in your phone so you can access it if your pet is lost away from home.

If you have lost or found a pet, another very successful method for getting that pet home is Facebook – "Lost & Found Pets in Elmore County" is a very active Facebook page that has reunited many a lost pet so yet another reason to make sure you have a current photo of your pet on your phone or computer. This is leveraging social media in a good way and many thanks to all who have worked hard to get lost or found pets back home!