

CAT: Owner returned to Suttle Lake from Sherwood repeatedly

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the indoor-only cat, quietly escaped from their travel trailer sometime during the night on Friday, June 2.

“That night we were sitting around the campfire with friends, it’s one of our favorite things to do. We had the door open but the screen door closed so we could see the cats inside the trailer,” Andrade said.

The next morning the Andrade’s couldn’t find Hamilton anywhere in the trailer.

“I searched every nook and cranny, because once we found him hiding inside the cabinet below the sink. But he wasn’t there. It was then I realized that he somehow got out during the night,” Neal said.

On Sunday, after searching for Hamilton the entire weekend, the Andrades had to leave and returned to Sherwood.

After reading that lost cats will sometimes return to the spot they started out in after a few days, Neal returned to the South Shore campground the following Tuesday afternoon.

“I camped in my Chevy pickup next to where we lost him, but no luck.”

Once an indoor cat finds himself in the great outdoors, he may panic at finding himself in foreign territory and go into a complete defense mode

by hiding from everything and anything — including his pet parent.

Andrade and his wife returned to South Shore campground to set a humane trap the following Saturday. They slept in their Toyota Camry at the campground.

Andrade made up fliers with Hamilton’s photo on them and posted them at all three campgrounds, Suttle Lake Lodge & Boathouse Resort, and the day-use area the following weekend.

“Tammy and Neal worked with the camp host and could leave a live trap where they had camped,” said Karly Drake-Lusby, who works in guest services at Suttle Lake Lodge. “Neal brought over a stack of flyers and I sent them to all our friends around the lake. Even our management team was on the lookout for Hamilton.”

The camp host would check the live trap each day. It was a team effort.

On June 13, a construction worker took a video of a cat inside one of the cabins that is being renovated. And a few days later when Andrade returned he talked to the construction worker and saw the video.

“Although the video wasn’t very good quality, I knew right away that it was Hamilton!” he said

On June 16 and 17, Neal Andrade returned to South Shore campground in the Camry with Sweetpea to look for Hamilton. Again, no luck.

“I had to return home on Saturday, June 17, but before

I got there, I received a phone call from Ashley, a bartender at Suttle Lake Lodge. She reported seeing Hamilton the night before. I continued home to drop off Sweetpea, then back on the road up to Suttle Lake again to move the trap over a mile away to the Lodge where Ashley sighted him.”

Staff sightings continued. Hamilton was alive and nearby. The Andrades continued their search, returning from Sherwood every weekend.

On Thursday, June 29, the staff at Suttle Lodge & Boathouse reported seeing Hamilton in the parking lot and bushes. And the following day Neal once again returned to Suttle Lake with hope.

Andrade set a second trap close to where he was spotted a couple of days earlier and spent most the night searching the areas he had been seen.

On Saturday, July 1 at 5 a.m. Andrade checked the first trap near the cabin, nothing. Then he walked over to the second trap to find his missing cat Hamilton.

“When I got to my office on July 1, I saw the corner of a flyer sticking out from under my door. The word ‘lost’ had been replaced with ‘found,’” Lusby said. “Joy ensued! The whole staff was cheering, it was a super-happy day for all



PHOTO PROVIDED

Hamilton is safe and healthy after a month on his own at Suttle Lake.

of us.”

Especially for Hamilton.

He is now safe at home after getting checked by the vet and is relatively healthy — no fleas or ticks found on him.

“Thank you to all the

staff at Suttle Lake Lodge & Boathouse for their prayers, support, and help during the month of June,” Andrade said. “They were very gracious and friendly to us during our time there searching for our lost cat.”

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