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ASK-THE-DOG-CATCHER BY KYLIE BELACHAIKOVSKY

Lost & Found

LCAS's Kylie B. answers your pet questions

Why should I license my dog? He's got a microchip. Besides, he doesn't like his collar. It rubs his neck, so I take it off in the house and yard; we just wear it for walks, where he wouldn't get lost anyway.

First, can I give you a "hell yeah" for microchipping your pup? I know us dogcatcher types are all about the licensing, but microchips are the only foolproof and permanent identification for your dog. For those less savvy, a microchip the size of a sesame seed can be placed just under your dog's skin. No, it doesn't function as a GPS, but if your pet ends up at a shelter or veterinarian, a quick scan will reveal your pooch's true identity. And, you can get your cat or dog chipped for cheap at the city of Eugene Spay/Neuter Clinic. While you are there, how about buying a dog license?

So seriously, why license if your dog has other forms of identification? Isn't it just a tax on dog owners? Well, sort of, yes. The licensing fees pay for sheltering all of Lane County's lost and abandoned pets and directly help animals that are being neglected or abused. A portion of all licensing fees are also set aside to provide spay/neuter vouchers to low income residents. Isn't that worth supporting?

Not to mention that county, city and state laws mandate that your dog must have both a rabies vaccination and a dog license. Rabies can be transmitted — and is fatal — to people. That is why keeping those vaccines current is really important to your local government, and they use licenses to track the rabies vaccines. So you can pony up a few dollars, support your local animal shelter and be Joe Compliant all in one fell swoop.

Now, what if you *don't* support Lane County Animal Services, and don't want to cough up your hard-earned dough for a license? In that case, you can play "license roulette" and hope you don't get caught. I mention that only because a Failure to License citation (yeah, that really exists) is \$242. Ouch.

Help! I lost my dog! He ran out of the yard when the delivery guy left the gate open! Who do I call; what do I do?

Seriously? The canine love of your life has vanished and you're just getting around to writing to a *newspaper columnist*? Here's a little factoid: If your pooch ends up at LCAS, he only has a mandated 72-hour stay before being adopted or transferred to another shelter. Which means that by the time you're getting around to starting your search, your dog could already be chillin' with a new family. Thankfully, LCAS no longer euthanizes pets just because of shelter overcrowding, but it isn't a risk I'd take! So what should you do if you lose a pet?



Kylie B. is the Dogcatcher

Come in to LCAS right away and fill out a lost dog report and view found dog reports (some people report found dogs without bringing them in to the shelter). You can view the found pets online, too. You can also leave a report at Greenhill Humane Society although LCAS is the only agency that accepts stray animals. Post an ad on online forums like Craigslist. Call your local vets and the Emergency Vet Hospital and make reports, in case your pet is found by someone who doesn't want to take it to a shelter. Definitely take the time to make a quick flyer and post it around your neighborhood. For skittish lost cats, consider setting a live trap at night as cats usually don't roam far but may be too afraid to come out from hiding in daylight.

Now is also a great time to think about what kind of identification your pet is wearing. Are you the kind of person that doesn't leave collars on dogs or has collars but no tags? Bad news, because there are a lot of animal welfare vigilantes who figure that any dog running loose without ID is "neglected" and is fair game for being "re-homed" without looking for the proper owner. Visible ID can be as simple as using a marker to write your phone number on a collar.

Here is a list of all of those resources I mentioned, so consider clipping this fine column for future reference!

- Report lost/found dogs and purchase ID tags and licenses from LCAS at 682-3647; 3970 West 1st Ave; lanecounty.org/animals
- Leave lost/found reports with Greenhill Humane Society at 689-1503.
- Get an amazingly inexpensive rabies vaccine and/or microchip at the city of Eugene Spay/Neuter Clinic: 682-3643, also located with LCAS.
- Post lost/found pet ads at eugene.craigslist.org **EW**

Questions for the Dogcatcher can be emailed to askthedogcatcher@eugeneweekly.com Questions may be edited for length.

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PATRICK PHILLIPS

Department of Biology and Center for Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, University of Oregon

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