

## Stormie the Boxer romps before capture

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Rather than get a booster shot, Stormie the Boxer slipped out of her collar and sprinted for freedom Friday outside the Animal Care Veterinary Hospital on state Route 96 (New Salem Highway).

About seven hospital employees chased Stormie almost two hours and two miles up St. Andrews Drive, past Scales Elementary School and into a water reservoir where technician Brent Cannon finally captured her.

Ironically, Stormie was supposed to receive a leptospirosis booster to prevent dogs in contact with standing water from passing on a potential water-borne disease to their humans, explained Cassie Preston, hospital marketing director.

Owner Jordan McCall said Stormie's flight began when his father, Dennis, took 9-month-old Stormie and her Boxer boyfriend, Cole, to the hospital for their boosters.

"As he opened the door, she slipped out of her collar," McCall said.

Cannon and other employees chased her. Cannon described Stormie as being in shape.

"It's very eye-opening how out of shape you are when you're chasing a dog like that," Cannon said.

He pursued her near the school where a bus driver pointed him toward the fleeing canine. He searched through brush and a 60-acre field without spotting her. In an adjacent field, Cannon climbed atop a dirt mound and spotted her 50 yards away.

"I called her," Cannon recalled. "She took one look at me and darted across the field."

Stormie entered a heavily wooded area with briars before coming back out. Cannon ducked behind the mound, hoping to sneak up on her but she spotted him.

"She took off running and jumped inside a reservoir filled with water," Cannon said, watching her and hoping she would swim to the side. "Of course not, that would be too easy."

Instead, Stormie swam to the middle. Cannon, who described himself as the "worst swimmer you could possibly get," swam toward her in the frigid water and tried to touch her. She responded by nipping him with an expression of fear in her eyes. Cannon perched on big rocks in the reservoir.

"Finally, she calmed down until I could get my hands on her," Cannon said.

Because he didn't have a leash or collar, Cannon carried her out of the marshy water and set her down on the ground to walk with him. She didn't budge and waited until he picked her up. After the 1-1/2-hour chase, Cannon was worn out.

"I threw her over my shoulders and carried her," Cannon said, preparing to walk about two miles back to the hospital when fellow employee Travis Burks pulled up.

"Thank the good Lord," Cannon said with relief in his tone. "I had mud all over me. He was nice enough to let me ruin his leather seats."

Cannon carried Stormie on his shoulder when he returned to the hospital.

McCall was working at Heath Consultants when he received the call about the missing Stormie. His boss, Steve Compton, allowed him to leave and search for Stormie.

"This is her second escape," McCall said, describing how Stormie ran away from his mother near Christmas.

McCall thanked the Animal Care staff who successfully chased and caught Stormie. He gave Cannon a \$20 tip for his efforts.

"It's the greatest thing I've ever seen," McCall said. "The guy jumped in the water. I'd have just let her swim until she got tired."

Stormie got her booster shot and a microchip implanted so her owners can locate her better. McCall urged pet owners to make sure they microchip their pets.

How did Stormie spend the rest of the day?

"She's fast asleep underneath the coffee table, acting like nothing ever happened," McCall replied with a laugh.



Technician Brent Cannon rests after chasing Stormie about two miles Friday.