

THE WATCHDOG

Lost money could result in theft charge

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problem

r a dumb animal, The
hdog has a very smart
lub.
y does he know this? By
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about Missouri highway
s that seem to urge
ers to do the unthinkable:
r worker.
e signs go on to say that
deed could result in a
00 fine and the loss of
r driver's license.
it the main message looks
much like an imperative
me people.
hen the Missouri Depart-
t of Transportation re-
ided that it was merely
g to cram a lot of infor-
on into a few words, sev-
readers said a little punc-
tion would remove all mis-
erstanding. For instance:
Hit a worker: \$10,000
/lose your license.
Hit a worker? \$10,000
/lose your license.
Hit a worker = Lose your
ise + \$10,000 fine.
MoDOT, what do you

answer
anks, but no thanks.
unctuation just isn't
ed on signs, as ... those
acters are typically mis-
l as something else given
short period of time a
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DOT signing and marking
neer Tom Honich.
e Watchdog says Mo-
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e.
ou have a comment or
ition about a public issue?
e to The Watchdog, The
as City Star, Newsroom,
Grand Blvd., Kansas City,
54108, or send e-mail to
hdog@kcstar.com. Include
name, telephone number
city of residence.

answer

CK arson
ases lead
o tip line

By DAWN BORMANN
The Kansas City Star

rash of arsons in northeast
as City, Kan., has
npted firefighters to estab-
a special phone number so
ers can report anonymous
n the last two weeks we
e had 13 fires that we could
bute to being set intention-
Assistant Fire Chief Craig
e said.
he recent arsons were at
occupied homes, but not all
ne houses were abandoned.
least one was up for sale,
e said.
What we're concerned with
isn't how many of these

Man dropped \$1,460 in grocery store parking lot, and police seek couple who picked it up.

By DAWN BORMANN
The Kansas City Star

Playground bullies recite it often: *Finders keepers, losers weepers.*
But that's not the law, and one couple might just learn that lesson the hard way.
Leavenworth police said surveillance images at a local grocery store show a 22-year-old man unwittingly dropping a bundle of cash in a Dillons parking lot.
But the money didn't stay there long.
Eventually a man and woman walked upon the lost fortune — \$1,460 to be exact. The man reached down and scooped up the loot. The cou-

ple kept walking but never stepped inside the Dillons store, according to video surveillance.
"They paused in front of the store out of camera view," Leavenworth Police Maj. Robert Smith said.
About 20 to 30 seconds later, the two returned to camera view.
"They moved briskly back to their truck to get out of there," Smith said.
They were long gone by the time the young man reported the money missing. Leavenworth police learned that the young man had just sold his car and had planned to make a quick stop at Dillons and head to the bank to deposit his cash.
Smith said the video surveillance photos of the man and woman were grainy, but police did get a good picture of the

couple's truck, a maroon Ford F-150 with a regular cab and a silver-tone tool box mounted in the bed. Police said the truck could be a 1997 to 2003 model.
If arrested, the couple could be charged with theft under Kansas law, which specifically forbids stealing lost or mislaid items.
"The rules when you were 8 — you know, finders keepers, losers weepers — that doesn't apply. That's not reality. A lot of people think it is, though," Smith said.
Smith said the money was in the parking lot for a matter of minutes. During that time, several other shoppers also spotted the bundle, but they continued walking.
"I don't know if they thought it was a setup or something, but nobody picked it up but this guy," Smith said.



LEAVENWORTH POLICE DEPARTMENT

A truck like this one belongs to the couple suspected of taking money found in a parking lot, police said.

The theft happened March 29, but Leavenworth police aren't giving up.
To reach Dawn Bormann, call 816-234-7704 or send e-mail to dbormann@kcstar.com.

RUNNING WITH MAN'S BEST FRIEND

DEBRA SKODACK



GOOD CONNECTIONS

A good run outdoors often produces great results. For a golden retriever mix named Monty, it was the start of a new life.
Monty was waiting for adoption last fall at Wayside Waifs in Kansas City. One Saturday, Monty got the lucky chance to go for a run with a group of volunteers. Monty came back a changed dog — a relaxed canine that one man couldn't resist taking home that afternoon.

"I don't think he would have been adopted if he hadn't run that day," said Barbara Poe, Wayside Waifs' adoptions program manager. "He kind of snapped out of his cocoon."

Jeff Graves of Roeland Park organizes the running volunteers. Graves left his job as an account manager in commercial insurance at Lockton Inc. in September 2008 to start KC Dog Runners, a running, walking and sitting service for dogs. He started the volunteer effort at dog shelters last July.

"Lockton is big into having employees volunteer their time," Graves said. "I like that aspect of Lockton and I wanted to carry that over to my business."

That first Saturday, Graves was the sole runner. He now has a list of about 50 volunteers he alerts to the runs on the second and third Saturday morning each month.

The runners meet at either Wayside Waifs or the Pet Connection in Mission. Parents often bring their children along.

"There is no real age limit," Graves said. "You just have to be comfortable with running with dogs."

The runs begin at 9 a.m. and last about 40 to 45 minutes. The runners and dogs typically go



SUSAN PFANNMULLER | SPECIAL TO THE STAR

Among volunteers taking shelter dogs out for a run twice a month is Creighton O'Neal, who ran recently with Boston, a shepherd mix from Wayside Waifs.

about four miles, mostly on asphalt.
The shelters are careful about putting plenty of space between dogs, which are leashed.
"It's no big pack," Graves said.

For the dogs, it's a big treat especially since shelter life can be such a change.
"The dogs don't know any of us yet," Poe said. "There's a lot of barking and strange people doing strange things to them. It

is such an exciting thing when all these dogs come back and they are tired."
Poe said the only rule about picking the dogs to run is they have to be at least medium-sized and in good health.

"If they are energetic, then it really benefits them. But sometimes I choose the shy ones to help them get out of their shell."

BARBARA POE,
WAYSIDE WAIFS ADOPTIONS
PROGRAM MANAGER

ON THE WEB

For more information on Jeff Graves' volunteer program, go to www.kcdogrunners.com.

"If they are energetic, then it really benefits them," Poe said. "But sometimes I choose the shy ones to help them get out of their shell."

Like Monty last fall.

"Monty was so relaxed, we kept him behind the counter and he got adopted that day," she said.

The volunteers see benefits, too.

Creighton O'Neal, for example, lives in Shawnee and has an 11-year-old dachshund named Snoop. Snoop is a great dog but not so great a running companion for O'Neal, who is nearly 6 feet tall.

"He can't go very far," O'Neal said. "Running is not his thing. He needs to take 10 steps for every one of mine."

But the shelter dogs? No problem.

"Sometimes it is like taming a wild stallion," O'Neal said. "They just want to take off."

Always, the dogs outnumber the volunteers.

"I see people running on Saturday mornings," Graves said, "and I want to yell out my car window, 'Why not come run with a shelter dog?'"

Good Connections tells stories of people who are giving — and getting — help. If you have a story idea, call Debra Skodack at 816-234-4738 or send e-mail to dskodack@kcstar.com.