

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Update on STOLEN Puppies from Animal Shelter Inc – Sterling MA Now a Dire LIFE & DEATH situation for 2 Remaining Puppies...

Sterling, MA - As of 3/20/2011 11:04 PM – Animal Shelter Inc. has **STILL ONLY** recovered 7 of the 9 puppies stolen from the Animal Shelter Inc. of Sterling, MA the night of Wednesday March 16th 2011. “As more time goes by the more bleak the situation becomes,” states Leigh Grady, Executive Director of Animal Shelter Inc. located in Sterling, MA. Sadly the adoption fees coming from these puppies was being dedicated to pay for another shelter puppy that is in need of orthopedic surgery –



Trace a 7-8 month old lab mix female rescued from the South was found to have had a previously fractured leg that was healing incorrectly requiring extensive orthopedic surgery and is scheduled for the week of March 23rd.

There are two puppies STILL missing...and we are beyond distressed for their safety and well-being. All 9 of the puppies were spayed and neutered late afternoon Tuesday and were stolen later that same night, ripped from their kennels and cage mates, as they recovered in their kennels where they were kept warm, safe and well fed. We've had reports that the puppies were most likely abandoned to fend for themselves in the streets of Worcester – most likely because the media involved has shed light on the theft. We believe the puppies were stolen to be re-sold on the internet. We DO NOT believe the story Sylvia Ortiz, arrested and arraigned for felony theft is reporting. People do not just drive around handing puppies out of cars. Furthermore...if her ex brother in law DID want a puppy – WHY ON EARTH would he take FOUR puppies to an apartment where the Worcester Housing Authority DOES NOT ALLOW PETS to begin with. The story is just that... a story... or in our eyes... a big fat lie. We believe there were at least 2-5 people involved in the break-in. Once the media was involved the thieves who stole these puppies were trying to hide the “evidence”. So rather than bringing the puppies to a safe place where they could be returned they were just dumped like yesterday's trash,” Grady continued.

The two missing puppies pictures are posted below and we are pleading with the public especially in the **Worcester area** (specifically Great Brook Valley and the Worcester Housing areas) to do the right thing and help us get our babies back...” Grady continued.

At this time and with so many hours and days that pass the more dire the situation becomes. Because these puppies were recently spayed and neutered it is critical they are kept warm and dry and fed 3 full meals a day. Puppies at this age simply do NOT have the bodies to regulate their temperature if left outdoors overnight and are too young to understand where or how to seek shelter and food and water. They aren't aware of cars and safety... they may run out in to traffic. There are coyotes and fisher cats even in the Worcester area that could easily take them as a meal,” Grady added.

UPDATE: The Animal Shelter Inc. of Sterling, MA has a joint partnership with the VCA Animal hospitals and the closest veterinary hospital to the area the puppies were last seen is VCA Abbott Animal Hospital located at 21 East Mountain Street, Worcester, MA. The VCA Abbott Animal Hospital has kindly agreed to take either or both of the puppies in to their hospital with NO questions asked and monitor and care for them as they will most likely be suffering from dehydration, food deprivation and possible upper respiratory illnesses due to the cold weather. With all the melting snow there are puddles they'd have walked through and could possibly have infected incisions at their spay/neuter sites that need to be checked and monitored. They will need fluids and to be warmed up, fed as much as possible and examined with possible care and extended treatment.

Mon 8:00AM - 8:00PM
Tue 8:00AM - 7:00PM
Wed 8:00AM - 7:00PM
Thu 8:00AM - 8:00PM
Fri 8:00AM - 6:00PM
Sat 8:00AM - 3:00PM
Sun 8:00AM - 1:00PM

Any anonymous calls and tips can be made 24/7 to :

Sterling Police Dept 978 422 7331 OR report anonymously <http://www.sterlingpd.com/tipform.html> OR call anonymously (508) 425-4669

Animal Shelter Inc. of Sterling at 978 422 8585 OR email staff@sterlingshelter.org OR

Worcester Police department text an anonymous tip <http://www.worcesterma.gov/police/anonymous-crime-tips> OR call 508 799-8606.

For the Media please direct any questions regarding this case to the Sterling Police Department's Chief Chamberlain at chief@sterlingpd.com or (978) 422 7331.

Photos of the STILL missing puppies below:

These puppies are in immediately danger and in need of medical care. Last sightings as of the afternoon of 3/20/2011 was 1 puppy in Great Brook Valley and one other seen in the Worcester Housing Authority area known as "The Valley"



Quinn - Blue collar in the is a pointer/lab/pit mix female 11 wks male



Scout – female black lab mix 10-11 weeks (pictured on the left)

The response from our shelter adopters and supporters has been that people are angry and have every right to be. Imagine your own home or business being broken in to - vandalized and your most precious items ripped away from you. The pets in our shelter are like our own pets and children - caring for them day in and day out – we get attached, and just because they have four legs and fur doesn't mean they can't feel pain and be scared and terrorized... We still have 2 missing puppies recovering from spay neuter that are alone cold hungry and terrified. Our incredibly dedicated staff are here to save lives and we take that seriously, we've been in tears everyday praying these puppies aren't killed by cars, coyotes, starvation, or hypothermia. We didn't deserve this cruel inhumane nightmare– to be afraid to go to work for fear someone breaks in... and nor did these 9 helpless puppies that were traumatized by this entire nightmare. Spared

puppies can NOT live outside much longer if they're alive at all, which we don't even want to think about. Am I angry? Damn right I'm angry...but also cared for them traveling the streets alone...if you witnessed the devastation in our kennel and looked in to the innocent eyes of the puppies remaining who knew something wasn't right... you'd hope those involved get the book thrown at them," Grady added.

Our shelter does want to thank all the people and organizations involved with helping to recover the 7 of 9 missing puppies... The Sterling Police Department, Detective David Johnson , the Sterling ACO, as well as the Worcester police department and Detective Mike Tarckini of the Worcester Detective's Bureau's which have all been instrumental in helping to recover the 7 puppies. We're also thankful to the Boston Animal Rescue league's PR director Jennifer Wooliscroft for helping to get the word out...as well as Lt. Alan Borgal of the Boston ARL who've helped us get through this extremely distressing time. Our shelter is so very grateful for all the help and support that the community and kind words from fellow rescue organizations ... it means so much to us... the calls and emails of support have been overwhelming... We are all very touched and cannot begin to thank the community of pet lovers that are watching out for these tiny creatures who are so innocent," stated Leigh Grady – Executive Director of the Animal Shelter Inc. of Sterling, MA.

Please help the Sterling Shelter bring their puppies back – keep an eye out for people with a new puppy, hearing a puppy barking, crying or whining, paw prints in the snow or mud and contact the agencies above if you can help the shelter bring them home.