

UPDATE: Dog shot with arrow, recovering from surgery

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By [KATHIE BASSETT](#)

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ALTON - A severely injured dog was picked up Thursday morning near Wenzel Road, and an animal rescue group is attempting to save her life.

Authorities from Madison County Animal Control contacted Jackie Spiker and Kim Lee of Hope Animal Rescues in Alton to ask whether they could help the 4-year-old Shetland sheepdog, who had been shot through the abdomen with an arrow.

The two women drove to Edwardsville, intending to take the dog to Daniel Randall Veterinary Clinic in Godfrey, but decided that they needed to find a closer location.

"She was losing so much blood that we didn't want to take the 30 minutes," Spiker said. "Kim helped her stand up in the back of the van while I drove. She couldn't lie down, because the arrow was sticking out of both sides, and we were worried that she would hurt herself further."

They opted instead to take her to Horseshoe Lake Veterinary Hospital, which was only 15 minutes away on Illinois Route 157 in Collinsville.

"She is a really sweet and friendly dog," Spiker said. "She even tried to climb into Kim's lap."

The clinic's first goal was to stabilize her vital signs by putting her on fluids and pain medication prior to taking her into surgery. Indicating that she was in shock, Spiker said that her heart rate was elevated and her blood pressure had dropped.

"I don't think the shooting was an accident, based on where the arrow penetrated her abdomen," Spiker said. "She was shot right through her middle."

Spiker said they were able to track down her owners through a microchip embedded under her skin. They learned that she had been adopted from a rescue shelter in Missouri four years ago. The owners were upset but said they could not afford the veterinary bills, estimated at \$2,400, if she survives.

They surrendered the dog over to Hope Animal Rescues through Madison County Animal Control.

"We don't know her name, but I think we're calling her Christmas," Spiker said. "If she makes it, she'll be our Christmas miracle."

Spiker said they would do everything they can to help her save her life.

"We take on high-risks dogs; this is normal for us," she said. "Hopefully, there will be a happy ending."

Figuring out how to cover her medical bills will be next on their agenda.

"We love dogs," Spiker said. "We have to try to help them. When you look in their little faces and see that they just want to be helped, it's really emotional."

The extent of her injuries won't be known until she comes out of surgery, Dr. David Hall said.

"Looking at her, I don't think there's anything that indicates whether or not this was an intentional shooting," he said.

Besides practicing with Horseshoe Lake Veterinary Hospital, Hall also is the administrator for Madison County Animal Control.

"I think it's a safe assumption that the arrow was used in deer hunting," he said. "It is deer season, and stranger things have happened. A hunter might have seen movement and just shot at it."

Hall said he would be in touch with the Madison County Sheriff's Department to discuss the matter but emphasized that there were no suspects.

Still in surgery, Hall said that Dr. Wendy Mollett had removed the dog's spleen. He anticipated that, at the very least, they would have to deal with a serious case of peritonitis, because of bacteria entering the dog's abdomen through the puncture wound.

"Even if the surgery goes well, the dog won't be out of the woods for the next seven to 10 days," he said. "We'll have to watch out for complications."

Hall said he thought the dog likely would be placed in foster care if she survives.