

Gone Goat: Hardin residents asked to be on the lookout for a cloven-hoofed critter, which isn't the devil this time

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer
September 17 2018 10:59 AM



HARDIN – The Calhoun County Sheriff's Office is asking the public's help in finding what authorities have described as a “very skittish” goat.

The goat has been described as weighing around 75 pounds. She is white and approaching two years old. Her last known address was a farm in Carlinville managed by David Shelton. She is a Saanen breed of dairy goat and is worth between \$150-\$200. She was last seen near Hurley Dodge in Hardin.

She went missing last week on Sept. 8 when Shelton's grandchildren were showing her alongside her fellow goats at the Calhoun County Fair. Someone left the gate open, and two goats escaped. This goat crossed the road, hopped up a hill and escaped – after getting tangled in some undergrowth.

“This is not a prank,” Calhoun County Chief Deputy Kyle Jacobs said. “This has been an actual ongoing complaint for a week. We have a good sense of humor on our Facebook, but this was an actual legitimate posting.”

Shelton said he plans on going to Calhoun with his trailer full of goats to lure the wayward goat back into the herd. He said she is not exactly a pet goat, but would not likely run from people. Shelton's assessment is directly in contradiction to a witness report from near Hurley Dodge. That witness told deputies the goat was very skittish – hence the description above.

“When she got out, I was told about 25 people chased her,” Shelton said. “If they wouldn't have run after her trying to catch her, she probably wouldn't have even left the barn after someone left the gate open.”

He said the dairy goat was not used for milk or cheese, but was instead utilized to nurse orphaned lambs. He described himself as a “hobby farmer,” saying those goats have been shown by his children at several county fairs, but are now being shown by his grandchildren. Calhoun County was the only county fair this year, however.

As for the recapture of the goat, Shelton said his goat will return to the herd if it bleats for her. He said bringing her fellow goats to the last location in which she was spotted (Hurley Dodge Sunday night) will lure her out of hiding. Shelton said he would not be surprised if the goat simply walked onto the trailer upon hearing her comrades calling for her.

Jacobs said he is concerned for motorists who may encounter the wayward goat in traffic. He said the last thing he wants to see is the goat killed in the streets or having a motorist wreck after trying to avoid striking her. He said he is not otherwise concerned for the goat's well-being, adding there was plenty of water to drink and grass for grazing in Calhoun County.

Anyone who spots this goat is asked to contact Shelton at (217) 556-0373.