

Scott, Daniel and Hunter Wright

2159 7th Avenue North

It was a dark and stormy day. It was my birthday. My dog ran away. If not for some heroic Historic Kenwood neighbors, my situation might have turned into a bad country music song. I was at the grocery store when a storm came crashing down on September 5th. Normally, I wouldn't have left my eight-year-old Lab/Mastiff mix Barrymore in the backyard but he was sleeping so comfortably in the shade when I left that I hated to wake him. After all, this was just a quick trip to the store. I hadn't counted on a sudden storm. Barrymore is mortally frightened of thunder, lightning and rain. He had been abandoned to the elements in the chain-link fenced yard of a home for who knows how long before I rescued him. Then, he was a hairless bag of bones, with teeth falling out due to malnutrition. It took three weeks in the animal hospital to save his life. Several months later, he was in the hospital again where he had half of a cancerous jaw removed. When we arrived home, the gate was open and Barrymore was gone. In the pouring rain, we walked and drove the entire neighborhood, calling his name. We put up flyers, called the shelters and vets, posted on Nextdoor Historic Kenwood, Craigslist and Facebook. Seeing how devastated I was, neighbors - especially Maggie Mae Robertson and a dedicated woman named Diane who volunteers for Lost and Found Pets - joined the search. Twenty-six hours later, there still was no sign of Barrymore. I had nearly given up hope when the phone rang. "Did you lose a brown dog with a red collar?" a man asked. He and his teen sons had recognized Barrymore from our flyers. "He's under the bleachers at St. Pete High School. The gates are locked, and he can't get out." A police officer was there with the man and boys when I arrived, and it took a climb over a tall chain link fence (don't tell!) and a Keystone Cops chase up and down and around the football field, but we finally captured my very frightened Barrymore. I could never have done this alone. One of the boys even removed his belt, so I could use it for a leash. I offered them a reward, but they refused several times. They were just happy that my dog was found and wished me a happy birthday before going on their way. Scott, Daniel and Hunter Wright and the many folks who helped in the search are the kind of people who make Historic Kenwood such an exceptional neighborhood.

Thank you, all! — Charla Cribb