

## PI Jamie Katz Lost and Found Pets

June 17, 2016

<<<<<<<<>Look Who's Home<>>>>>>>>>

Missing for 13 days in Miami, FL and FOUND 700 MILES AWAY in Atlanta, Georgia!!!  
Benjamin the Ferret is now SAFE & HOME, here is Ben's story.

I don't even know where to begin. These past 13 days have felt like an eternity to me. I have never in my life felt more sad, scared and worried than in these past 2 weeks. I couldn't sleep, lost my appetite, and couldn't focus on anything but trying to get Ben home.

Benjamin escaped from my house Monday, May 30th. My family and I were looking around my house for several hours because he tends to always find a new sleep spots (inside the sofa, under the mattress, etc.) After a few hours of no Ben, I came to the harsh realization that he had escaped. I went around the neighborhood calling his name and squeaking his favorite toy. Every person I saw I asked if they had seen him, but they hadn't. After about 2 hours my boyfriend came over to help me make flyers and continue to look. We put them up all around my neighborhood and passed them out to anyone we saw. We along with my family and friends stayed looking for Benjamin until about 2:30 am. I couldn't sleep that night nor did I want to. I just wanted to know Ben was safe. I had a million things going through my mind of what could've been happening to him. I did not go to work the following morning to continue my search.

One of my Facebook friends had seen my posts and messaged me letting me know about PI Jamie Katz and her success stories. I immediately got in contact with her and explained what was going on and asked if she could help me. Jamie explained to me that she had never tracked a Ferret with her dogs but they would definitely give it their best. Once Jamie and her two dogs arrived at my house we went with each of them to look for Ben. I spent the whole rest of the day with my family and friends searching the area her dogs had scent and putting up my homemade flyers.

At 9:30pm that same night, I received an e-mail from Jamie with a screenshot of an Instagram photo that had been posted to Jamie's post she made for Benjamin on Facebook.

It was Ben!!!! The caption on the Instagram photo was "Free rescued ferret. Very sweet & domesticated. Message me if interested" As soon as I saw the picture I ran home and immediately requested to follow the owner of the Instagram account. I ended up getting in contact with her and she told me that he was found in Miramar (45 minutes north of my house)?? She also told me that her boyfriend had given Ben away to someone that was driving up to Georgia the night before. I asked her if she could give me the contact info of the person because I would go any distance in the world to get Ben back. She told me she had no idea who the person was and she would let me know if she figured it out.

For some reason I had a bad feeling about the whole situation. I felt as though she wasn't going to cooperate and I was right. I sent her a text the following morning trying to get her to sympathize with me and let me know who had him. I immediately got a phone call from a random number yelling at me and telling me if I contacted the girl again that they would call the cops on me for harassment?? I was so confused.

How is wanting my pet back considered harassment? I then called the police to file an information report. Their response to my story and frustration was, "There's not much we can do." My dad and I then drove up to Miramar (where Ben was supposedly found) to file a police report there. The cops in Miramar were much nicer and more helpful. They assured me they were going to do everything they could to get Mr. Benjamin back home. My dad spoke to the detective in charge of the case and explained to him in further detail everything that was going on. Right off the bat he said this could be considered theft and charged as a criminal case. We were excited because this would turn it from a civil case into a criminal one, meaning the police would be able to intervene.

Unfortunately, as many people warned me, you can't always count on the police and they were right. The cops tried reaching out to the woman whom had posted the Instagram photo of Ben, only to also be accused of harassment. The detective in charge of the case called my dad to let him know "There's not much more we can do". The police claimed it was a liability for them to continue on with the case and they dropped out just like that! I felt like I had hit a brick wall and I didn't know what to do. I contacted one of my animal lawyer friends and explained to him what was going on. He told me that the law views animals as property and that there are laws set in place for "property" that is being wrongfully held. He advised me to get a writ of replevin from a clerk at the courthouse. (Court order demanding to give Ben back). I went and spoke to the clerk but she told me I needed to file a suit and who knows

how long that would take. I had lost hope. I didn't know when and if I would ever see my little guy again. I felt my heart breaking. I needed to get him home.

Jamie Katz then figured out that the girl who posted the picture of Ben was dating my neighbor!!! My dad and I walked over to his apartment to speak to him since we had gotten no cooperation from his girlfriend. Two ladies opened the door and told me he was not there (even though we heard a male's voice). All I wanted was to ask him who he gave Benjamin to. I spent all Saturday (June 4th morning) e-mailing every lawyer in South Florida that is a member of the animal committee. The best advice I received was to take it to small claims court and contact, "Help Me Howard".

For the prior week Jamie had been telling my dad and I to put up her professional lost signs up, according to the mapping she did. To be honest, I didn't really see the point since the homemade flyers I had already printed out had all the same information. That morning, while I was emailing lawyers, my dad gave in after Jamie got a little stern with us and he went to Staples to pick up Jamie's signs. My dad put them up where Jamie's two dogs took us and within 30 minutes the phone call we were hoping for came in.

"Hi is this the owner of the ferret?" I didn't know what to expect when I heard that. The guy on the phone told me he had found Benjamin Monday afternoon in front of the apartment down the hall from his mother's place. I immediately went over and knocked on his door and asked, "Do you have my ferret"? His name was Rick, he then explained to me everything that happened and how he felt so bad because he saw me putting up my fliers and he saw me looking for Ben. He let me know that once he saw me, he called the guy he gave Ben to (we will call him Jim) but Jim told Rick "it's too late".

I told Rick that all I want is my little Benjamin back, I didn't understand why I couldn't get the contact name and info from Jim & his girlfriend. The finder then called Jim and flat out told him that he was going to cooperate with him to help get this girls Ferret back period. Rick ended up acting as a mediator because Jim still would not talk to me or my father. We came to the agreement that my dad and I were going to drive the following weekend to Atlanta to meet the people who had Ben in the parking lot of a bowling alley close to where the people lived.

On Friday afternoon my dad and I left Miami for Atlanta. It wasn't until 700 miles & about 10 hours later that we arrived to the parking lot of the bowling alley. We arrived at about 2 pm and a minute later a van pulled up right next to us. It was a guy with 2 American bull dogs in his car. He lowered the window and said, "Stephanie?" while holding up Benjamin Sir Stinky Toes. I could not believe it!!!!!! I got out of the car to get Ben, I gave him so many hugs & kisses. I was so happy to be reunited with him!!!! Benjamin was in shock at first. My dad and I were worried that he was sick but after a few moments he started sniffing me and he was himself again. He started licking my hand and cheek, he was so happy to be back with his family. I kept trying to take a good selfie with him but he was so excited he couldn't sit still. As soon as we got back to Miami, Ben was reunited with Bella (my female ferret), it had been almost 2 weeks that they were separated. Bella was so happy she wouldn't stop sniffing him and following him all over the place.

Through this I realized there are more important things in life than material things. Several weeks before I had lost my favorite watch and thought it was the end of the world. It's not until you lose something that is truly irreplaceable that you realize material things have no real intrinsic value. (I found my watch a few days ago and don't care at all lol). I also realized there are more good people in this world than I thought. People who I didn't even consider myself to be friends with contacted me every day to ask how my search for Ben was going and if there was anything they could do to help. I am forever grateful to those who helped and were concerned about Benjamin's safety!!!!!! I am now reunited with my fur ball & I will never let him go!!!!

- Stephanie Evans in Miami, FL