

# Newsday

## Downright Dogged In Rescue

by Celeste Hadrick

Nassau Legis. David Denenberg and a friend, **Stephen Turman**, were driving to an event at Camman's Pond in Merrick yesterday when they noticed a crowd gathered on the fishing dock.

A man who waved them over reported that a dog was crying under the dock. That led to an impromptu rescue effort in which Turman donned a wet suit and waded into the water to rescue the dog - a Belgian Tervuren named Max who had been missing since Tuesday.

Denenberg said he went to the county park to take promotional photos of new solar-powered, self-compacting trash cans, and that he had asked Turman to come along.

Denenberg said that after coming across the dog, he dialed 911 and also called over a public works maintenance crew working at the pond. The crew pulled up sections of the

dock and could see the dog caught between the pond's concrete filter and the dock's pilings. But they couldn't reach him, Denenberg said.

Denenberg said that while he was trying to pry up one of the dock's grates, Turman, a Garden City lawyer who ran unsuccessfully for Hempstead town clerk in 2007, donned the bottom half of a wet suit provided by a neighbor - he couldn't fit into the top - and waded into the cold water.

"The dog was trapped between some branches and debris up against the concrete," Turman said. "Its head was barely sticking out of the water. If it rained, the dog would have been a goner."

He said the dog seemed to recognize he was getting help. "The dog was really sweet and calm. He was shivering. He looked really scared, but you could tell he was a really good

dog."

Once the dog was on the ground, bystanders wrapped him in blankets, Denenberg said, adding that he found the name "Max" and a phone number on the dog's collar.

Within minutes, a grateful John Amarusio, who lives less than a mile from the pond, came to collect his 8-year-old dog, missing since Tuesday night. "He's fine. He's walking around. We cleaned him up a bit," Amarusio said several hours later. "His back legs were very cold."

Amarusio said he had searched the neighborhood for the dog, who requires daily medication to prevent epileptic seizures. "It's been a tough two days," he said.