

# ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

(By ADAM TOWNSEND)

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## Missing bulldog found 80 miles away, under new name After 4 years of separation between dog and owners reunite.

This true story happened on March 2009 at Grand Pet Clinic Veterinary Hospital. We hope it will serve as a reminder to our clients and the public at large. The cost of a microchip including registration is ONLY 20 DOLLARS (Dr. Roy Kraemer)

Dr. Kraemer examining an English Bulldog patient before placing the microchip



**SANTA ANA** - Chico was an English bulldog. An expensive one. Four years ago, he disappeared from his Victorville home without a trace. But thanks to a piece of electronics the size of a grain of rice, he reappeared, 80 miles away in Santa Ana, living under the name of Rosco.

"We've never had a case like that, where someone got a dog back after four years," said Cpl. Sondra Berg, supervisor for Santa Ana Police Department's Animal Services. "I'm glad the owners had the wherewithal to microchip him as a puppy – it's like a LoJack for dogs." Louie and Eleanor Amezcuita live in two-story, tan-stucco house in Victorville and bought a puppy from a breeder for \$1,800. Louie Amezcuita was a big fan of the classic 1990s comedy "Friday," in which the main character had a bulldog named Chico. Hence, that would be the name of his dog. In October 2004, eight months after getting him, Louie Amezcuita was in the garage. It was a sunny morning, shortly after dawn. As he opened the garage door to pull his van out for work – he installs tile and granite – the pooch took off. Louie and Eleanor looked everywhere. So did their four teenage children: Louie Jr., who was 19; Valerie, 18; Raymond, 16; and Andrew, 15. They put up flyers, filed a police report and, for four months, searched the streets. But even with the police on his trail, Chico was nowhere to be found. The couple was so distraught by the loss of their dog that Eleanor Amezcuita's sister bought them another English bulldog they named Chico Jr. But in a few months, Chico Jr. disappeared as well.

### ROSCO

Last month, on the 25th, a couple showed up at the [Grand Pet Care Center in Santa Ana](#). They were on their way to Mexico, and they came to see [Dr. Roy Kraemer](#), a veterinarian. To take an animal over the border, travelers need a Department of Food and Agriculture Health Certificate, which requires a vet to sign off on the animal's health. As [Dr. Kraemer](#) examined the bulldog, the Santa Ana couple chatted in Spanish with the vet tech: The couple mentioned they found the dog four years ago and named him Rosco.

[Grand Pet Care Animal Hospital](#) has a special scanner ([click here](#)) that reads most brands of microchips, so the tech scanned the dog along the back of its neck, where chips are usually injected. The next day, the nurse told [Dr. Kraemer](#) about the chip and called the chip company – information on the dog showed contact numbers for the Amezcuitas, the original owners, and that there was a police report for the missing dog.

[Dr. Kraemer's](#) office called the Amezcuitas. *"We were both excited – the kids were excited, too,"* Eleanor Amezcuita said. *"Everybody was close with the dog."* Santa Ana's Animal Services was also contacted.

"I called the people who had the dog in their possession," Cpl. Berg said. "She was already at the airport getting ready to leave." The woman was distraught that the Amezquitas wanted their dog back.

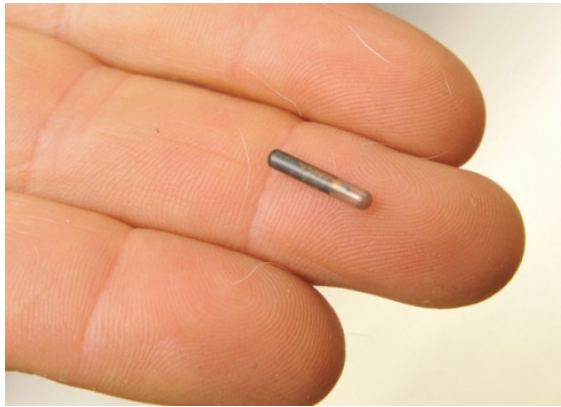
"I'm trying to make you understand, if you don't give the dog back, you're in serious legal trouble," Berg told her. That afternoon, a friend or family member of the couple dropped the dog off at the doc's office.

Dr. Kraemer demonstrates how a microchip would be inserted under a dog's skin. The microchips cause the dogs no pain and will function properly for any dog's lifespan. Chips are typically inserted above a dog's shoulder blades.



### CHICO

Berg scooped up Chico and let the amiable bulldog hang out in the back of her patrol van for the rest of the afternoon as she did her rounds; the dog was seemingly unconcerned that he was now in the custody of the authorities. Louie and Eleanor Amezquita drove the 80 miles from Victorville that night to pick up the dog. The shelter was closed. But Berg waited in the parking lot to make the handoff. Now, Rosco is at her old and new home, with the Amezquitas. The family decided to call the dog Rosco not Chico, so as not to, confuse the canine. He was sad the first few days Eleanor Amezquita said, but he's coming around,".



Dr. Kraemer holds a discarded Avid microchip. Each chip contains an unalterable alphanumeric code unique to the chip. Chips like this one are used by veterinarians and law enforcement for pet identification. The unit is slightly larger than a grain of rice