

April 14, 2014

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A California truck driver was reunited with his Pit Bull today thanks to the family that took care of her, the police officer who found her, and the animal shelter staff that found the microchip.

Gracie, a brindle and white Pit Bull, was overjoyed to see her “dad,” Charles Boettcher, who drove from California to Burleson to pick her up.

“He said it was the longest three days of his life,” Kim Peckler, Burleson’s animal control supervisor, said of the days between when Charles was notified and the time he pulled up to the shelter on John Jones Dr.

Charles and Gracie were separated in November 2013 when Charles stopped his truck at a truck stop at Everman Parkway in south Fort Worth. Charles’ regular truck route was from California to Texas. He won’t forget that November trip.

“He said he got out, tied Gracie outside, ordered some tacos, then went back out and sat with her,” Peckler said. “He went back in the truck stop to pay for the tacos, and before he got back someone had stolen his dog.”

Gracie ended up in Burleson, and then got loose. The Pit Bull was found on Cedar Ridge in Burleson by Amber Pippin, her husband and her 3-year-old son. They took Gracie to check for a microchip but that scanner did not pick up on a chip. The Pippins posted signs to try and find Gracie’s owner but no luck. Amber and her family took Gracie in, took her to a veterinarian and Gracie got all of her shots.

Fast forward to April 10, 2014. Burleson Police officers found Gracie, who had gotten loose, and dropped her off at an overnight pen at the Burleson Animal Shelter. On April 11, when the shelter staff scanned Gracie for a microchip, this scanner found the microchip and showed that Charles had reported Gracie stolen in November. Amber called the animal shelter to report the Pit Bull missing. That’s when the staff told her that Charles reported Gracie stolen in November.

“Amber came up to the shelter that day to say her goodbyes. She asked us if we could give Charles her phone number because her 3-year-old son wanted to say goodbye to Gracie. We did, and they all met at the shelter this morning,” Peckler said.

The shelter is closed to the public on Mondays, but this time Peckler said they made an exception. Charles had adopted Gracie from an animal shelter in California. The Pit Bull rode with him for 2-1/2 years before she was taken from the truck stop.

“He was very happy,” Peckler said.