

## **Miss. pup heads back home after landing in LC**

**By Jason Gibbs [jgibbs@lcsun-news.com](mailto:jgibbs@lcsun-news.com)**

**Posted: 05/11/2011 12:57:10 AM MDT**

LAS CRUCES - What started as a doggone shame has ended in a story that has tails wagging across several state lines.

A Mississippi mutt named Teddy, a terrier mix less than a year old, turned up this week at the Animal Services Center of the Mesilla Valley in Las Cruces, roughly 1,170 miles from his home in Diamondhead, Miss. Now, his human family down south is overjoyed after shelter staff checked the pup's microchip and told them the well-traveled Teddy was safe and sound in Las Cruces.

Only Teddy knows for sure how he came from the Mississippi gulf coast, across Louisiana and the vast expanse of Texas to land on the playground at Highland Elementary School where he was picked up. A microchip scan came back with the owners' contact information and, according to ASCMV assistant director Curtis Herring, the owner "wants his dog back."

In fact, four members of the Murphy family have been hoping for Teddy's rapid return since he disappeared just before Christmas.

"I think someone took him for a Christmas present," said Caroline Murphy. "We called every shelter in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama. We put up fliers that said 'all we want for Christmas is our puppy back.'"

While the family has another hound in the home, Teddy is special to Caroline, as well as the rest of the family - her husband, Patrick, and daughters Annie, 14, and Charlotte, 8, had taken a special liking to their furry friend after adopting him just before Thanksgiving from the Hancock County animal shelter.

"That was our baby," Caroline said. "We've had a lot of dogs, but we've never loved one more than this one. He's a happy little guy."

Teddy was microchipped before adoption and local shelter officials say that made all the difference.

"We just want to prove to people in the community that microchipping works," Herring said. "It will reunite you with your pet. So get out there and microchip your pet."

Teddy doesn't yet have a plane ticket to get home, and there are details to be worked out. The pooch needs to be up to date on all shots and get a clean bill of health from the veterinarian before getting a boarding pass.

And the Murphys are still rounding up the price of a ticket. While he may not fly coach, Caroline says Teddy will certainly receive a first-class welcome when he gets home from his cross-country adventure.