



Animal Care Technicians Ben and Jeanette cuddle and play with a stray dog at the shelter — much like the dog, Lucky (shown below), they groomed for a special reunion with a woman who said her pet had vanished more than a year earlier. A microchip implant assisted in the fast reunion for the dog and rightful owner.

Matted Dog Gets Groomed For Nicer, Fancier Reunion

Animal Care Technicians Gonzalo “Ben” Barron and Jeanette Castro formed a compassionate combo in late September.

They seized the opportunity to do something extra special for a woman that was already very happy with the Department of Animal Services.

Animal Services reunited a dog named Lucky with Tara McHenry. She hadn’t seen her dog for more than a year. But thanks to a microchip implanted in Lucky, Ben was able to contact Ms. McHenry and give her the good news.

The woman rushed to the



shelter to claim her long-lost pet. There was a big problem, however. The impound fees were going to be a struggle for Ms. McHenry. Similar to so many other Americans at this time, she was on a very tight budget.

A shelter manager allowed her to take the animal home on a payment plan. But before the dog was released, Ben and Jeanette realized they had a chance to do something for Ms. McHenry that went beyond their job description.

Ben and Jeannette realized Ms. McHenry probably couldn’t immediately afford taking her dog to a professional groomer, something that was definitely needed after the dog’s ordeal as a stray. Little Lucky was very dirty and matted when it first came into the Riverside Shelter. So the two animal care technicians teamed up to wash and

groom her dog.

Unfortunately, The Pound Press Express tried to reach Ms. McHenry unsuccessfully. But Ben said the owner was very thankful to the Department of Animal Services.

Riverside County Animal Services Director Robert Miller said he loves hearing these types of stories.

“This is a very heartwarming story, especially when I know our shelter employees have had to endure a bigger workload in the aftermath of mandatory budget cuts and layoffs,” Miller said.

“This reaffirms my strong view that the county of Riverside is fortunate to have these types of caring individuals working inside the shelters looking after all the homeless pets,” added Miller.

The Pound Press Express is an online flash newsletter published weekly — and sometimes more! — by the Riverside County Department of Animal Services. It is sent via e-mail to anyone who would like to receive it. Want to be added to the e-mail list? Have a story idea? Did you adopt from us and you want to let us know how much you love your pet? Please e-mail Public Information Chief John Welsh at jjwelsh@co.riverside.ca.us

