

Lost Dog Found 1,200 Miles Away

Two years after Florida dog disappears, he's found in Illinois.

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A 5-year-old Golden Retriever named Sam-I-Am has been reunited with his owners two years and 1,200 miles after he disappeared from the family's home during a hurricane.

Tampa, Fla., resident Alice Baines and her son, Brett Baines, 9, arrived at O'Hare International Airport in Chicago to pick up Sam on Dec. 14. The last time they had seen him was in 2004, before a hurricane ripped apart a fence outside their home.

No one is sure how Sam made the 1,200 mile journey from Tampa to Chicago, although due to his good condition, it doesn't appear he walked, Illinois animal shelter officials said. Speculation is that Sam was probably picked up in Florida and taken to Illinois, only to get loose again.

Officials say a family in a small town in McHenry County, Ill., found Sam wandering around and took him to the McHenry County animal shelter. Animal control workers were then able to trace his origins using a microchip implant in his body.

Alice Baines said she got the good news that Sam had been found in the form of a phone call around 5 p.m. on Dec. 13 from the veterinarian who implanted the chip. She then booked the first available flight to Chicago to retrieve her dog.