

# Dog Gone Aggie Ring!

by Chris Carter '01

Few institutions have anything that can rival the value an Aggie finds in his or her Aggie Ring. It has been worn and recognized around the world for over a century by Aggies defending liberty on the cliffs of Normandy and securing contracts in the boardroom.

Many stories have been told of the Aggie Ring—complete strangers finding a new friend in a foreign airport, or a teary-eyed pensioner telling of the unique gold band on the hand that pulled him to freedom after the Holocaust—and it is these stories that add to the value of wearing the Aggie crest of gold on one's hand.

Steve Ortiz '00 and his wife of four years, Kirsten Ortiz '00, value their Aggie Rings greatly. So, it comes as no surprise that Steve was alarmed one morning in June while coming out of the shower when he discovered his Aggie Ring was not where he placed it the night before.

"I remember he called me at work that morning and asked me where he had left his Aggie Ring," Kirsten recalls. "Well, I remembered that he didn't leave it on the bathroom counter where he normally leaves it, but it was on the dresser in the bedroom." Kirsten decided to take an early lunch to help him look for it, and searched the area thoroughly. Then, something caught their eyes. A pair of scissors on the floor by the dresser gave them a clue. They now had a suspect.

Kristie, one of their two one-year-old German Shepherds had been playing in the bedroom while Steve was in the shower. The scissors were on the dresser next to his ring.

Steve called the veterinarian to see if there was any way they could figure out if Kristie had swallowed the ring, and they

made arrangements to have x-rays done later that afternoon. "Sure enough, we got the x-ray, and there was the Aggie Ring just sitting in her stomach," Kirsten remembers.

After inducing vomiting failed to produce the ring, the veterinarian suggested that they feed Kristie a banana a day as fiber to push it through her system—and wait.



Steve and Kirsten Ortiz, both Class of '00 with their two dogs, Kristie and Katie.

"The doctor said they had never had an Aggie Ring swallowed before," Kirsten says. "They had had a wedding ring and that took two weeks to come through."

So the Ortizes bought some bananas and waited.

"We waited and waited and fed her a banana a day, until she didn't like bananas anymore," Kirsten chuckles. "The dog who'll eat anything grew to not want anymore bananas."

After three weeks of waiting with no results, they took her back in for more x-rays. The ring was still in Kristie's stomach.

Knowing the ring could damage the lining of the dog's stomach, Steve and Kirsten set up an appointment for the next morning to have the ring removed at the Texas A&M Small Animal Clinic.

The veterinarians slid a tube with a camera and prongs on the end down her throat. They got the ring with no problem and checked Kristie's throat and stomach for damage.

"It (the Aggie Ring) came out clean," Kirsten says with amazement. "I mean, it was shiny - it looked better than mine. 'We're careful now, though,' she says. 'Steve puts it on top of the armoire in the bedroom or he leaves it in his office on the desk and keeps the door shut.'"

Aggie Rings are indeed valuable to those blessed enough to earn them, but they are desired by many others—including a German Shepherd named Kristie.

Kristie's x-ray clearly shows an Aggie Ring.