

Spring 2006  
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# cgm magazine

celebrating greyhounds

## ALSO INSIDE:

Canine Flu  
Spooks



# The Track is Closing...

## What About the Greyhounds?



Bonnie, Age 12, adopted by Mike and Joanne Bast of Edgewater, Md.

## cgmagazine

The Magazine for Greyhound Adopters,  
Owners, and Friends  
Vol. 11; No. 1 Spring 2006

### Front Cover Credit:

A Trainer at Caliente Greyhound Park in Tijuana, Mexico walks the Greyhounds from the kennel to the track. GPA/California-Orange County and Greater Los Angeles (GPA/CA-OCGLA) established a pet kennel at Caliente Greyhound Park many years ago. Nearly all of the greyhounds placed by GPA/CA-OCGLA once raced at Caliente.  
Photo by Larry Fletcher/Fletcher Digital Images

### Back Cover Credit:

Three tired pets head home at the conclusion of GPA/Emerald Coast's Fifth Annual Hound Dog Howliday. Photo by Steve Bauer

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Ten years ago this summer, I got my first house and my first Greyhound. *On the same day.*

I remember pulling into the driveway in my tiny Toyota with a duffel bag, a mummy sack, and a trunk full of dog stuff, including a giant plastic crate. Since I came straight from my adoption appointment, I also had a 90 lb Greyhound in the backseat. The previous owners of the house handed me the key as they walked out the back door.

"It's yours," they said.

Herman and I spent a fitful night on the floor (the furniture would not arrive for another week). I crated Herman because I thought that was what I was supposed to do. He tossed and turned constantly, tags jingling. The next day, exhausted, I made a long-distance call to my mother.

"I'm all alone in this huge empty house with this HUGE dog and I'm not sure I can do this," I sobbed. "What have I gotten myself into?"

A lot has changed since then. Mom is gone. Herman and I are still here. Hattie and Hannah have joined us, and a station wagon big enough for all of us replaced the Toyota long ago. I have furniture that the dogs share with me from time to time. Although the house could use a coat of paint, I don't think my neighbors hold that against me.

I learned so much that summer — about home ownership, money management, how to be a good neighbor . . . and, of course, about Greyhounds. Hungry for more information about this new creature sharing my home, I pored over every item in the packet I got from my adoption group. And I sent in my subscription form for a brand-new publication: *Celebrating Greyhounds Magazine*.

With this issue, *Celebrating Greyhounds Magazine* has been in existence for ten years. A lot has changed in that time. Although a few adoption groups around in the summer of 1996 no longer exist, most do, and many others have formed since. The Greyhound adoption community has gotten more creative and successful about getting the word out about Greyhounds as pets, and placing Greyhounds in good homes. Adoption groups have worked hard to partner with people in the racing industry — track management, kennel owners, farmers, haulers, and racing dog owners, to name a few — to ensure that increasing numbers of Greyhounds can look forward to a life of retirement. The universe of stuff available to Greyhound pet owners — information, online support, local and national gatherings, vendor offerings, you name it — has expanded dramatically. And the sight of someone walking with a Greyhound down the street is not the rarity it used to be.

The contraction of the Greyhound racing industry over the past decade has certainly had a significant impact on the adoption community. Since Summer 1996, nine tracks have either closed their doors or ceased live racing (at this writing the future of a tenth, Plainfield, is still in question). Ten years ago, the closing of a Greyhound track meant a mad scramble by adoption groups nearest the facility to save as many dogs as they could, with the knowledge that many more would likely fall through the cracks. As the articles in this issue of *Celebrating Greyhounds Magazine* illustrate, that scenario is becoming increasingly dated. While nobody would argue that a track closing is anything but difficult for everyone involved in taking care of the Greyhounds, we've been through the drill a few times, we've learned from our experiences, and we can help each other.

I still remember what Mom told me, that first morning:

"Calm down. You can do this. Everything will be fine."

She was right.

## Celebrating Greyhounds Magazine

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Jake and Gabriel, adopted by Micky Foreman.

### Love Those Seniors

I just received your Fall 2005 issue yesterday and was thrilled to see it was devoted to senior Greyhounds. I just had to write and tell you how great it was to see all the informative articles and positive information about these other dogs. I adopted Zippin, a beautiful blue brindle, in October 1996 from NGAP in Philadelphia, Pa. She turned five that November. She was euthanized in June 2005 due to a break in her femur that appeared to be cancerous. Although she had slowed down, she was active until the day her bone broke and did not look her age. She was a certified therapy dog and enjoyed the attention she received at her visits to nursing homes. She was 13 years 7 months. In October 2004, I decided to adopt another Greyhound and when I went to NGAP I wanted to take a bounceback. That very day I came home with Greta, a little black-and-white female, who was 13 years old. She has a stiff right rear leg, but gets around well and does not

act her age at all. She turned 14 on August 8, 2005. She loves to play with her soft squeaky toys. She makes us laugh every day. I want everyone to know that taking an older Greyhound is rewarding and very satisfying to know they have a good home. I would not hesitate to take another older Greyhound when I'm ready to adopt again.

**Carol Squillace  
Pennsauken, N.J.**

I received my first issue of CG last week. I was delighted to see that it was devoted to seniors. My husband and I have made it our mission to adopt only seniors from now on. We got our first senior Greyhound, Reina, in 2002. Sadly, we only had her for five and half months, but she was an absolute joy and cemented our desire to adopt only seniors. A week or so after we adopted her, she slid off her bed and ended up under our bed. I heard a thrashing noise and looked over the edge of the bed to see only her back legs. I tried to pull her out without causing a

rug burn but her rib cage kept hitting the bottom of the bed. Not wanting to hurt her, I told her to stay calm, which she did, and I picked the bed up so she could get out. Needless to say, I was laughing but she managed to keep her dignity long enough to stalk out of the bedroom. Her charm and elegance live with us still. Since Reina, we've had Velma, whom we had only 15 months, and now Velma's sister Gigi, who we've nicknamed La Diva. Although we never have our senior girls as long as we like, we trade the sadness of losing them for the joy of their company. Besides, we can spoil them silly.

**Pat Durrwachter  
Dallas, Texas**

I was so pleased that the Fall 2005 issue was devoted to senior Greyhound adoption. After losing three old dogs in one year, I adopted AC Aleve (Mya), then Island Pirate (Seamus), who was a bounceback. Seamus is 10 years old and totally blind. But what joy he has brought us! My father has suffered



Lita, adopted by Donna Arcaro of Sunland, Ca.  
Colleen Summerfield

multiple health problems over the last couple of years, including impaired vision. He and Seamus bonded instantly. We refer to them as the "two blind old codgers." I have never had a dog that talks as much as Seamus. He and my father talk and argue with each other all day! Seamus was born and raced in Ireland until he was brought to this country at the age of 5. I swear he kissed the Blarney Stone before he left his homeland. I taught Seamus how to go up and down stairs for the first time in his life. Now he is an old pro at it. Who says you can't teach an old dog new tricks? With Seamus, I do not worry about the future. I enjoy and am grateful for every day of love that I have with him. I would highly recommend to everyone to adopt a senior Greyhound, even one with special needs. The rewards are beyond description.

Karen Lindley  
Pittsburgh, Pa.

I adopted Callie at age nine three years ago from Greysland. She was a brood mama. She is by far the best four-legged companion I have ever had, but I know I am preaching to the choir! I always leaf through your magazine the day I get it, enjoying the photos and scanning the articles to be read more thoroughly later. But yesterday's edition was exceptional for us. Your articles

on aging Greyhounds are very timely for me, especially "The Oldest Old" (Fall 2005 CG). A month ago, Callie suddenly could not walk unassisted and seemed very disoriented. The emergency veterinarian, our veterinarian, and a neurologist all suspected a disc problem, seizure, or cancer. No one mentioned Old Dog Vestibular Disease! I am now sending a copy of the article to all of them, as I believe this is what Callie had. She is back to her old self now, thankfully, but I think I know what happened, and that it can happen again. I will approach it differently next time, and will be researching the condition. And we will always walk with the cell phone, just in case.

Tinka Perry  
Westford, Mass.

We lost our Greyhound, Hope, on June 6, two months short of her fifteenth birthday, to lumbosacral stenosis. I cried as I read "The Oldest Old." It was as though I had written it myself as we spent our final months together. After she died, I had a thousand questions regarding her care, whether I did enough for her, etc. Thanks for such an informative article. I know now I did all I could for her and would gladly do it again for her if given the chance.

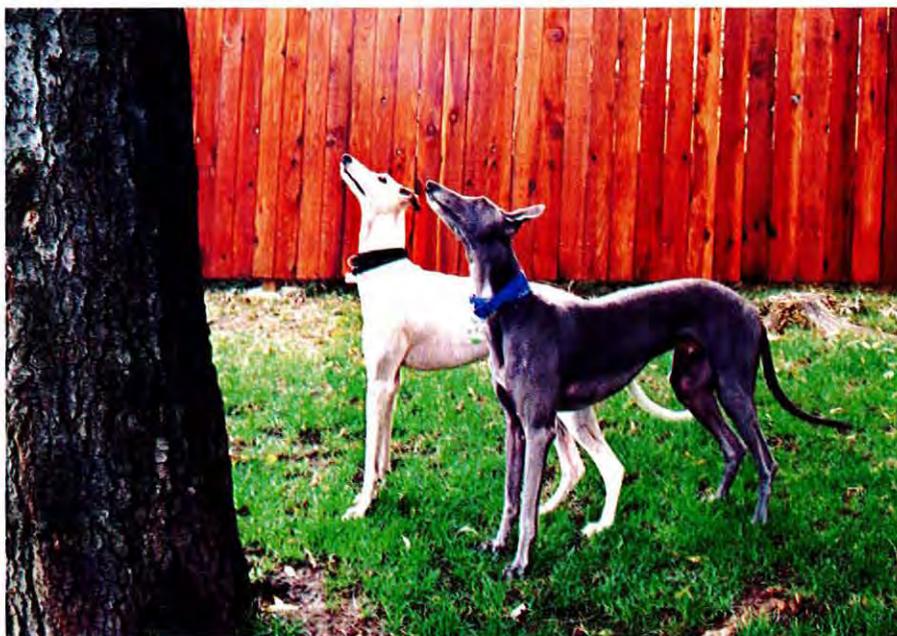
Patricia Cooke  
Via E-Mail

### Good News: Our Dog is in CG! And the Bad News . . . .

I was thrilled to see my darling 12 and a half year old Alice's picture in the latest issue of CG Magazine, focusing on seniors. However, I feel it was the worst possible representation of her. Alice has never growled or shown any type of aggression in her life. In fact, she is by far the biggest grinner and kisser we have ever seen or been owned by in 18 years of adopting Greyhounds. We feel that this was a total misrepresentation of her, and that there should have been a disclaimer below her picture. Several friends have written (one even phoned) regarding this picture. They all say they were shocked to know that Alice had sleep/space aggression. They all know her as an extremely adorable, grinning girl. I sent about eight other beautiful pictures of her. Even if you had used one of these to show her "true" self I would have been totally OK with it. Alice is my heart girl and to see her depicted as vicious made me extremely upset. I realize that you can do whatever you wish with the pictures you receive. However, I hope that you will print this letter or a note of apology and explanation.

Pamela and Fernand Samson  
Peterborough, Ontario

*Alice's photograph appeared on page 10, illustrating Lee Livingood's column on sleep startle and space aggression. Needless to say, had the*



BeBop and Blue, adopted by Heidi and David Jarvis of Pullman, Wash.

photographer included an explanatory note explaining Alice's behavior as depicted in the photograph, we would not have used this image to illustrate Lee's article. We apologize!—Ed.

In Dr. Barr's article in the Fall 2005 issue ("Caring for Your Aging Greyhound"), he states in no uncertain terms that "allowing an older Greyhound to run is courting disaster." I've never heard such a thing before, not from Greyhound owners, breeders, trainers, or veterinarians. What exactly is "old" (since hounds, as do people, age differently)? Does Dr. Barr mean NO running at all? No long-distance racing, but a short sprint around the backyard is OK? I know my boys would miss our morning jobs (and their occasional figure-eights in the backyard). Although we might not go the full distance as they get older, they sure still want to go out — the same as I do, and I'm no youngster. Could he please be a little more specific?

Bonnie Baron  
Los Angeles, Calif.

Dr. Rodger Barr responds: *This question — Why should one restrict the freewheeling exercise opportunities of aging, retired racers? — has caused me much more consternation than I would have thought. I compare this inquiry to the*



Looker, Adopted by Sue and Ed Bulsza of Doylestown, Pa.



Golden Flyer, adopted by Maureen and Ed Nelms of Saanichton, B.C., Canada. *Jerry Shulman*

question: "Is cigarette smoke bad for you?" I have preached this for so long, I guess took it for granted that the whole world is fully aware of the risks and dangers. Struggling with the response, as I have, I decided to answer with the list of the injuries I have managed in my practice since receiving this question about my article. In the month of November alone, I managed retired Greyhounds with the following activity-related problems: Three dislocated toes; six lacerations from running into yard equipment (most commonly a barbecue grill, with swing sets a close second); one broken neck (a condition I see at least four times a year, usually from running into a fence while chasing a small furry creature); four ruptured discs, one of which resulted in euthanasia due to total paralysis; and assorted split webs, spike wounds, and housemate-generated lacerations resulting from the heat of outdoor competition. We all love to watch these magnificent athletes run, none more than I, but they are retired, they are aging, and they are out of shape. Their running days

should be over. Walking or standard jogging provides more than adequate exercise. It's not always as easy or convenient as opening the back door, but it certainly saves on wear and tear, especially if the Greyhound's mind is willing but his body is not up to the task (as is the case with many of our pets). I guarantee that walking with a cautious eye will rarely result in injury, let alone loss of life.

### Remembering EJ's Douglas

I can't tell you what it meant to my wife and I to read the article on EJ's Douglas ("EJ's Douglas: Hall of Fame Resident," Fall 2005 CG). We never met Doug but we were certain he was special because we adopted two of his offspring: Sharon's Girl and Tiger Jim (their mother was Tiger Jean). When we adopted these two five years ago, we told our local adoption group that we wanted two females. They called to say they had a female for us. Before they brought her out for us they said they wanted us to meet a male, Tiger



Jolina, adopted by Jennifer Cotterell and Brent Gardella.

Jim. He was still 30 feet away from us when I caught a good look at his face. I knew right then he was going home with us. He was a clown from the beginning. Then Sharon's Girl came out and our hearts completely melted down. Before we even knew they were brother and sister, we knew they were going home with us. That was almost six years ago. Since then, Jasmin and Jammin have participated in dozens of meet-and-greets to promote Greyhound adoption. We have also adopted one of Doug's "grandchildren" — Flame Star, now Joshua. He is just like his grand-dad: Kind, gentle, loving, and terrific with children. I hope this letter finds all the right people and brings a smile to their faces as much as your article brought a

smile to mine. We are always trying to locate other siblings. We've met a few, and they are all very special. Maybe we can correspond further and arrange a trip to the Hall of Fame where Jasmin, Jammin, and Josh can meet the folks and see something of their famous father and grand-dad.

Bob and Karen Giddings  
Hillsboro, Mo.

Thank you for the excellent article on EJ's Douglas; it certainly touched my heart. Our first Greyhound was GNC Wind Dancer, aka Dancer. One of EJ's Douglas's offspring, he was our "goofy boy." Unfortunately, we lost him at the age of eight to spindle cell sarcoma. Our lives will

never be the same; he made an impression on our heart that we will never forget. He is the reason we are still fostering and adopting Greyhounds. Dancer will forever be in our hearts. Seeing Doug was like seeing a mirror image of Dancer.

Cindy and Dave Goodline  
Auburn, Mass.

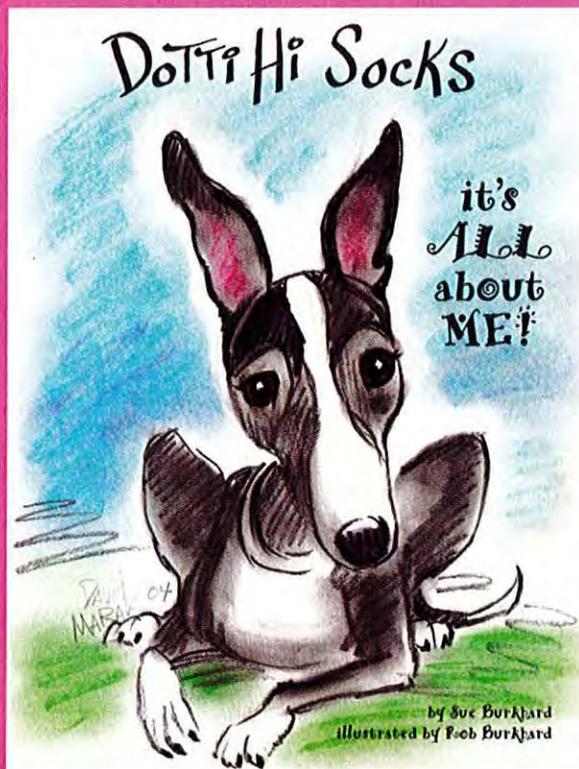
### Riley's Heartworm

As I read the touching article about Riley ("Riley's Story," Fall 2005 CG), the tears started to flow. My own sweet Greyhound, Bree-Anne, came to my side immediately, with a look of concern in her dark eyes. I bent down close, hugged her, and softly spoke these words: "Riley just wanted to run, he just wanted to run." Bless you Riley, now you can run fast and run free beyond the Rainbow Bridge. One pill, once a month is such a simple way to prevent this deadly disease. I will get copies of Riley's poster and help spread the word about the dangers of heartworm infestation. Riley's death will not be in vain.

Chris Dennison  
Grand Rapids, Mich.

*Thank you for your letters (up to 300 words) and photographs. Please send letters and photos by mail to Celebrating Greyhounds Magazine, Attn: Editor, PO Box 120048, Saint Paul, MN 55112. Letters sent via e-mail to [editor@adopt-a-greyhound.org](mailto:editor@adopt-a-greyhound.org) are also welcome. Please include your home telephone number if you would like your letter to be considered for publication. Letters may be edited for brevity and/or clarity.*

*We regret that we cannot publish every letter and photo. ■*



# Dotti Hi Socks: It's all about me!

By Karyn Zoldan

*Dotti Hi Socks: It's all about me!*  
By Sue Burkhard (2005)  
\$18.00

**D***otti Hi Socks: It's ALL about Me* is the story of a love-hate-love relationship between a very special greyhound and Sue Burkhard, the author and adopter. If you're signed on to the greyhoundlist.org listserv, your appetite for the Hotti Dotti stories has already been piqued and the delightful book with 30 vignettes doesn't disappoint. As a matter of fact, it leaves us wanting a sequel soon. However, if you're just meeting Dotti for the first time, then get ready for a few chuckles.

According to Burkhard, Snotti Dotti is dumber than a box of rocks and has a nose like a pig, ears twice as large as her body, and a bushy tail that could be used to clean a toilet bowl. Despite all her alleged faults Naughti Dotti's one redeeming feature is that she is cute and knows it. Can she get by on cuteness alone? You bet she can, especially when she snuggles with one of Burkhard's beaus who by the end of the evening wants to take the Hot-to-Trotti Dotti home with him. Burkhard thinks the defective Dotti is a sham and makes frequent calls to the adoption group where she got Dotti. They just chuckle, pretend there's a bad connection, and hang up the phone.

Most of the stories are laugh-out-loud funny. It's simply human nature to breathe a sigh of relief when we catch a glimpse of our hounds' antics mirrored from a safe distance. Burkhard's gift as a wordsmith transforms everyday situations into comedic episodes lightly dusted with poignancy, while the whimsical illustrations deftly drawn by her brother Rob Burkhard abstractly capture the quirky elegance of Dotti Hi Hoe Socks.

To order the book, visit the Web site at <http://www.greyhound-support.org/Dotti/index.htm> or send a check for \$18.00 plus \$2.00 S&H to Greyhound Support, Attn: Dotti book, 3900 N. 99th Street, Kansas City, KS 66109. All proceeds from the sale of the book are split among the following non-profit organizations: Greyhound Support in Kansas City, Animal Aid, Humane Society of Southwestern Michigan, and Wolverine K9 Search & Rescue.

Whether you have a Potti Dotti on your couch or not, she will carve a hole in your heart and massage your funny bone, all the while making you ache for more. My only regret is that I wish my book was pawtographed. ■

*Karyn Zoldan is a CG copy editor.*



Heidi, adopted by Natalie and Steve of Raymond, N.H., succumbed to kidney disease in 2003. New treatment options have the potential to extend the lives of dogs like Heidi.

# New Treatment Options for Kidney Disease

By William E. Feeman III, DVM

**K**idney disease is a relatively common condition in dogs. When the kidneys fail to filter the blood adequately, substances build up in the blood that make the dog sick. Symptoms of kidney disease range from increased water intake to severe lethargy. Most cases of kidney disease are not curable, and supportive measures are taken to extend the dog's life expectancy and improve the quality of his life. Supportive measures include prescription kidney diets, regular subcutaneous fluid administration, and treatment with medications such as stomach acid reducers and phosphorous binders. Severe cases may require hospitalization and intravenous fluid therapy.

Two treatment options are now available that may help in some cases of kidney disease: Kidney transplantation, which replaces the diseased kidney with a new, functioning kidney; and kidney dialysis, which artificially replaces some of the filtering functions of the kidneys. Both of these treatments, though expensive and infrequently performed at present, are becoming increasingly available, in large part because clients are requesting them.

## Kidney Transplants

Kidney transplantation is a very rare procedure in a dog. Some referral facilities may perform this surgery weekly on cats but only very rarely on dogs. The primary reason for this is the risk of rejection of the organ by the recipient. Immunosuppressive drug therapy is less dependable in dogs than it is in cats. Transplantations are never performed on an emergency basis, and patients must be stabilized prior to surgery. Early referral, before significant complications of

end-stage kidney disease develop, is preferred.

The cost of the procedure can be staggering. The testing related to the transplantation is extensive (see Table 1). The surgery and its associated costs often run in excess of \$10,000 (in addition, unexpected complications could add to the expense). Following surgery, the animal remains hospitalized for ten to 14 days. The recipient is kept on a regimen of immunosuppressive drugs that normally cost \$150 per month for small dogs and as much as \$2,000 per month for giant breeds. Most institutions that perform kidney transplantation surgery ask that the recipient's family also find an appropriate donor dog. A donor dog can be obtained by some institutions, but the recipient's family pays for all testing related to the transplantation and must agree to provide a home for the dog and care for it after surgery. Ideal donors should be less than 6 years of age, healthy, and of similar size and body weight to the recipient. Though preferable, the dogs do not have to be of the same breed. Donor dogs can live perfectly normal and healthy lives after surgery.

Following surgery, the recipient requires twice-daily medications and weekly blood tests (these are not included in the surgical



Blue Magoo, adopted by Barbara Homer of Walnut Creek, Calif.

cost estimate). Based on the results of these tests, the frequency of testing and immunosuppressive medication may decrease over time. The major complications associated with transplantation surgery include acute rejection of the donated kidney, infection, and side effects associated with the immunosuppressive drugs (liver toxicity, bone marrow suppression, vomiting, diarrhea, and cancer). Immunosuppressive drugs following organ transplantation have been associated with a one hundredfold increase in cancer in humans. Approximately 10 percent of cats who undergo a kidney transplant will

develop some form of cancer that is believed to be associated with the use of immunosuppressive drugs. It is assumed that dogs may have a similar increased risk.

### Kidney Dialysis

A few veterinary referral clinics in the United States offer kidney dialysis as a treatment option. In this procedure, blood is pumped out of the body, filtered, then returned to the body. Approximately 50 percent of patients treated with dialysis show clinical improvement after the treatment (for example, increased appetite and energy

**Table 1: Laboratory tests required of the recipient and donor prior to kidney transplant surgery.**

Recipient	Donor
Complete blood cell count	Complete blood cell count
Serum biochemistry profile	Serum biochemistry profile
Urinalysis	Urinalysis
Urine culture and sensitivity	Urine culture and sensitivity
Urine protein:creatinine ratio	Heartworm antigen test
Heartworm antigen test	Toxoplasmosis titer (IgG and IgM)
Toxoplasmosis titer (IgG and IgM)	Intravenous pyelogram
Thyroid test	Blood type and cross-match to recipient
Echocardiogram	
Thoracic radiographs	
Abdominal ultrasound	
Coagulation panel	
Antithrombin III and fibrinogen levels	
Blood pressure	
Fecal examination	

### How to find a Hospital to Perform the Surgery

To locate a veterinary hospital that performs canine kidney transplantation surgery, find a center close to you that performs feline transplant surgery (for a list, go to [www.felineert.com](http://www.felineert.com)), and ask them if they have performed or will perform the surgery on a dog. Your primary veterinarian may also be able to recommend a facility.

#### Hemodialysis Centers

- University of California (Davis, Calif.)
- Helen Woodward Animal Center (Rancho Santa Fe, Calif.)
- The Animal Medical Center (New York City)
- University of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia)
- Tufts University (North Grafton, Mass.)

## Morris Foundation Funding Supports Kidney Transplant Technology

While kidney transplants in humans are now relatively routine procedures, scientists have spent the past decade trying to perfect the technique for companion animals. Kidney transplants are becoming more common for cats, and with Morris Animal Foundation funding, Dr. Michael Tillson of Auburn University is making great strides for dogs, too. Given the progress that has been made for other species, tailoring the procedure for dogs might sound straightforward. But the way the canine body works complicates the process.

"After a normal kidney transplant, a dog's body can reject the kidney within two weeks," Dr. Tillson says. This is one reason dogs who have undergone transplants must remain on antirejection medication for life. Dr. Tillson and his colleagues recently completed a foundation-funded study aimed at advancing the transplant procedure.

To combat organ rejection, the team transplanted some of the donor dog's bone marrow along with the new kidney. They found that many of the recipient dogs in the study needed fewer antirejection drugs, and some even went completely off medication. The team successfully extended the kidney survival time in dogs from two weeks to 13 months. Dr. Tillson's findings could save dog owners thousands of dollars in medication costs and greatly improve the quality of life for their pets. Based on these positive results, his team will conduct more studies to further develop this promising treatment. — From *AnimalNews* 5:2, 3. 2005. Morris Animal Foundation.

level). Dialysis requires placement of a large intravenous catheter inside the body that may require surgery to insert.

The cost associated with kidney dialysis can be prohibitive. The first week of treatment typically costs \$2,500 to \$3,000 and includes catheter placement, the first three treatments, and feeding tube placement if needed (some animals require a feeding tube to ensure adequate nutrition). Subsequent treatments cost \$500 each, and most animals require three treatments per week.

Complications associated with dialysis are numerous. Malnutrition is a primary concern. Many animals with kidney disease have a poor appetite. Treatment with dialysis may or may not improve appetite, but it does increase protein and calorie requirements. These increased requirements may necessitate the use of a feeding tube. In addition, patients undergoing dialysis have a higher risk of broken bones, carnitine and taurine deficiency (two nutrients associated with heart disease when the levels are low), blood clot formation in the dialysis catheter, and infection from the catheter.

Dialysis has been slow to transition from human medicine to veterinary medicine because new equipment had to be developed for its use in animals. Standard human dialysis machines would extract too much blood from a veterinary patient, which could be lethal. The research and development of veterinary dialysis machines is one factor that keeps the cost relatively high.

Kidney transplantation and kidney dialysis are two cutting-edge procedures available to animals with kidney disease. There are very few hospitals that are even able to provide these services and they do so at great expense. As more procedures are performed and more studies are conducted, these procedures may eventually become mainstream treatments. ■

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*Dr. Feeman is a CG regular contributor.*

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Arthur, adopted by Ray and Melanie Gilbert of Montrose, N.Y.



Kaky Kerr (here, at age 12) helped mend his owner's broken heart. *Ginny Johnson*

# The Love of a Greyhound

By Ginny Johnson

**M**y story starts on October 3, 1993.

I received a phone call late that night telling me my son's helicopter had been shot down in Somalia. Staff Sergeant Daniel D. Busch had died defending the downed helicopter.

I just couldn't believe Danny was gone.

The eight days we waited for his body to come home and the months to follow were a blur. I sank into a deep depression. I wasn't able to function very well. Some of my friends and family said I wasn't functioning at all. I wasn't able to work. I didn't care about anything. My memory of that awful time is a blur. It was dark and I couldn't sleep or concentrate. My doctor finally put me on antidepressants. They helped a little.

Eventually, I started accompanying my husband to the Wisconsin Dells Greyhound Park, where he worked, because I couldn't take being home alone at night. I loved watching the dogs and soon got to know some wonderful people who worked at the track.

One family in particular went out of their way to help me. The Meuret family owned the Winterstar Kennel. Connie Meuret was a wonderful, caring person who not only loved Greyhounds but cared about other people. A couple of months after we became friends, she told me she knew what I needed: a Greyhound.

I told her I did not want a dog, least of all a Greyhound. I still was not doing well.

About a year later, I took my 87 year-old neighbor to the track, because she loved Greyhounds. Her granddaughter had adopted a retired racer named Spuds. While we were watching the races, I saw a big, black Greyhound break out of the 7 box and run back and forth behind the rest of the dogs. He was usually an excellent Grade B racer if he had the outside, but not today. The racing program had it right: "Never in it."

I watched him, and there was something about him that got to me. After the race I asked Jim Meuret if I could adopt this

dog, named Kaky Kerr, when he was done racing. (This is how ignorant I was — I thought there was a waiting list of people wanting to adopt Greyhounds.) A week later, Kaky injured his leg during a race. Connie Meuret knew I wanted to adopt him, so she took him home for a couple of weeks to let him heal and help him adjust to living in a house. A couple weeks later, I adopted him.

He was very shy, which was good for me. I had never owned a dog, and I wasn't sure of my ability to take care of a Greyhound. We were both scared and nervous at first. I now think of us as "dumb and dumber" — and don't ask me which of us was which. Kaky adjusted to home life, and I adjusted to having a dog.

It was a wonderful experience. We walked morning and evening. Kaky loved walking, and my doctor said exercise and fresh air would do me good. This was the beginning of our bonding process. Kaky loved to go for rides in the car, and he started going everywhere with me. When I went

to the cemetery, he would lean next to me while I grieved.

After I had Kaky a little more than a month, I no longer needed to be on antidepressants. I was learning how to feel and love again, thanks to Kaky. After I had Kaky more than a year, I was able to get and keep a full-time job.

Never having been a dog person, my Greyhound Kaky Kerr was a miracle to me. Today I volunteer for GPA/Wisconsin, helping these gentle, loving dogs find good homes. I want to give back to a breed that gave my life back to me.

*Ed. Note: The battle in which Staff Sergeant Busch lost his life was the basis of the 2001 motion picture "Black Hawk Down."* ■

Ginny Johnson lives in Baraboo, Wisc. and volunteers for GPA/Wisconsin.



Wren and Tyler, adopted by Brian and Deanna Swartzfager of Columbia, Md.



Illustration by Bruce DeKing

## We Got Trouble-- with a Capital "T" that Rhymes with "P" that Stands for Pool

By Bruce DeKing as told to Nancy Waddell

It started out as that special, beautiful April day that Greyhounds and their people can only love. The air was fresh, clean, and still cool. There was an early morning peace punctuated by the clear call of a jay and the tenacious trill of a territorial house wren. To put the icing on it, we were going to a parade!

"We" are me — Bruce — and my big, bodacious, bold, and beautiful brindle boy, Snickers. Greyhounds love a parade. Greyhound owners love any occasion to show off their dogs, and there is nothing more perfect for that than a parade on a one-of-a-kind spring day. The two of us were meeting several other people and their Greyhounds before the parade at the home of Barb and Jim Tait. Greyhounds love a chance to run and the Tait's abode offered them that and more. We'd decided to organize there and give the dogs a chance to relieve themselves of energy and whatever else before we started to march.

The Tait's have about three fenced acres of gorgeous backyard, a beautiful in-ground pool, three Greyhounds, a lovely home, and a stocked pantry. Plus they are fun to be around — my kind of people.

I had been to the Tait's home many times before, but this visit was Snick's first. It was

going to be a day of firsts for Snick and it was going to be great. I knew he'd love the chance to run with his own kind. I knew he'd love parading his big brindle self before a crowd of appreciative onlookers. Oh yes, it was going to be the perfect day for both of us.

What a sight! Our 14 Greyhounds took off together, intent only on running. Snick started out with the others who were headed out to run the perimeter. But wait — you could almost see the light bulb come on — Snick decided to take a shortcut across the yard and meet his new friends halfway.

His shortcut took him directly over the pool. Never having seen a pool before, Snick hadn't a clue about the blue hole in front of him, but he wasn't going to let it deter him. He made it almost a third of the way across before he looked down, did a Scooby Doo air paddle, and the light bulb blinked out faster than it had come on.

"DeKing's dog is in the pool!"

"Dog in the water!"

"He's going down!"

Jim and I rushed to the pool, grabbed Snick's collar, and helped — dragged — him to the edge. He couldn't climb out, so we maneuvered him around to the end of the pool with the stairs. My big, bodacious, bold, and beautiful brindle (notice that "bright" was not part of that alliterative package) was exhausted, terrified, and not ready to put his feet on anything. I stepped in to help guide him out of the water, then stepped back out with soggy shoes, soaked pants, and a drenched dog.

Snick marched that day — happy, big, shiny, and dry. He left a trail of new and admiring friends all along the route while I squished along side him, chilly in damp pants and sodden shoes, leaving a trail of wet footprints behind. ■

*Bruce DeKing is a CG regular contributor. Nancy Waddell got her first Greyhound in 1994; her household currently includes 14-year old Kelvin and 11 year olds Dasher and Sugar.*



Quesa, adopted by Joan Nageldinger of Rochester, N.Y.

# Greyhounds in the News

## It's Celebrating Greyhounds Calendar Time

Your Greyhound could be a star! A pinup cutie! A heartthrob! Now is the time.

The Greyhound Project collects photos for the Celebrating Greyhounds Calendar all year long. Photos for the 2007 calendar will be selected in early April. Photos that come in after the selections are made will be held for the next year.

Prints of any size are acceptable. It is generally better not to try to enlarge a smaller print. The original is usually clearer and easier to work with. And the calendar staff will have greater success at producing the enlargements than you will.

Please put a label on the back of each photograph you send. The label should include your name, address, the names of the dogs, and the name of the adoption group or other source of the dog. If you got your dogs directly from the racing owner or trainer, that's great; they are just as eligible for the calendar as dogs that are placed by an adoption group.

Please label everything. There is nothing more frustrating than sorting through all the photos that we want to use only to find that one of them is anonymous. It's usually one of the really great pictures that we want to use, too.

If you have digital images, they must have been taken at the highest resolution that your camera will produce in order to be acceptable for printing. Please send us a print of the image as well as a copy of the image on a CD. Be sure to note on the label that the picture is also on CD, and include the file name.

If you have photos that were taken by someone else, please obtain their written permission for us to use the photos. If the photo was taken at a nursing home or therapy program of some sort, please obtain permission from the program.

The photos for the calendar are selected by a group of Greyhound adopters. The members of the group change from year to year, depending on who is around and wants to come play on the weekend that we gather around a big table and go through the photos. The people looking at the photos generally won't know the people or the dogs in the pictures. They are looking for the images that "speak" to them.

Send your Calendar photos to:  
 The Greyhound Project, Inc.  
 Attn: Celebrating Greyhounds Calendar  
 P.O. Box 5239  
 Framingham, MA 01701

### Cancer Researcher Seeks Information on Greyhounds

Dr. Guillermo Couto at The Ohio State University is collecting information on Greyhounds with cancer. The information will be used later this year in a study on cancer in Greyhounds. Owners of Greyhounds who have been diagnosed with cancer who wish to participate in the study by providing information about their dogs may do so by completing a short questionnaire about their diagnosis and treatment. The questionnaire can be accessed on line at <http://forum.greypet.com/index.php?showtopic=113592>.

### Race for Adoption Tops \$100,000; First RFA Dog Retires from Racing

After a year and a half of operation, Race for Adoption has earned \$102,838.00, all of which has been paid directly to Greyhound adoption groups.

Whistler's Betty, who ran 73 races as a Race for Adoption dog at Wheeling Downs and contributed \$18,000 to adoption groups, retired from racing in late December. Her owner and trainers made the decision for Betty "not to chance any injuries and to go out on top." She will be entering the second phase of her career as a brood.

Race for Adoption is a fundraising effort that sold sponsorship shares for young racing Greyhounds and then donated both the proceeds of that sale and the earnings of

those dogs to designated Greyhound adoption groups. The fundraising effort was described in detail in "Racing for Adoption" (Summer 2005 CG).

By the end of 2005, 10 Race for Adoption dogs were running at seven tracks. Twelve adoption groups had received funds from the program: Pups Without Partners, GPA/SEGA-Tallahassee, GPA/Emerald Coast, Halfway Home, Northern Lights Greyhound Adoption, Project Racing Home, GPA/Missouri, GPA/Salt Lake City, Virginia Greyhound Adoption, GPA/New Mexico Greyhound Connection, GPA/Arizona, and Greys Matter.

RFA's organizers continue to solicit participation in the program by owners of racing Greyhounds.

### Greyhound Writers Honored

The Dog Writers Association of America (DWAA) has honored *Celebrating Greyhounds Magazine* as the winner of the Maxwell Award for Best Single Breed Magazine in the DWAA 2005 Annual Writing Competition.

The DWAA also selected *Celebrating Greyhound's Magazine* as the recipient of the Presidents Award, which is given to the award winner judged to be the "best in show" of the award winners in the 54 regular categories in the competition.

*Celebrating Greyhounds Magazine* was a finalist for the Maxwell Award for Best Single Breed Magazine in 2004. It won the award in

2003, 2002, 2001, and 2000.

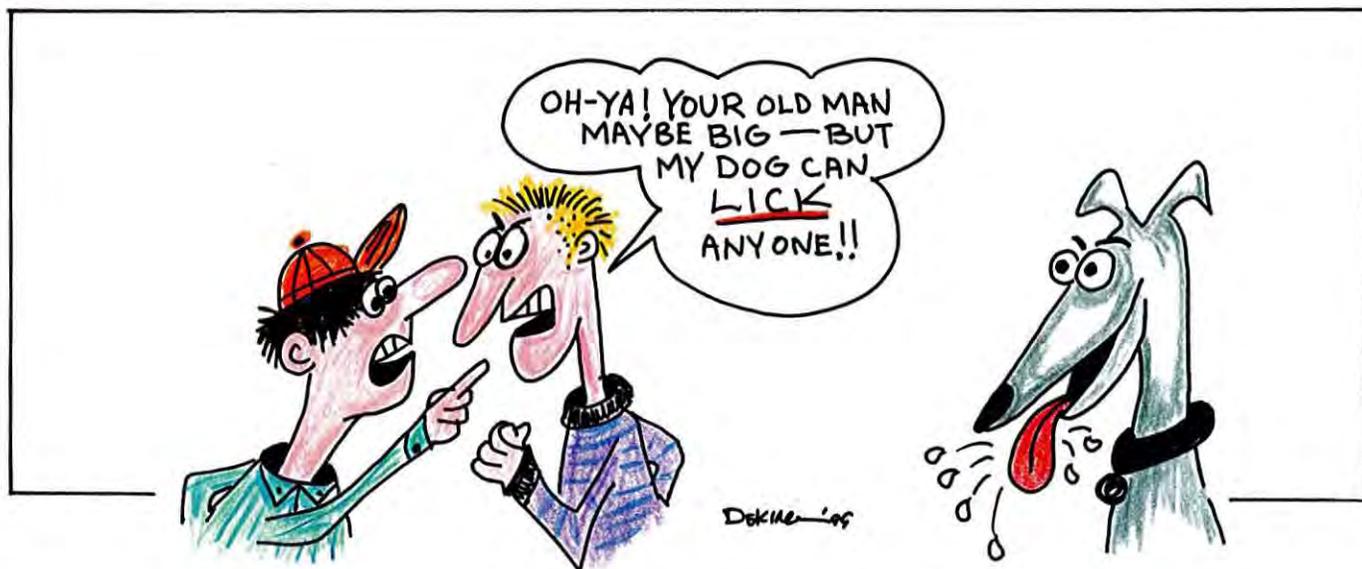
Teoti Anderson's article, "Where is Your Dog?" which appeared in the Summer 2005 issue of GPA/South Carolina's newsletter, *Carolina Greyhound News*, received the Maxwell Award in the Regional or Local Club: Feature Article category.

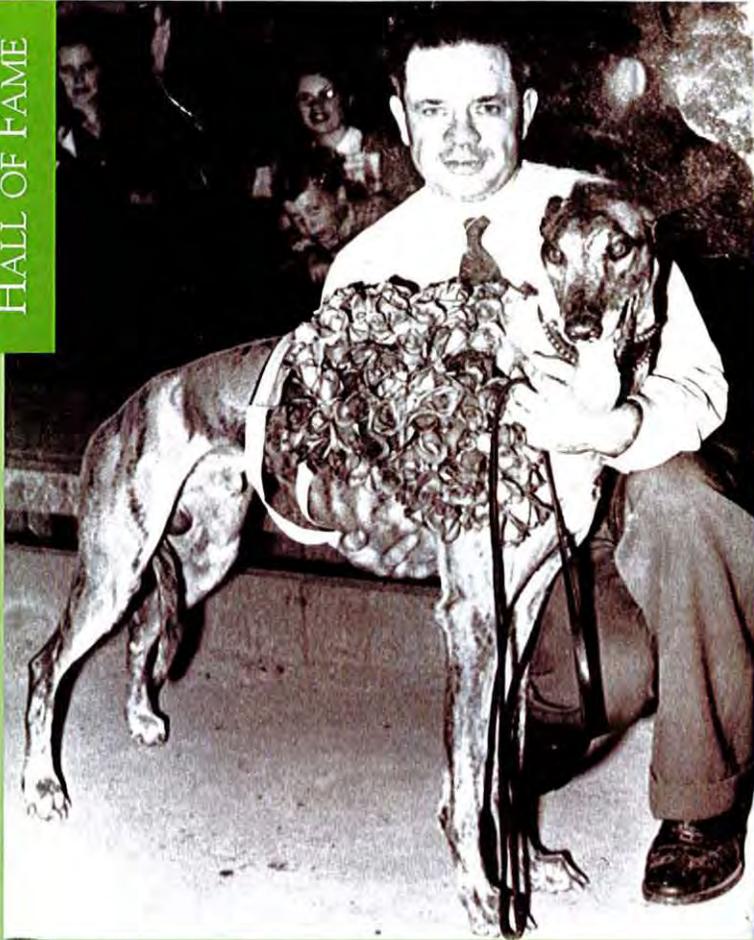
Lee Jolliffe's article, "What to Do When There's Nothing to Be Done," written for the Fall 2005 issue of *Celebrating Greyhounds Magazine*, was a finalist in the Feature Article: Single Breed Magazine category. Her article was also a finalist for the Eukanuba Canine Health Award.

Finalists were recognized and award recipients announced at the DWAA's annual banquet in New York City on February 12, 2006. For more information about the DWAA and its annual writing competition, visit its website at [www.dwaa.org](http://www.dwaa.org).

### Correction

Page 16 of the Winter 2005 issue of CG contained the following statement: "The [Keystone] Kids raised over \$66.00 at their first event!" That total was actually \$666.00. Great job, Kids! ■





More Taxes with his owner, Frenchy Letourneau. *Greyhound Hall of Fame*

# More Taxes

By Laurel E. Drew

**M**ore Taxes is the great grandson of Kiche (pronounced similar to Hi Chee), who was one of the greatest producers of early Greyhound racing. Kiche produced several litters for Bill “Timmy” Timmerman of Manning, Iowa. While she never raced, or even officially coursed, she sure could run a rabbit. In fact, Timmy said, “She can catch any jackrabbit in any cornfield.” In 1927, she was sold to George Lippold, who said, “She was a smart dog, not at all shy, and we let her run loosed all the time.” Lippold said she weighed about 56 pounds, a good size for a bitch in those days. Her descendants would add to that size, with some males weighing as much as 78 pounds. She had three more litters for Lippold: two by Traffic

Officer — another Hall of Famer — and a single pup by Meadows. She was later struck (intentionally, Lippold believed) on the road on his farm.

Kiche was bred once to Hartshorn\* and produced Baroness Blitz, whose grandson was More Taxes. This line produced several top Greyhounds, including Grand Man, More Taxes, and — through More Taxes — Beach Comber, No Refund, Feldcrest, Vigorette, Ample Time, and other greats who appear in numerous pedigrees. A sister of More Taxes, Grand Sis, founded a line that resulted in Indy Ann (see “Indy Ann,” Winter 2005 CG).

More Taxes was born in 1940 out of Grancop and was sired by Par Ex, the son of Baroness Blitz. Known as the Monarch

of Dogdom, More Taxes smashed records for three courses and won the Derby in Portland (Oregon) by 10 lengths. He provided much-needed entertainment and a temporary escape from the harsh reality of the war years. In 1943, the *Portland Oregonian* created a new sports award just for him.

In 1944, More Taxes moved to Tampa and continued racing, often going head-to-head with future Hall of Famer Never Roll. Never Roll won two of the big races, with More Taxes a close second. The following year, More Taxes beat Never Roll in both the Inaugural and the Derby. He had come into his own for sure. In 130 career starts, More Taxes garnered a record of 56 wins, 36 places, and 22 shows. Eight of the 16 times that he ran out of the money, he was at his first meet as a green pup.

More Taxes was purchased by Doris and Frenchy Letourneau in 1944. In his first race under their colors, he broke his leg, and for a time it was doubtful that he would ever race again. He recovered, however, and went on to win handsome earnings for his loving owners. An article about him commented, “There just ‘ain’t now flies’ on More Taxes when the gate goes up and he goes off down the stretch like the dog catcher was after him.” He was not tremendously fast out of the gate but was rarely out of the money and set several records.

The Letourneaus believed in raising a pup right. They said if the pups were started right and treated right, they would grow into winning dogs, whether they were racing champions or not. But if mistreated, ill cared for, and indifferently trained, they would never turn out well or make their owner’s kennel a winning one. Doris said any dog will give back to the owner exactly what the owner gives to the dog. The Letourneaus believed in loving and giving affection to the dogs so it would be returned fourfold. More Taxes was just one of their success stories, and his 1979 induction into the Hall of Fame was recognition by the entire racing world of his winning ways. ■

*Laurel E. Drew is a CG regular contributor.*



Bella, adopted by Tina and Ken Supple of Pittsfield, Mass.

# Should You Worry About Canine Influenza?

By Jim Bader, DVM

**T**he talk of the Greyhound world is the “new” influenza virus that has mutated from horses to dogs. Is there a need for panic? How is it transmitted? How is it treated? Is there a test or vaccination to prevent the disease?

Before these questions can be answered, one needs to understand something about viruses. How does a virus infect the Greyhound? How does the body respond? The answers to these questions will help Greyhound owners put canine influenza in perspective.

A virus is a microscopic particle about 10 to 20 nanometers in diameter. Its size depends on the type of virus. The type also indicates the shape: a rabies virus is shaped like a bullet, a poxvirus is shaped like a blimp, and an influenza virus is shaped like a balloon. The virus is composed of a protein

outer layer protecting genetic material, either DNA or RNA.

A virus is a cellular parasite. It attaches to the cell and injects the cell with its genetic material. The genetic material directs the cell to perform the will of the virus. The genetic material commands the cell to make more viral protein and genetic material, manufacturing more viruses. The cell then ruptures, causing the virus to be released into the body to infect more cells. The process continues until the body forms an immune response to kill the virus and stop the replication. The Greyhound’s immune system recognizes the unique proteins of the virus, forms an immune response, and kills the virus before it can infect more cells.

During viral replication, a small amount of the genetic material of the host cell may be incorporated into the genetic material of

the virus, changing the virus slightly. This process is called genetic drift. On other occasions, a large amount of the host’s genetic material may be incorporated into the genetic material of the virus, causing the virus to change significantly. This is called genetic shift. The influenza virus is unique in that if two different influenza viruses infect the same cell, the viruses may exchange genetic material between themselves. This allows the virus to become more virulent or allows it to infect multiple species. These viral properties are responsible for the influenza virus’s ability to jump from horses to dogs.

The canine influenza virus was isolated in racing Greyhound kennels in Florida. The virus could be isolated because of the confined population that was exhibiting clinical signs of infection. Symptoms were similar to

that of kennel cough, but patients were not responding to the usual treatment. Once the virus was isolated, the underlying cause of the infection could be determined and a test was developed.

The infection takes one of two forms: mild or severe. In the mild form, the Greyhound has a "goose honk" cough, which can be slightly productive. Most have nasal discharge similar to that of a child with a cold. The severe form affects about 6 to 8 percent of all the Greyhounds infected by the virus. These dogs have elevated temperatures and clinical signs of pneumonia: increased respiration rate, wheezes and crackles in the lungs, and difficulty breathing associated with an increase of fluid in the lungs secondary to the infection. These Greyhounds are serious cases, because if enough fluid accumulates in the lungs, the dog essentially drowns in its own fluids.

Treatment for either form is to support the Greyhound while the body mounts an immune response to kill the virus. The mild form usually is associated with a secondary bacterial infection, so antibiotics are in order. A form of a cough suppressant may be necessary if the cough is causing the Greyhound discomfort. Some have recommended an antiviral medication such as Tamiflu® (Roche Laboratories). There is little evidence that this is an effective treatment, and since it is not approved for use in dogs, it should be considered only on a case-by-case basis.

The severe form is more challenging to treat. The Greyhound should be started on supportive care including antibiotics, intravenous fluids, and oxygen therapy. These cases may be appropriate for treatment with Tamiflu®, with the knowledge that it is an extra-label use of the medication that may or may not have benefits. These Greyhounds with supportive therapy may take one to three weeks to recover, if they do recover. During the treatment of both mild and severe forms, these dogs are contagious to other dogs.

The canine influenza virus is aerosolized between Greyhounds. This means that when an infected Greyhound coughs, the virus is spread through the air. The virus is inhaled through the nose, after which it begins its

replication process. The newly infected Greyhound shows clinical signs in two to six days and is contagious to other dogs until the clinical signs have resolved.

### Protecting Your Greyhound

The only way to provide absolute protection is to isolate your dog from all contact with other dogs. This would mean no walks, dog parks, day care, or meet-and-greets. Since this is not practical, the best approach is to be vigilant about disease control; for example, being alert for dogs exhibiting signs of influenza. Associate with dogs you know are healthy. If your dog attends day care, ask the provider how they screen for contagious diseases. Do they check each dog when he comes in for the day? If a dog becomes sick during the day, do they have an isolation area? This is important not just for canine influenza but for disease control in general.

There is a test for canine influenza that is performed at Cornell University's Animal Health Diagnostic Laboratory ([www.diaglab.vet.cornell.edu](http://www.diaglab.vet.cornell.edu)). A serum sample is submitted for testing for antibodies to the virus. A sample is taken at the onset of clinical signs and another is taken three weeks later to check for a rise in the amount of antibodies to the virus. Alternatively, one sample is taken when clinical signs have subsided. Either method indicates if your Greyhound was infected with the virus; the test may also tell you if your Greyhound is now immune to the virus. There is no

vaccine for canine influenza, but research into development of a vaccine is ongoing.

The "new" canine influenza virus has probably been in the Greyhound population for decades. It was finally isolated due to the concentrated, confined population in the Greyhound kennels. Most Greyhounds recover from the infection. A small percentage of the population will die from the virus; this is no different from many other viral diseases (for example, human influenza).

There is no reason to panic about canine influenza, nor should extraordinary steps be taken to avoid all contact with other dogs to avoid infection. If you know the clinical signs to watch for and what steps to take if your Greyhound begins to exhibit symptoms (that is, see your veterinarian), you are doing all that is necessary to protect your dog. ■

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*Dr. Jim Bader is a CG regular contributor.*

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Hannah, adopted by Cindy Hanson of St. Paul, Minn.



Zoe was one of the Greyhounds who suddenly needed a home when Plainfield Greyhound Park closed in 2005. *Bruce Truax*

# Closing Plainfield

## The Experience of Connecticut Greyhound Adoption/GPA

By Kim Reese

Connecticut Greyhound Adoption/GPA (CGA) began like most Greyhound adoption groups. Some Greyhound lovers got together in January and February 2005, developed a mission statement, established basic adoption policies and procedures, procured insurance for the group, and elected officers. On February 28, we were accepted as a sub-chapter of Greyhound Pets of America.

We were thrilled and immediately got down to business. We brought two dogs into our program as fosters and committed to a third dog with a broken leg. We were off! Our goal was to place 25 Greyhounds the first year — a manageable objective while we completed all of the necessary administrative and organizational tasks. Our first adoptee was Kiowa in My Yard on March 25, 2005.

Fast-forward to the end of April 2005 when things changed dramatically for our fledgling group. We started hearing unsubstantiated reports that Plainfield (Connecticut) Greyhound Park might be closing. In early May, the major media outlets began reporting that the track was indeed closing on May 14. Within days we were inundated with calls from prospective adopters as well as trainers, track officials, and other adoption groups.

The closing became super-charged when an e-mail message was circulated around the country stating that 500 Greyhounds would die on May 14. Track management assured us that the dogs were safe though they still needed to be moved out quickly. Nevertheless, the public had a very different perception of the situation.

Rory Goreé, president of Greyhound Pets of America, moved quickly to contact track management. He arranged to set up a toll-free number for the large volume of calls from animal lovers everywhere who wanted to help in some way. GPA National routed the calls from all around the country to the GPA group closest to the caller. After discussions with Rory Goreé and Karen Keelan, the general manager of Plainfield Greyhound Park, it became clear that the vol-



Murphy, who lost his job when the Plainfield track closed, enjoys his retirement. *Bruce Truax*

ume of adoption applications already coming in would overwhelm the track's on-site adoption program. The track began referring prospective adopters to CGA so we could process the applications, conduct home visits, and provide the critical follow-up for adopters.

At this point we realized we needed to get organized in a big way and very quickly. Our bare bones website was up and running and the online adoption application proved to be invaluable.

Since CGA was so new, most of our volunteers had little, if any, experience with the formal adoption process. Up to that point, I processed the few applications we received and did the home visits.

We immediately set up a training session to prepare volunteers for screening applicants via telephone, calling veterinary references, conducting home visits, and answering typical questions from prospective adopters. To streamline the process, we divided the state into geographical areas and assigned home visits to volunteers by territory. We developed a database to track applications. One person was assigned the task of calling veterinary references. CGA

became pretty much a 20-hour-a-day venture for core volunteers. We returned as many calls as possible each evening, then burned the midnight oil to respond to the e-mail inquiries and adoption applications we received that day.

Our small band of volunteers began the arduous task of home visits throughout the state. This was undoubtedly the most difficult aspect of the entire process. Though all of our volunteers have full-time jobs, we were firmly committed to doing home visits for all applications. Thankfully, Penny Zwart and several of her Pups Without Partners volunteers stepped up and assisted with home visits in the southern part of the state. We conducted roughly 160 visits in slightly over four weeks.

We were particularly concerned that though many well-meaning people wanted to help the dogs, they might not realize what life with a Greyhound would really be like or be ready to make a lifetime commitment to a dog. Lee Livingood, author of *Retired Racing Greyhounds for Dummies*, came to our rescue. Lee prepared wonderful handouts for prospective adopters that dealt with track-to-home transition issues and also focused on

introducing a new Greyhound to children and other pets.

Applicants who were approved each week were invited to come to the track on the weekend to choose their dog. Behind the scenes, volunteers from adoption groups throughout New England spent countless hours profiling dogs. When adopters arrived at the track, each was assigned a volunteer who worked with them to find the dog who would best fit their home. We spent a minimum of 12 hours at the track each weekend.

For adopters on the western side of the state, we brought six to eight dogs to a central location when we returned from the track each weekend. The town of Avon, where our group is headquartered, has a lovely canine shelter that allowed us to house several dogs until they were placed. This gave us the flexibility to place dogs during the week with approved applicants who were unable to come to the track on the weekend.

The good news is that we were able to place 126 Plainfield dogs in adoptive homes. Follow-up calls have been incredibly time-consuming but worthwhile. The return rate has been extremely low.

Perhaps the biggest challenge that CGA faced was finding veterinary services for a large number of dogs at a reasonable cost and in a timely manner. We hoped that the state's low-cost spay-and-neuter program would be available to help alter the dogs. Although the governor expressed her concern for the welfare of the Plainfield Greyhounds, the state ultimately determined that these dogs were not eligible for this program.

Another blow came when an outside agency sent a letter to all veterinary practices in the state asking each to take a Greyhound from the track, provide the necessary veterinary services, and place the dog. While this was certainly a well-intentioned attempt to help the dogs, it had a decidedly different effect. First, it provided no follow-up support or safety net for these dogs. Cynthia Branigan was kind enough to send copies of her book *Adopting the Racing Greyhound* for distribution to the veterinary clinics. We also provided each practice with our CGA contact information so that it could be passed along to the adopters for follow-up assistance.

The bigger issue that arose from this mailing was that as CGA called veterinary clinics to see if they would assist us by altering the vast number of dogs at a price we could afford, most refused. They felt they had done their part by vetting and placing one dog. Some clinics offered exceptional support to our efforts, including Roaring Brook Veterinary Hospital, Montville Animal Hospital, and Bolton Veterinary Hospital.

Despite the challenges our young group faced with the closing of Plainfield, there were many positive outcomes as well. Of course, the most important result is that we found good homes for many wonderful Greyhounds. A lot of people who had been considering adopting a Greyhound for some time decided the time was right to proceed.

As a group, CGA learned a tremendous amount in a very short time. Specifically, we learned that organization and teamwork are everything. We were forced to pull things together much more rapidly than we had anticipated. We also realized that to avoid a



Buck and Boy Friend, adopted by Jeff and Shelley Lake of Paola, Kan.

duplication of efforts, each volunteer had to know his or her job and do it as effectively and efficiently as possible.

Another positive outcome of the Plainfield experience is that it brought everyone in our group closer together. We gained many new, fantastic volunteers. CGA is more committed than ever to placing Greyhounds in good adoptive homes and we are proud of the work we did to help the Plainfield Greyhounds.

Volunteers literally dropped everything and put the hounds first. They spent hundreds of hours answering calls from prospective adopters, doing home visits, making follow-up calls, transporting dogs, and working with adopters at the track. Without the participation of Holly and Mike Gerner, Neil and Sharon Salesky, AnnMarie Savage, Leslie Vento, Emma Palmacci, Vivian Miller, Kimlyn Marshall, Cathy Currier, Holly Wells, Ellen Johnson, Frances Schroeder, and Rich Smalley we would not have been able to do what was needed to place the Plainfield dogs quickly.

Greyhound Pets of America, the Petco Foundation, Dakin Animal Shelter, Hartz, and Lupine Pet Products also made important contributions.

Linda Jensen coordinated the placement of the Plainfield dogs with local groups as well as groups around the country. Without her efforts the job would not have gotten done.

It is late November 2005 as I write this

article. In the last two months our group has faced yet another challenge — the seasonal closing of three New England tracks. Wonderland Greyhound Park in Massachusetts and Shoreline Star Greyhound Park in Connecticut have already closed for the season. Seabrook Greyhound Park in New Hampshire will close in a few weeks.

Our experience with these closings has been remarkably different. CGA has not been bombarded with calls and applications, nor have other groups. These closings have been conducted in an orderly fashion and the dogs are safe until adoption groups can place them. As a result there has been little media attention and no public outcry.

At this writing, we have learned that Plainfield Greyhound Park has been approved to run 262 races beginning in September 2006. As an adoption community we must find ways to raise public awareness without creating the panic that ensued in the days following the Plainfield closing announcement. And, at the same time, continue to move the dogs into adoption. ■

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*Kim Reese is president of Connecticut Greyhound Adoption/GPA. She and her family share their Avon, Conn. Home with Greyhounds Lady, Chester, and Hooper, as well as Katie, a Keeshond, three kitties, and four Guinea pigs. Kim is on the faculty of The Hartt School of the University of Hartford where she is a professor of music education.*



Darla, Blossom, and Quaker catch a ride home.

## “Immense Frustration and Immense Pride”

### GPA/Wisconsin and the Geneva Lakes Closing

Story by Ellen Schneiderman  
Photos by Cindy Dombrowski

**T**here are events in our lives that are defining. We find out who we are, or who we thought we were. If we're lucky we find out exactly what we can accomplish.

In early September 2005 I listened to Rory Goreé give a speech at the North American Greyhound Adoption Conference in Tampa, Florida. He indicated that more tracks in the U.S. would be closing in the coming year. I didn't give this prediction all that much thought. I remember Rory's message not so much because of the content but because of the intensity with which it was delivered. Little did I know that his words would hit very, very close to home.

On September 6, 2005, Geneva Lakes Greyhound Race Track and Simulcast Center (GLKC) in Delavan, Wisconsin announced that it was closing for business. After years of poor attendance and operating in the red the track owners finally pulled the plug. The closure would be effective November 6 and it would be permanent. Locally the closure announcement was met with a strange mixture of shock and wonderment. The track had done so poorly for so long that many people in Wisconsin thought it already had closed. Local adoption groups had heard many rumors of impending closure. This time, it was real.



Sammie found a home through the Geneva Lakes Greyhound Track Adoption Program.

Within about 30 seconds of the announcement the phones at GPA/Wisconsin and those of other State-approved adoption groups started ringing. Frantic trainers and kennel owners were feeling the panic of their impending job loss as well as the need to find a place for their dogs. How many dogs? That was the question for which everybody wanted an answer. A thousand or more was one estimate. Eight hundred to 900 Greyhounds, estimated another. Maybe only about 600 guessed another. *Only*. The desperation was palpable. GLKC General Manager Milt Roth went to great lengths to sincerely assure all involved that the dogs would receive appropriate care even after the close.

The timing of the GLKC closure was difficult. Hurricanes Katrina and Rita had made thousands of animals homeless and tapped the pocketbooks of many prospective donors. The Greyhound track in Plainfield, Connecticut had recently shut down, so east coast adoption groups were swamped. The track in Dubuque, Iowa was due to close for the season at the end of October. Closer to home, GPA/Wisconsin's only annual fundraiser was scheduled for October 15; all of our available resources (chiefly, volunteer time and money) were already committed to that event.

As the saying goes, when life gives you lemons, make lemonade. So that is what GPA-Wisconsin did — made lemonade, and lots of it.

GPA/Wisconsin is fortunate to have Cindy Dombrowski on its board. Cindy works for the Wisconsin Department of Administration, which includes the Division of Gaming (DOG). The Division of Gaming oversees Greyhound racing in Wisconsin. Upon hearing of the GLKC closing, Cindy immediately contacted DOG and initiated a dialogue about Geneva Lakes. DOG indicated that a “detailed plan” for the track closure was in the works.

GPA/Wisconsin had lived through the closures of three other Wisconsin Greyhound tracks: Fox Valley Greyhound Park in 1993, Wisconsin Dells Greyhound Park in 1996, and St. Croix Meadows in 2001. GPA/Wisconsin always took dogs from those closures and assisted with transport. Fox Valley and Wisconsin Dells closed at a time when Cynthia Cash coordinated the movement of dogs resulting from these closures. For the most part, adoption groups just had to agree to take dogs. Even though I knew Cynthia Cash was no longer involved in this effort, I somehow figured it would all get handled. After all, GLKC had its own adoption center. Somebody who knew what they were doing would step up. The dogs would all be spoken for. “Don't panic,” I urged our board of directors at an early September meeting. “When tracks close all the groups pitch in. Everybody takes dogs. It's a long haul. It will all work out.”

Due to the initial contact by trainers, some dogs moved out of GLKC early on. In mid-September, 20 Greyhounds left on a haul coordinated by the National Greyhound Association. Cindy Dombrowski arranged a haul that moved 18 Greyhounds to Canada. GPA/Wisconsin committed to taking at least 50 dogs from GLKC, which would be 50 dogs over and above what we normally take. (Dairyland Greyhound Park was still up and running in Kenosha, only 50 miles away from GLKC; their retired racers needed homes, too.)

By now we realized that our annual fundraiser would take on another emphasis. We not only needed to raise our usual funds,

we needed to raise awareness. We had to capitalize on the media attention generated by the closure announcement to rally the local pool of supporters, adopters, businesses, and people who needed a Greyhound but didn't know it yet. When any news report appeared in which there was no mention of Greyhound adoption, we contacted the reporter. GPA/Wisconsin and other adoption began receiving coverage beginning in late September. All major Wisconsin papers covered the closure and GPA/Wisconsin. The *Chicago Tribune* ran an initial piece and a follow up weeks later. For a group that could barely get a local community paper to give us the time of day, this was a big change. We were contacted and interviewed by Wisconsin Public Radio as well as some smaller radio stations. Always our focus was the same — we promoted the dogs and the need for good adoptive homes. Always we were asked the same question: “How many dogs?” In early October we learned the answer: 820. Eight hundred and twenty Greyhounds were officially out of work and in need of homes.

When faced with the actual number and the lack of much if any outside assistance, we decided to step up and handle things. Cindy Dombrowski began making trips to the track



Volunteers transported many GLKC dogs to adopters and groups. Jolee (top) and Tuff (bottom) were two dogs that benefited from this effort.



Sandman is another recent retiree from Geneva Lakes.

(about 11/2 hours from her home) to cat-test, photograph, and profile the dogs. Cindy also started a discussion thread on Greytalk ([www.greytalk.com](http://www.greytalk.com)) to keep people in the Greyhound community updated. Ellen Paulus, GPA/Wisconsin's foster home coordinator, began making calls to get more foster homes. Cindy and I began calling and e-mailing adoption groups, the NGA, GPA, and anybody we thought could help. The American Greyhound Council ponied up some funds to help us with our expenses. Rory Goreé sent a manual on track closing procedures. But nobody gave us a roadmap or offered the kind of advice or assistance that we were hoping to get.

Somehow dogs moved a few at a time here and there. The press continued to cover the closing. On the day of GPA/Wisconsin's fundraiser, thanks in large part to volunteer publicist Jackie Gauger, we received news coverage from every local station as well as a large article in Wisconsin's largest paper. The focus was always the same, and Greyhounds being Greyhounds . . . well, who could resist. Local response was tremendous. GPA/Wisconsin was swamped with adoption applications. Adoption coordinator Terry Kozuk was working triple time, as were all available GPA/Wisconsin adoption representatives. Ellen Paulus spent endless hours both on the phone with new and existing foster homes and running back and forth

from our kennel. Madison area adoption reps Lori and Brent Wesolek brought in new families, and handled a huge upsurge in applications. Cindy Dombrowski kept pushing the dogs and working to get them moved out: Fifteen went to Heartland Greyhound Adoption in mid-October, with smaller numbers going to Midwest Greyhound Adoption, GPA/Minnesota, and other state-approved groups. One month in and the pace was already gueling.

GPA/Wisconsin has two geographic centers of operation: Milwaukee and Madison. The two cities are about 90 miles apart. We have placed dogs throughout southeastern Wisconsin, up to Green Bay and west into and somewhat beyond Madison. We have always felt the need to stay within a certain area so that we could offer support to our adopters. Yet we had realized that for some time that the area was probably at a saturation point for Greyhound adoption. While the track's closing announcement had renewed public interest in Greyhounds as pets, for the past several years, GPA/Wisconsin had adopted to about equal parts new Greyhound adopters and repeat adopters. Without branching into new territory, we were not going to be able to place the number of dogs we wanted to.

Enter Sheryl Clouse. Now stick with me here: Sheryl moved to the La Crosse area (far western Wisconsin) from North Carolina. Sheryl wanted a Greyhound. Sheryl's aunt Holly directed her to Joyce McRorie of GPA-OC/GLA. Joyce directed Sheryl to GPA/Wisconsin. Since we don't normally work so far afield, I told Sheryl to contact GPA/Minnesota. "No," Sheryl persisted. "I want to work with you." I didn't make it easy. After exchanging many e-mail messages and phone calls, Sheryl drove five



Darla and Blossom look ahead to a future as beloved pets.



Beauty is a recent retiree from the Geneva Lakes track.

hours to meet me and meet dogs. She chose Kyra, who was originally placed by GPA/Las Vegas, lived in Chicago, and was returned to GPA/Wisconsin by her owner. It was love. And while Kyra got a great new home, GPA/Wisconsin got Sheryl! After having owned Kyra for only a few months, Sheryl became GPA/Wisconsin's La Crosse area adoption representative. She started working on grants. She contacted media, did interviews, coordinated the handful of adopters in the area for meet-and-greets, attended a local pet festival, and generally gave that area of the state a huge kick in the pants for Greyhound adoption. Sheryl proved to be a ferocious volunteer and an unrelenting advocate. As a result of her work, 19 Greyhounds have made their home in La Crosse, a previously untapped area for GPA/Wisconsin.

On November 6, GLKC closed. Approximately 550 dogs remained at the track at that time. Sometime after that 200 Greyhounds moved to Dairyland, leaving over 300. The interest in and the pace of dogs moving off the track slowed to a trickle. GPA/Wisconsin volunteers helped drive over 40 dogs to other adoption groups. Of the countless groups that were contacted to take dogs, a few would take one or two. The vast

majority would take none. *No we're full. No, we only take dogs from Florida. No. No. No.* No amount of begging seemed to help. GPA national leadership approved all GPA groups to take Wisconsin dogs, but this made no impact whatsoever. Adoption groups in the region helped as they could, and about 30 to 40 dogs went to Canada. Between November and mid-January, several hauls moved out due to efforts between kennel workers and various adoption groups. But the largest number of dogs moved to the same midwestern groups that had always taken Geneva Lakes dogs: GPA/Minnesota, Greyhounds Only, Midwest Greyhound Adoption, and GPA/Wisconsin.

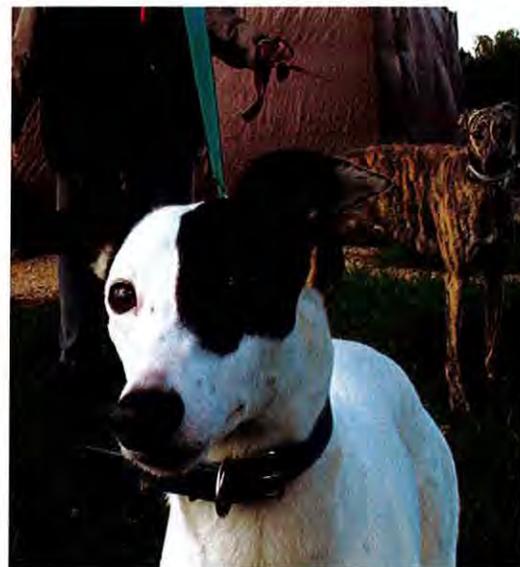
In the months that followed the closing announcement, the hours put in by all of our active volunteers tripled. Hours and hours were spent on the phone, thousands of dollars of personal funds were spent on phone calls and gasoline, and time off was taken from paying jobs. And the emotional toll has been huge. When I asked other board members for their thoughts about the closure and how things are going, they expressed two things: Immense frustration and immense pride. They also asked troubling questions: Where was the support from outside? Why won't more groups take dogs? Why have we heard No so often? All mentioned the role of volunteers: 15 new foster homes, six new adoption reps, our entire board working like mad, the members of Greytalk pitching in. There continues to be a Herculean effort on the part of so many GPA/Wisconsin supporters.

The closing of the Geneva Lakes Track has in a sense strengthened and defined GPA/Wisconsin as a group. While challenged beyond what we thought possible, we rose to that challenge. When I think back about my comment to my board — It will all work out — I guess I was right and wrong. I truly believed the dogs would move, and they have. But I also believed they would move to many more groups than they have. For those of you that may have a track closing in your backyard, I hope you hear Yes more than we did. I hope you don't feel that you're left on your own with little guidance or support. GPA/Wisconsin will be happy to help if we can; we have the best volunteers anywhere. ■

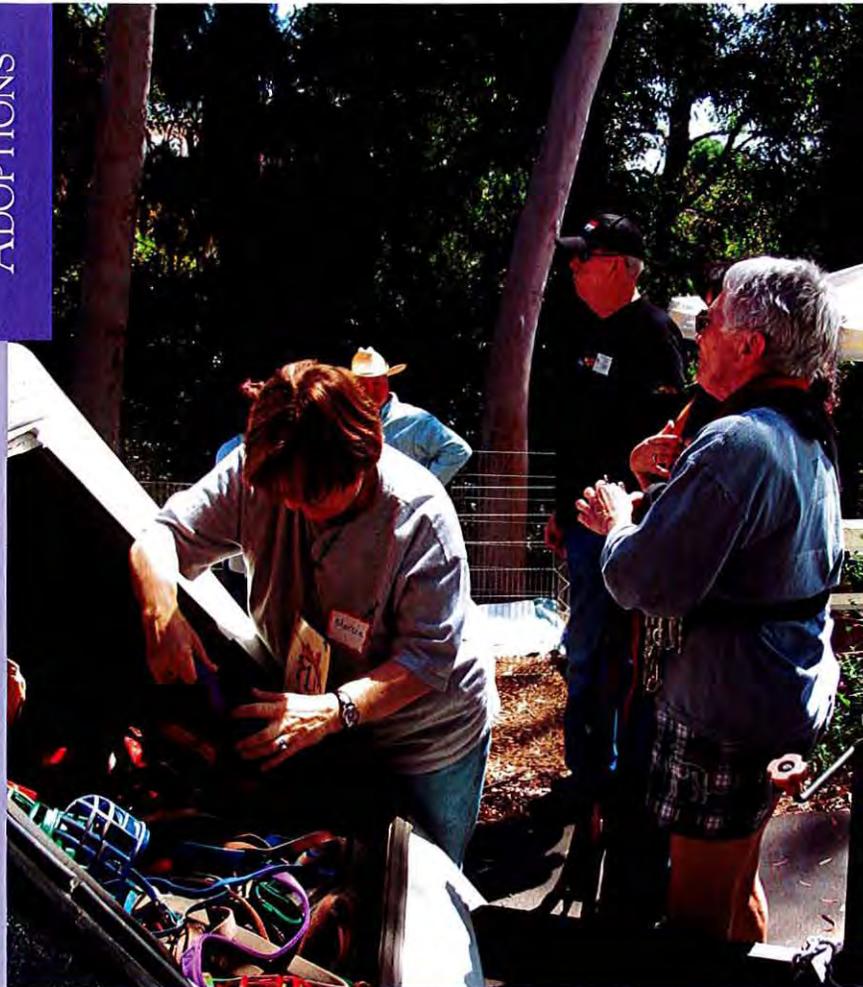
*Ed. Note: Shortly before this issue went to press, there were about 65 dogs remaining at the GLKC Adoption Kennel. For more information, call their office at 1-800-477-4552, ext. 501.*

*Ellen Schneiderman volunteers with GPA/Wisconsin. She expresses the utmost gratitude to the entire board of directors of GPA/Wisconsin: Bob May and Terry Kozuk, Ellen and Bob Paulus, Cindy Dombrowski, Tonia Powers, Muriel Cunningham, and Lori and Brent Wesolek. On behalf of GPA/Wisconsin, she expresses gratitude for the outstanding effort, support, and cooperation they received from everyone at Geneva Lakes Kennel Club; the kennel owners, workers, and trainers were outstanding to work with and helped with everything, including cat testing and photographing the dogs. Finally, she thanks the countless volunteers who foster, transport, adopt, and love these dogs.*

*Cindy Dombrowski is a volunteer and board member of GPA/Wisconsin. She shares her Madison, Wisc. home with Greyhounds Thunder and Copper.*



Jolee found a home through GPA/Wisconsin.



Volunteers make sure plenty of supplies are on hand.

## Crossing the Border

Story by Joyce McRorie  
Photos by Glen Stroud

**G**reyhound Pets of America/California-Orange County and Greater Los Angeles (GPA/CA-OCGLA) is located approximately two and-a-half hours from the Mexican border. Almost all of our retired Greyhounds come from Caliente Greyhound Park in Tijuana. Over the years, we have formed a wonderful working relationship with track management, and have established a pet kennel on the track property. Communication between the track,

GPA/CA-OCGLA, and Greyhound Adoption Center (GAC) of La Mesa, California has provided a healthy working environment that allows Greyhounds who are ready for retirement to find adoptive homes stateside.

On April 9, 2005, Tom McRorie of GPA/CA-OCGLA made a trip to Caliente to pick up a dog with a broken leg. He learned that the recent closing of Multnomah Greyhound Park in Portland, Oregon and the end of live racing at Apache

Greyhound Park in Apache Junction, Arizona had resulted in a large number of displaced racers being sent to Caliente. The pet kennel was filled well past capacity. Track Manager Carlos Duran informed us that for the first time in many years, they would have to begin putting down numbers of dogs, unless we were able to pick up 60 dogs by the following Saturday.

Our foster homes were full. We had taken 31 dogs into our program over the previous two weekends. I called Sandy Hightower, our president, and gave her the news. I called others asking for help including Kathy Johnson of GAC; Pat Guiver, president of Orange County SPCA; and Gary Guccione of the National Greyhound Association and American Greyhound Council. We sent e-mails to our list and any other list we could contact. By that Saturday, we had succeeded in identifying 60 foster homes for the Caliente dogs, as well as donations from the AGC and Orange County SPCA to help purchase essentials.

Tom and four volunteers left for the track at 4:30 a.m. in high spirits. By the time he arrived at Caliente, Kathy Johnson of GAC had already picked up 28 Greyhounds. Tom asked that all of the retiring dogs be brought out of the working kennels to join the remaining dogs in the pet kennel. At that point, trainers swarmed the kennel with leashed Greyhounds in hand, expressing their heartfelt gratitude for working with them to save these dogs. When the dust settled, there were 69 dogs in the turnout yards instead of the 32 anticipated. Our volunteers loaded as many dogs as could fit into our trailer, a Suburban, and a van. Tom called to tell me to prepare for 47 dogs instead of 32. (Although 22 Greyhounds remained in the pet kennel that day, they were safe. They played in their kiddie pools and waited for their trip across the border.)

By the time I got the call, approximately 30 volunteers had arrived at our home and were preparing to process the incoming Greyhounds. I announced that a few more were coming than we expected. Several of us began calling local boarding facilities and reserving spots for the extra dogs. Others put up more crates and exercise pens to keep them safe during processing. Vaccinations were ready, collars, leashes and GPA tags



Hurry up...and wait!



They're here! The first new retirees meet the volunteers.



The dogs arrive in several vehicles, including GPA's hauler.



Volunteers unload the dogs from the hauler.



Each new arrival is assigned to an ex-pen.



Friendly hellos are exchanged before precessing.



The dogs had a chance to stretch their legs after the long ride from Tijuana to Los Angeles.



Volunteers check the dogs for ticks, injuries, and other problems.



A volunteer prepares to dry the dog and clean its ears before sending it to the medical tent.



It's bath time!



Am I retired yet?



After a very busy day, these dogs are ready to go to their foster homes.

were assembled, and food was prepared. By the time the caravan arrived, everything was set.

I can't find the words to express the elation we felt when those Greyhounds jumped from their transports, tails wagging. Some were even smiling. The volunteers worked tirelessly, ensuring that the dogs were taken from station to station to be bathed, have toenails clipped and ears cleaned, receive vaccinations, have blood drawn, and be cat- and small dog-tested. The day began at 8:30 a.m. for the volunteers who set up the kennels and stations and ended after 8:00 p.m. for those who helped with cat

testing and the breakdown of ex-pens. And as it turned out, no boarding was necessary as every Greyhound went home with a foster family.

So, on one Saturday, when neither GAC nor GPA/CA-OCGLA had room for many dogs at all, we came together and transported 75 Greyhounds across the US-Mexico border and into adoption. ■

*Joyce McRorie is first vice president of GPA/CA-OCGLA.*



George, adopted by Judith Adair of Centralville Va. *Paw Prints*

## To Every Thing, There is a Season: Reflections on Track Closings

By Cynthia Branigan

The first time I went to Wonderland Greyhound Park in Revere, Massachusetts was for the Greyhound Adoption Expo in June 2004. Not knowing my way around, I stopped at the parking attendant's booth to inquire about where in the vast expanse of asphalt I should put my car. I was struck instantly by the pleasant and helpful demeanor of the attendant, an elderly Latino man. In broken English, but with uncommon politeness, he indicated the best entrance to use for the Expo. When he was sure I was taken care of, he returned to what appeared to be his main interest, reading to his young granddaughter.

His granddaughter smiled at me shyly, her large brown eyes glistening in the late day sun. "Muy bonita," I told her grandfather. He smiled broadly. "Si," he replied, "muy bonita." He was so kind and open that uncharacteristically for me, I extended the conversation by asking what they were reading. Proudly the grandfather held up the racing program. He beamed with pride as if he was holding up a trophy fish. He added, "In here she can learn the numbers and the words at the same time." Partly due to my ignorance of Spanish and partly due to my surprise, I said nothing; but my face must have revealed that I was thinking more than I was saying. As if reading my thoughts, he said almost apologetically, "She loves the dogs, señora." Here was a man looking for common ground.

I felt my face flush with embarrassment that, even fleetingly, I should have questioned the appropriateness of their reading material. Whatever judgments I may have had were clearly off base. There was such a strong connection between those two that they practically epitomized quality time. Who could argue about the political correctness of teaching a child to read from a racing program? Indeed, what really was incorrect about it? And, of course, what business was it of mine?

I attempted an encouraging comeback by using the last phrase of Spanish that I knew. "Muy bueno" I said cheerfully, and waved goodbye. They went back to their reading. I parked my car and thought little more about it.

The next year, although I knew my way, I decided to swing by the booth anyway to see if the grandfather and granddaughter were still there. Perhaps by now, I mused, she might be well into advanced statistics. Instead, I was met by a wholly different scene. Not only was the booth boarded up, but the faded pictures on the recycled boards used for the

job, maybe from the '50s or '60s, portrayed a very different Wonderland from the one I knew. Beneath the headline "Dinner and Dancing Nightly" enough of the peeling paint remained to reveal a sketch of a well-dressed man and woman doing what appeared to be the jitterbug.

How long, I wondered, had it been since Wonderland saw that kind of action? Had there really ever been a time when it was thought of as what is now called an entertainment destination? Mostly, though, I wondered and worried about whatever became of the grandfather and granddaughter. That evening, as I walked across the huge parking lot and made my way to the Expo, I noticed that the cracks in the asphalt had sprouted weeds. Although Wonderland was still home to some of the country's finest racing dogs, it was clear that by the summer of 2005, Wonderland had become more of a wasteland. What is not so clear is why.

2005 was a hard year not just for Wonderland but for other Greyhound race-tracks, too. And what affects the industry, also affects the adoption community.

In May, those of us running adoption agencies on the east coast were hit with the news that the Plainfield, Connecticut track was closing its doors. Before track officials made a formal announcement to the media or to adoption groups, word of the closing leaked out to both camps. What resulted

proved wrong the old adage, "There is no such thing as bad publicity." The media leapt on the story with all the fervor of a hungry dog gnawing on a bone. Eventually, the track issued assurances that every single dog would be placed with an adoption agency, returned to its owner, sent back to the farm for breeding, or moved to another track. But it was a classic case of too little, too late. As anti-racing activists seized on the track's public relations blunder as an opportunity to advance their point of view, some adoption groups went into a frenzy, taking in as many dogs as their cars could hold, not stopping to consider where they would put the dogs once they got home. In short, the first few weeks were a mess.

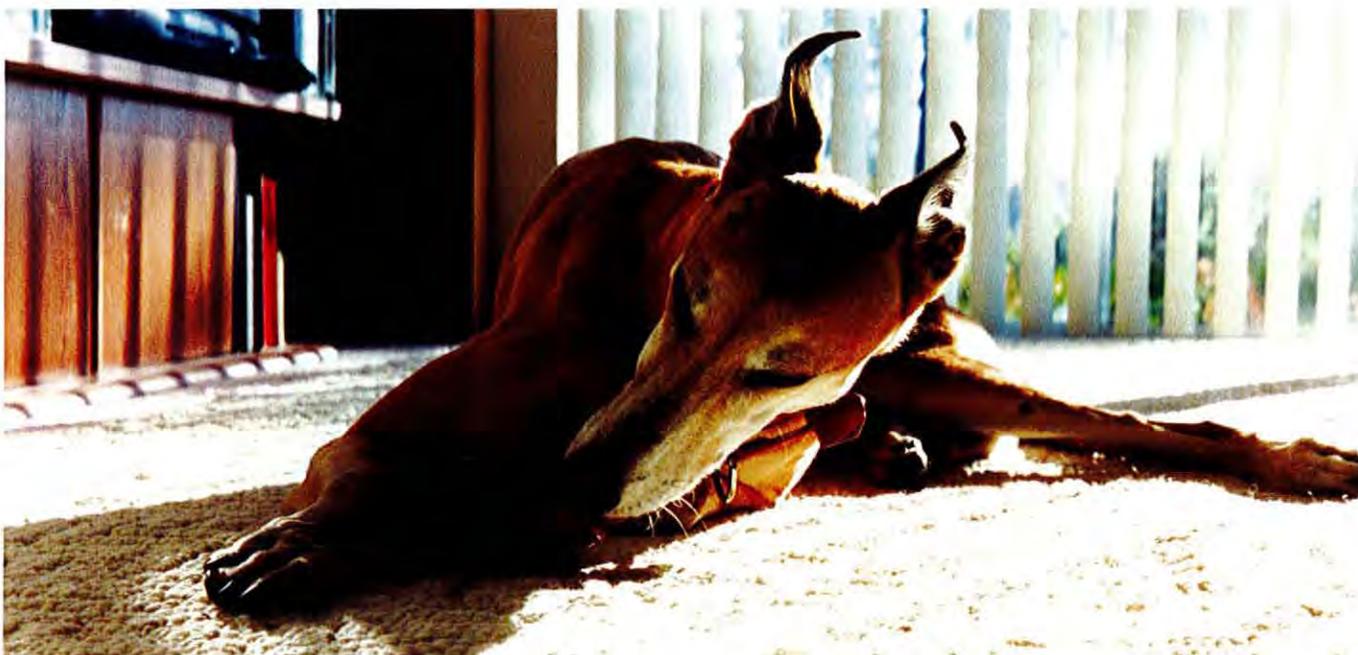
But, as all stories do, the Plainfield closing saga eventually cooled. The news media went in search of the next big thing. By then, track management had enlisted the help of veteran adoption coordinator Linda Jensen to oversee the orderly dispersal of dogs. Within just a few weeks, and with the assistance of Shoreline Star's Penny Zwart and Connecticut Greyhound Adoption/GPA's Kim Reese, all the dogs were where they were supposed to be.

Speaking personally, the only positive to the negative publicity was that my organization (and I suspect many others) had a momentary surge in applications. While we discourage adoptions based on pity or whim,

many of those who inquired turned out to be good, solid people who had been thinking about adopting for a while. The news stories gave them the added impetus they needed to turn their daydream into a reality. Ironically, when I asked for additional Plainfield dogs to fill the applications, I was told that all of the dogs had been placed. But the story of how well things turned out was of no interest to those who make their living reporting on the salacious.

By mid-summer, many of us were beginning to breathe a sigh of relief. Plainfield was handled. Lakes Region Greyhound Park, in northern New Hampshire, had already closed the previous year. So for the first autumn in well over a decade, we wouldn't have to worry about their seasonal closing in September. Things started to look manageable.

Yet, as someone who has been involved with Greyhound adoptions for nearly 20 years, I should have known better. It wasn't long before the other shoe dropped: In addition to the expected annual seasonal closing of Shoreline Star in Bridgeport, Connecticut we discovered that we would be faced with two other closings — one not entirely unexpected and the other very much a surprise. Wonderland announced a mid-autumn closing, with a re-opening planned for spring 2006. Given what I saw there last summer, it seemed a reasonable decision. But when the Seabrook, New Hampshire track



Cinnamon, adopted by Barbara Celli. *Will Shumaker*



Kirby, adopted by Russ and Dana Laggan of Livonia, Mich.

announced that they, too, would start a seasonal schedule and close in December, many of us were very much taken off guard. Incredibly, there was still more to come: Geneva Lakes Greyhound Park in Wisconsin announced its decision to close permanently. Geneva Lakes was one of five tracks that opened in Wisconsin in the 1990s. Now only Dairyland in Kenosha remains. Thousands of Greyhounds would suddenly need homes.

I freely admit that of all the tracks my organization deals with, Seabrook is my sentimental favorite. My dear Ajax graced Seabrook's track. And having dealt with Chris Makepeace, the track's REGAP adoption coordinator, for the better part of two decades, I have come to regard her as a member of my extended family. Much like the little girl at the parking attendant's booth in Wonderland, Chris grew up at Seabrook. Her mother was a trainer, while her grandfather was an owner. The switch to a seasonal schedule meant that part of the web of her life, my life, and the lives of so many Greyhounds and people, would be broken. For me, this was not just another closing. It represented the end of an era.

At the same time, another web was being disturbed. Most of us are aware that as their fortunes or the fortunes of their owners change, racing Greyhounds move from track to track and from track to farm. In other words, it is rarely accurate to proclaim that a certain dog is from Arizona, or Kansas, or

anywhere else. Just as Greyhounds are in motion on the track, so are they in motion off the track.

In late September, four adoption coordinators from three New England tracks (Linda Jensen and Mike Carrabba from Wonderland, Penny Zwart from Shoreline Star, and Chris Makepeace from Seabrook) sent a letter requesting that until the Shoreline, Seabrook, and Wonderland dogs were placed that "we emphatically ask that groups avoid sending Greyhounds from other markets into the Northeast. . . ." Assurances were made that all three tracks are committed to making sure the Greyhounds available for adoption from these three tracks will be properly cared for until permanent homes can be found.

In a certain light, it makes sense. Logistically, it is much easier for groups in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic states to get New England dogs. And with the imminent closings, it also made a certain amount of sense to clean out an entire section of the country as quickly as was possible.

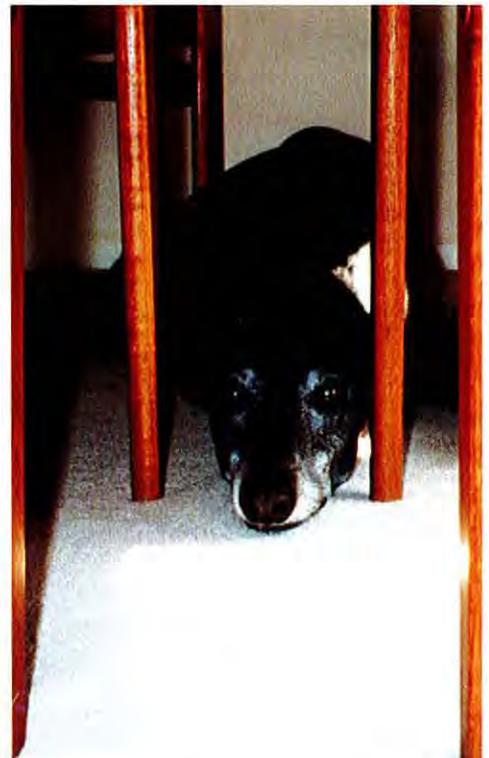
And yet, the request that groups elsewhere refrain from sending Greyhounds wherever they wanted was interpreted by some as fighting words. Florida tracks and Florida adoption groups were particularly hard hit, both by the request and by the New England closings. Not only did the owners of many New England dogs rush to get bookings at various Florida tracks (thus increasing the

overall number of dogs in that state needing homes), but with the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic groups being inundated with New England dogs, fewer were able to take any additional ones.

As Dennis Tyler, who runs the GPA chapter in Melbourne, Florida, rightly asked: Who can say what is a Florida dog? He pointed out that his kennel was full of dogs newly arrived from Plainfield. Just because they happened to be in Florida when they retired, can they not claim to be Connecticut dogs?

The debate intensified when a distraught Brigitte Cooper of Joey's Greyhound Friends in Cape Coral, Florida sent a heartfelt mass e-mail fearing that the New England closings would amount to a "death knell" for Florida dogs. The controversy reached a peak when Beverly Sebastian of the National Greyhound Foundation in Homosassa, Florida sent out a press release claiming that although the New England dogs were protected, "That is definitely not the case in Florida where most Greyhounds are destroyed when they are shipped back to the farm because owners just can't keep them unless adoption groups take those dogs."

As someone who runs an adoption group, I felt stuck in the middle. In the end, we wound up taking dogs from New England and Florida. Overall we took in many more dogs than we



Jeanie, adopted by Jill Hendrickson of Timonium, Md.

would have ordinarily. At this writing we are stretched beyond our usual capacity, with 37 dogs in foster care. And still, we had to turn down those who literally begged us to take more. For me, it has resulted in many a sleepless night.

We tend to think of the span of our lives as being all that there is, but the historian in me looks to the longer view. In fact, there was a time in the recent past when seasonal tracks were the norm. In the early days of racing there was something of a circuit, with dogs running in the South in the winter and the North in the summer. Only in the last 20-30 years has year-round racing taken hold. In his book *Betting on Myself: Adventures of a Horseplayer and Publisher*, Steven Crist writes of going to Greyhound tracks during his student years at Harvard College in the early 1970s. He tells of a time when the year-round schedule was just taking hold, and when dog racing in general was far more popular than it is today.

Having already become a regular at Wonderland, Crist writes: "That fall, we expanded our reach and found other dog tracks within an hour of Boston — Raynham and Taunton in Massachusetts, and Seabrook, just over the New Hampshire border and down the road from New England's biggest nuclear power plant. We didn't have cars (a city boy, I didn't even know how to drive), but there were \$1. chartered buses to these tracks." Later he adds, "Seabrook offered an irresistible deal. On Saturdays they ran

tripleheaders, with 12 races starting at 10:00 a.m., 12 more in the afternoon, and a final dozen at night. How could we pass up 36 dog races in a day?"

It all seems so incredible today — \$1 chartered buses to Seabrook? Thirty-six races on a Saturday? Today Seabrook, much like Wonderland, has a far larger parking lot than they will ever need. In the 18 years I've known of the track, I have watched that lot shrink as they have sold off much of their surrounding land to housing developers.

2006 is a very different world from the one that produced Greyhound racing at the turn of the last century. For one thing, today's fast pace practically requires instant gratification. Although a race lasts but a few seconds, there is a wait between races that some find interminable. For another, there are various gambling opportunities available, from lottery tickets to casinos.

One could make the case that if the anti-racing folks had concentrated their energy on correcting racing's various ills instead of only on bringing down the industry, this whole thing might by now be a non-issue. One could also make the case that if the racing people had done right by their dogs to begin with, there would never have been a basis for criticism of the sport. For whatever reason, perhaps the era of Greyhound racing is over.

But perhaps not. Places like Derby Lane — the country's oldest continuously running track — in St. Petersburg, Florida are still

packing them in seven days a week. Diversity is the name of the game: Dogs race in the Florida sunshine during the winter while other amusements such as poker, simulcasting, and tapas and martini bars operate there year round.

Along the interstate, their billboards proclaim "It's all about having fun." And as the new slogan of Raynham-Taunton track (previously two tracks now merged into one) says, "It's not just the dog track anymore." They, too, offer other forms of entertainment, and for now they continue to race year-round. Other tracks, in New England as well as elsewhere, hang on in hopes of someday getting slot machines as a way to save the day.

Clearly these are times of change for the industry, for adoption groups, and for the Greyhounds. While the future of racing and of adoption groups may be uncertain, I am confident that having survived for 8,000 years so far, the Greyhounds will endure. ■

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*Cynthia Branigan is the author of the best-selling book Adopting the Racing Greyhound and the award-winning book The Reign of the Greyhound: A Popular History of the Oldest Family of Dogs. She is founder and president of Make Peace With Animals, an all-volunteer adoption group that has found homes for over 4,500 Greyhounds since 1988.*



Janny, adopted by Todd Knight and Mike Leonard of Fennville, Mich.



Danny, adopted by Jude Edling of Blue Earth, Minn.

# The Greyhound Community and the Internet

By Joan Belle Isle

**D**o you routinely use the Internet? What do you use it for? Do you use it to communicate about Greyhounds or obtain information about them? Do you find the Internet useful? Have there been times when it wasn't helpful? Were there times when it was, in fact, harmful?

One of the benefits of being a senior member of the Greyhound community (that's code for *I am a cranky old bat*) is that I've seen a lot of changes in 15 years, including the emergence of the Internet as an important vehicle for communications. I'm afraid that I go back to the pre-browser days when a lot of the navigating was in native C code and Unix commands. Believe me, it wasn't pretty. All kinds of things have changed since then. For one thing, you don't have to be a geek to use the Internet anymore. Discussion groups, websites, online chat rooms, blogs, Internet radio, streaming video — they are all there for anyone with a PC, a Blackberry, cell phone, or the newest latest gizmo that connects everyone to everything. It's a lot easier now to navigate around cyberspace. But like all sorts of powerful things, that's good news and bad news.

The Internet started because serious university and government research types needed a way to share a lot of information fast. That's still its underlying purpose, but now you don't have to be a research engineer at NASA to be online. And if you get as much spam and cyber-junk as I do, you probably question the value of some of the information.

There is no question that the Internet has had a huge effect on Greyhounds and Greyhound adoption. For one thing, it is the foundation for an enormous international community of Greyhound owners and adopters. Do you want to know about a dislocated toe, separation anxiety, diarrhea, siblings, toys, squawkers, screaming monkeys, meet-and-greets, laryngeal paralysis, dog doors, dog food, dry skin, allergies, dog beds, collars, coats, carpet cleaners, vacuum cleaners, day care, boarding, traveling with dogs, new dogs, old dogs, warts, corns, happy tail, spooks, lost dogs, found dogs, Rimadyl<sup>®</sup>, glucosamine, arthritis, raw diet? You name it and the information is available. There is someone in the vast Greyhound world that has some experience on the matter and generally is willing to share what she knows.

And there is also someone out there who knows someone who knows about the subject or something sort of like it, so he will

give you information based on what he thinks he knows from his friend or acquaintance. A subset of this guy is the person whose information and expertise is based on other Internet discussion groups and sources — he saw it on another list somewhere.

And then there is the person who doesn't have a clue, but has an opinion anyway.

The moral of the story is that you have to be an educated consumer when you are shopping online for information. Not all of the information is correct. Some of it may be a little misleading. And some of it is just plain wrong.

If someone wants information on adopting a Greyhound, the Internet can be a great source. Information on the Internet includes everything from directories of adoption groups to websites for almost every adoption group to personal web pages chronicling the adventures of individual adopted Greyhounds. The content of those sites varies from rich to feeble. The best adoption

group sites have information about Greyhounds in general and specific dogs currently available for adoption, site-specific message boards, calendars of promotional events, reports on adoption group activities, online applications, and links to other useful sites. The more anemic web pages at least have some way of contacting the group.

The biggest problem with adoption group websites is the more complicated and comprehensive the information, the more difficult it is to keep it updated and current. I can tell you that The Greyhound Project faces that problem all the time. Frankly, we don't do a spectacular job with it either.

I know that buried somewhere in the bowels of our site ([www.adopt-a-greyhound.org](http://www.adopt-a-greyhound.org)) is at least one page with an address and telephone number that is more than five years out of date. I just haven't been able to find where that information is hiding. I know it's still there because a couple of times



Molly, adopted by Lynn and Martin Latham of Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire, England.



Cynder, adopted by the Pasterski family of Green Bay, Wisc.

a year I get a call from someone complaining that they tried to contact us at an old address. When I ask where she found the address, she tells me it was on our website, but of course she doesn't remember exactly how or where she found it.

One of the places where the Internet can be most useful — and at the same time most dangerous — is when a large number of dogs is suddenly in trouble. Whether it's a track closing like Plainfield; or some other circumstance, such as removal of dogs from an abusive situation, the Internet can provide almost instant communication with a very large number of people, enabling quick responsive mobilization to a crisis or a potential crisis. The biggest danger in those situations is distinguishing fact from fiction.

Whenever there is a potential crisis, a sense of urgency takes hold and frequently the information that is passed from one person to another is just plain bad. The more

often it gets repeated, the more it takes on the gravitas of truth, even if it is just plain wrong. Once bad information reaches a certain critical point, it is almost impossible to undo the damage created. It passes into the realm of assumed truth without regard to validity.

Sometimes when I'm tired and especially cranky wading through cyber-junk, I start to feel that the half-stories and parts of stories and predictable overreaction and offended sensibilities just aren't worth the investment of time and energy to read, much less to respond.

So, I'm going to share with you my three rules for staying sane on the Internet:

**1. The Internet is not your living room.**

No matter how intimate and connected you may feel communicating with your friends and other people via the Internet, always remember that you are having half a conversation. Everything that is communicated

through the tone of your voice, the expression on your face, and the cues of your body language when you are communicating face to face is missing from your online messages. Words that are spoken in jest, irony, or sarcasm have a very different impact when they appear in print. And as the communicator, you also lack critical information — that interactive feedback that comes when you are a participant in a conversation.

It should be no big surprise that we often don't know if we are communicating with someone who is friend or schmo. We all want to believe that the people with whom we interact online are just like us. Most of the time we are communicating with other people who share our interest in — and passion for — Greyhounds, so they must be just like us.

Wrong!

The fact is that at least some of the time we are communicating with total strangers.



Ellie, adopted by the Chaffin family of Rockledge, Fla.

We don't know who they are, where they are, or even if they have a Greyhound. I don't know about you, but I get nervous when people I don't know — people with whom I've never spoken, and whom I've never met face to face — tell me, unsolicited, more than I ever wanted to know about their personal life. As creepy as it sounds, we have had at least a couple of cases of cyberstalkers in the Greyhound corner of the Internet universe. They do exist. We are not immune from them just because we love our dogs.

I don't want to leave the impression that we need to shut out everyone that we don't know personally. I'm simply saying that it is prudent to be careful. The Internet is not your living room.

## 2. An ounce of suspicion is worth pounds of regret.

When I talk about the Internet, sometimes I feel a little like the Grinch that stole Christmas. Members of the Greyhound

adoption community are incredibly generous and supportive. In some ways, those characteristics make all of us attractive targets for scams. Appeals for help from established adoption groups are pretty easy to identify and verify. It's the plea for individual emergencies or special circumstances that can be troublesome. The elderly adopter who can no longer afford the veterinary expenses for her aging Greyhounds; the person who wants to start a new adoption group but needs financial help getting started; the adopter who suddenly finds that his or her heart dog has some potentially terminal disease, treatment of which is so expensive that the family cannot afford it; the adopter whose house burned to the ground, leaving her and her dogs with no place to live. These examples, and others like them, may all be completely honest appeals for help, or they may be the product of a cynical manipulator who has found easy picking.

Obscure screen names and anonymous mail accounts are among the things that I find a little off-putting. Over the years I've found too many people with multiple screen identities under different e-mail accounts whose intentions were questionable if not downright troublesome. Individuals who hide behind obscure screen names and untraceable e-mail accounts and refuse to identify themselves publicly or privately while making a lot of noise on any topic fall into the category of trolls, troublemakers, and other unsavory critters.

## 3. What would your mother think?

My mother is an incredibly wise human being. She taught me when I was very small that calling people names was not nice. It is as true now as it was then. Even if a person hits all the hot buttons just for fun and really is a jerk, name-calling accomplishes nothing. Any possibility for communication, no matter how remote, disappears.

Unfortunately, some people seem to have fun trolling the Internet just to see how much angst they can induce. And some people who might not normally be characterized as trolls will intentionally use emotionally-loaded language to make a point or cause discord. Words like rescue, hater, holocaust, and abuse can start a verbal rumble as fast as you can hit the Send button.

Whenever a particularly nasty exchange is underway I am reminded of another little piece of wisdom that a very astute lawyer friend gave me many years ago. I was raging over some perceived injustice or another when he gave me this advice: Never get into a pissing contest with a skunk. Even if you win, you still end up smelling bad. I'm pretty sure my mother would agree.

Finally, rumors, gossip, and betrayed confidences are so common on the Internet that sometimes it feels like we are stuck in those awful sophomore days of our adolescence. Just watching these exchanges is embarrassing. Rumors and gossip are almost always only partly true. They have just enough truth to lend veracity to everything that is just plain not true. The worst part of rumors and gossip is how difficult they are to stop. Once whispered aloud, they quickly get to be like the bad information I mentioned earlier. In this case, the intent is mean-spirited and hurtful. If my mother caught me passing around rumors and gossip, she would be very unhappy with me.

My mom is a pretty good guide for dealing with other people civilly and respectfully. Her view is that everyone — friend or enemy, familiar or stranger — deserves at least that much.

I don't spend a lot of time publicly online any more. If and when I do, I try to keep it short and to the point. I try to always be aware of the power of words, especially those that are emotionally loaded. I make it a policy to re-read anything I am planning to put out there — slowly, from the beginning. I am usually amazed at the errors and poor word choices I find in something that I was so sure was crystal clear. I try not to post anything to anyone or anywhere, privately or publicly, that I am not prepared to have seen and read by the entire world. If I wrote



Baker and Elbert, adopted by Bill Geese and Vanessa Varian of Doylestown, Pa.

it, I am responsible for it no matter where it may show up. And I take everything that I see on the Internet with a huge grain of salt until I can verify the whole story.

These are my own rules. They keep me safe. They keep me sane. They keep me honest. And I hope they keep me from doing harm. ■

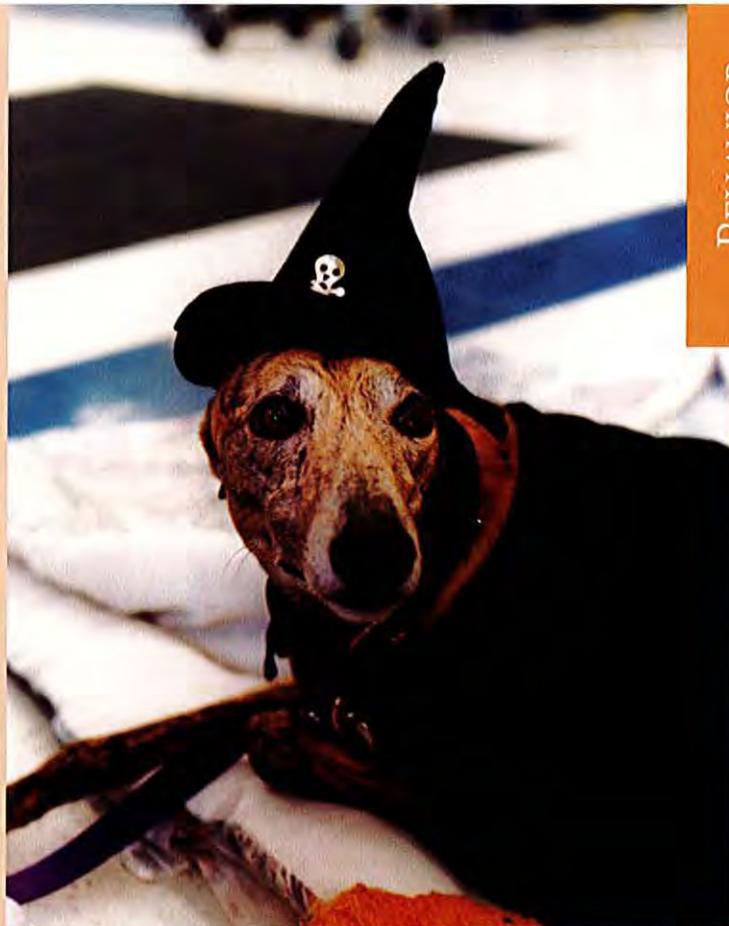
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*Joan Belle Isle is President of The Greyhound Project.*

Ah, the spook. Is there anything more gratifying than taking in a spooky Greyhound, reassuring him, teaching him to trust, watching his confidence grow, and seeing a happy, outgoing, responsive dog blossom from the once trembling, fearful mass of fur that walked into your home many months earlier? I doubt it. But before you agree to take on a spooky Greyhound, you should be prepared for what may happen along the way.

Before I begin, please allow me make a disclaimer: I am not an animal behaviorist, nor am I veterinarian. I am someone who has been working with Greyhounds for over 11 years and has worked with a great number of less-than-gregarious Greyhounds — Greyhounds who were shy, Greyhounds who were apprehensive, Greyhounds who were timid, Greyhounds who were out-and-out petrified, and Greyhounds who bit out of fear. Because my first Greyhound, Hawk, was labeled a spook, I have always had a soft spot for these particular Greyhounds. Spooks can tug at our heartstrings. We want so desperately to “fix” them, but fixing them is not always easy, and the fixing may be more time consuming and emotionally draining than we anticipate.

Many Greyhounds are labeled as spooks. In many cases, that label is inaccurate. While some Greyhounds truly are spooks, many fearful Greyhounds are just that — frightened.



Spooky Greyhounds can be just as scary to Greyhound owners as we are them. Zoomo, adopted by Wally and Kathy Drells of Worth, Ill. Karen Fishella

## What Do I Do With This Spooky Dog?

By Lee Lavery

These dogs are timid because they suddenly find themselves in unfamiliar surroundings. Perhaps they need a little longer to adjust to retirement than some other dogs. These dogs are fairly easy to work with and usually just need a little patience and a lot of love. The Greyhounds that are simply shell-shocked at finding themselves in unfamiliar territory will, generally, come around in about two to four months. By that time, they will have become the happy, outgoing, lovable goofs we all know and love. You need only to understand their apprehension, allow them their space and, most importantly, allow them to come to you in their own time and on their own terms. Patience is really the key when working with a timid dog.

Beyond the timid Greyhounds are those

Greyhounds that for some reason — perhaps genetics, the situation or, sometimes, inappropriate handling — are fearful and untrusting of humans. These Greyhounds are true spooks. In the most severe cases, fear will prompt these dogs to bite. These dogs are not for novices. If this type of dog is not one with which you are familiar, do not attempt to work with them. There's a good chance you will fail, get bitten in the process, and end up with a dog that quickly becomes unadoptable because he or she has been labeled a “fear biter.”

So who are the spooks? There are three different categories: The shy or timid dog, the true spook, and the fear biter. Let's take a look at each one.

### The Shy or Timid Dog

Shy and/or timid dogs are dogs that have not yet figured out that being a treasured pet is really cool. They suddenly find themselves surrounded by beds and blankets, toys, strange food, and a multitude of unfamiliar sights, sounds, and smells. They are not accustomed to this much stimulation. Sometimes, the most comfortable way for a shy dog to adjust is to find a corner in which to hide.

In my experience, the best way to handle a shy or timid dog is to do just that — handle them. Touching and petting is the best way to help a shy or timid dog warm up to you. However, keep in mind that if you chase them down in order to touch them, you are defeating the purpose. It is far better to casually reach out and touch the dog as he runs past you. Sit on the floor, keep your head lower than his (this is less threatening to him), and wait for him to come to you. Chasing a timid dog in order to pet him will only scare him.

Using a happy, upbeat tone of voice is also very helpful. Try to avoid using a condescending, consoling tone of voice. Sometimes a shy or timid dog will remain withdrawn, feeding on your desire to comfort them. I have found that the happier the voice, the faster the Greyhound will respond. (Sometimes I think this is because Greyhounds are so darn nosy. They just can't sit back and listen to a happy voice; they have to be part of the action.)

### The Spook

The spooky dog has all the same apprehensions that a shy or timid dog has, but the apprehensions are extremely heightened. A spook may try to bolt out the door if he sees even a hint of an escape route. The spook may urinate if you try to touch him. The spook may also lie down and roll over in submission, and I have seen those same dogs urinate on themselves while in that submissive position. The spook is the dog that will not come out of his crate or into the house unless there is no one near the door. The spook will cower in the corner for hours on end.

The spooky dog is somewhat more challenging than the shy or timid dog, but the spook is certainly not hopeless. Much of the same advice for shy and timid dogs applies to the spooks as well. Handling the spook is the best thing you can do for him, but the handling technique is a bit more challenging than what you would use with a shy or timid dog. Because a spook may not be willing to venture from his safe place (his crate, corner, etc.), you have to be creative to handle him. Over the years I have become an expert “combat crawler” when working with spooks. I frequently drop down and “combat crawl” toward the dog until I can reach out and touch him. Inevitably the dog will flinch and, depending on the dog, may even vault over the top of me, but I touched him and that's a start.

Working with a spook is like training any other dog. You attempt to achieve behavior modification by repetition. If getting the dog to allow you to touch him is your goal, then you must touch the dog 15-20 times a day. That might mean you crawl around on the floor 15-20 times a day. As I have stated, working with a spooky dog is very rewarding, but also very time consuming, especially if the dog is a true spook.

If your spook will venture out of his safe place, you can simply lie on the floor with your arms outstretched and wait. In most cases, the Greyhound will eventually come up and sniff you (it's that nosy Greyhound thing again). Do not try to touch the dog the first time he approaches you. Do not try to touch him the second, third, fourth, or tenth time he comes up to sniff you. Let the dog begin to develop some trust in you; then, slowly reach up or over and try to touch him. Once he allows you to touch him from a prone position, begin the process again, but try sitting on the floor instead of lying on the floor. Eventually you will be able to work your way to sitting on the sofa while petting your Greyhound.

All of this may sound a little involved and a little extreme. In many cases, it is. Only the spookiest of Greyhounds will require this much time and effort, but these dogs need a great deal of time and faith before they will trust. Trust is the key. Once these dogs trust you, most of them blossom quickly.



Polar Bear, adopted by Greg and Ann Peterson of Shawnee, Kan.

I have an almost four-year-old male that came to me two years ago as a major spook. Wally was a submissive urinator when I got him. Every time I tried to touch him, he tucked his tail up against his tummy and urinated all over his tail and all over my floor. Wally will now let me touch him, pet, hug, and kiss him. He takes food from my hand. But he bolts from the room about half the time when I stand up from the chair or sofa. Even after two years of my husband crawling on the floor to touch him, Wally is just now starting to approach the sofa where Larry is sitting. He takes a quick sniff of Larry's hand and bolts back down the hallway. We know our patience will be rewarded and eventually Wally will overcome his fear of being around Larry. I have often found that spooks adjust better to women than men, for some reason.

There are a few things you can do to help ease the apprehension of a spook. Leaving the television or radio on helps him to settle down a bit. Placing his food dish near his safe place and, day after day, moving it a little closer to the community area of your home helps ease him into becoming part of your family. Wear a t-shirt or sweatshirt for a day and then place that article of clothing in his safe place so he becomes used to the smell and associates your smell with something safe. My personal favorite trick to help a spook adapt is singing. Greyhounds love it when you sing to them, and they don't seem to care if you don't sing well! They don't seem to care what you sing, either. It sounds crazy, but try it sometime and see if the expression on your spook's face doesn't change just a bit.

### The Fear Biter

Unless you have several years of experience working with spooky dogs, I do not recommend you take on a fear biter. Having been bitten a few times by fear biters, I can tell you it is difficult not to react badly when they bite, but not reacting badly is part of the key to working with a fear biter.

The first thing to know about working with a fear biter is that a plastic basket muzzle is your best friend. A true fear biter should be wearing his muzzle almost all of the time during those first couple of days and

weeks (depending on the dog), unless he is eating. You need to be fearless when working with a fear biter, and the muzzle will give you some protection. However, do not think the muzzle will prevent the dog from biting you. I have been bitten by muzzled dogs three times over the years.

When a fear biter attempts to bite you or succeeds in doing so, do not scream at him or strike him. These responses will only reinforce his fear. Instead, when the fear biter tries to bite, try pulling up on his collar (a martingale-style humane choke collar is best), look the dog in the face, and in a firm but not angry voice, say "No! No bite!" After making the correction, attempt to gently pet the dog. If he allows you to pet him without growling or snapping, praise him and offer him a reward such as a small piece of chicken or other special treat. This correction/reward combination is intended to modify behavior, which can turn a less-than-desirable dog into a treasured member of your family. Working with a fear biter requires nerves of steel, limited common sense, or both. But once you have gained the dog's trust and see him start to accept you and the affection you offer, you will not regret the time and energy you put into the relationship.

Working with spooks is challenging. It is also one of the most rewarding things I've ever done. Admittedly, it's not for everybody,

and as a rule, I don't recommend it for novice Greyhound owners, particularly families with young children. Children move faster than adults, are frequently louder than adults, and have difficulty understanding why the dog runs away from them. And we never want to put a child in a position where they might possibly be harmed. Placing a spook in a home with very young children is frequently counterproductive for both the dog and the family.

However, if you are up to the challenge, have time, patience, the right environment, and the ability to withstand rejection on a daily basis, consider taking in a shy, timid, or spooky Greyhound. While your dog may never become the gregarious Greyhound ambassador that is the star of your adoption group's meet-and-greet (although it's possible), he will be the most loyal, loving, and appreciative companion you've ever had. Believe me, I know of what I speak — Hawk, the spooky little Greyhound who came to live at my house not quite 12 years ago, now rules our roost with an iron paw and a loving, trusting spirit. ■

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*Lee Lavery works with Greyhound Guardians, Inc. in northwest Indiana.*



Zack (Road Race), adopted by Jamie and Steve Wilson of Erwin, Tenn.



Photos by Steve Miller

## Back to the Track

For most of us, when we watch our Greyhounds run, all we see is a blur of graceful fur. Take a look at these photographs to see just how our Greyhounds defy gravity to race. Look closely. Is something just a little off about these racing photographs? The silks don't look quite right. Those sure aren't racing muzzles! And are those dogs wearing pet collars? They sure are . . . and these photographs depict retired racers returning to the track at Ebro (Fla.) Greyhound Park to relive their professional lives for just a few hours. The occasion was GPA/Emerald Coast's Fifth Annual Hound Dawg Howliday, and the dogs ran for the sheer joy of it. They were hand slipped, raced to the first turn, and chased nothing. Steve Bauer photographed the dogs that day. —Ann Bollens ■

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*Steve Bauer recently retired from the military after 27 years of service. He is currently "employed" as the personal chauffeur and event coordinator for his 14 year-old twins. Steve has been a photographer for over 25 years and his images have been published in several national magazines. He lives in Panama City, Fla. with his wife, two children, three cats, and a dog.*







Amber receives physical therapy on the underwater treadmill. (Because her history of laryngeal surgery makes it important to avoid inhaling any water, her chin is propped up with an empty bucket.)

# Walking on Water:

## Veterinary Rehabilitation and the Underwater Treadmill

By Barbara Royal, DVM

**W**hile physical therapy for animals is not a new concept, equipment and accessibility have opened up new possibilities. Recently there have been exciting improvements in treatments for animals who need veterinary rehabilitation. These advances, especially the underwater treadmill (UWT), have been extremely useful for Greyhounds recovering from injury, trauma, or arthritis pains.

I started using the UWT in 2001 at the Veterinary Specialty Center in Buffalo Grove, Illinois. I came to rely on it so much that I installed one in my own clinic, the Royal Treatment Veterinary Spa in Chicago. I know that many owners believe that their pets walk on water, but at these facilities, they truly do. Even animals who are unused to or dislike water do well in our pool.

### How the UWT Works

The UWT chamber is the size of a wide single bed. Dogs, cats, rabbits, ferrets, and other animals walk into a dry chamber with the technician. After the door is closed, the pool is then filled to the desired level. Buoyancy is increased by raising the water level. With increased buoyancy there is decreased weight-bearing load. The water stabilizes the animal and, along with the technician, provides resistance to avoid falling. Once the desired level is reached, the treadmill is slowly started.

Changing water levels and increasing or decreasing treadmill speed are basic to UWT therapy. While in the pool, we help animals return to their normal gait by physically moving their joints in the water and providing other physical therapy aids, like massage. Owners stand by with treats and encouragement. Most pets can't wait to get into the pool the next time.

The goals of physical therapy include improving muscle strength and slowing atrophy, decreasing pain and inflammation, increasing the rate of healing, remodeling scar tissue, and stabilizing arthritic joints. We work closely with orthopedic specialists, the regular veterinarian, and the owner to develop treatment plans for our patients. When surgery is an option, the post-operative rehabilitation can include UWT. We also use the UWT to help patients avoid surgery.

### How the Hounds Benefit

Because of the nature of racing and the musculoskeletal configuration of our lanky friends, Greyhounds often require physical therapy to recover from injuries or arthritis pains. Often we treat dogs with serious or debilitating impairments who need help to regain essential motor functions. In addition, some dogs must increase their fitness to prevent future injury.

Because of their sensitive constitution, Greyhounds are often referred to my clinic for alternative treatments. They have a tendency toward specific musculoskeletal problems. Because of their history as racers and their physical configuration — an arched topline, long thin legs, deep chests, and very little body fat — Greyhounds are more prone to musculoskeletal injuries than most breeds. I treat many chronic conditions: lameness, weakness (especially in the rear legs), stumbling or missteps, shortened strides, and difficulty in getting up. Decreasing pain is a priority. Often these hounds are not improving with medication or do not tolerate medication well.

With any problem, especially joint-related, an accurate diagnosis by a veterinarian is essential to rule out illnesses that can also cause joint pain and weakness in a Greyhound. These can include tick-borne

diseases, hypothyroid conditions, and bone cancers. Once other causes are ruled out, treatment options can be properly assessed. If further diagnostic, medical, or surgical intervention is not warranted, we proceed with physical therapy.

Bred for speed, the Greyhound's spine has terrific flexibility and permits them to tuck their rear legs and cover longer distances with each stride. This can predispose them to spinal arthritis. The geriatric Greyhound may develop spinal inflammation or pain. There may be no obvious signs until something causes stress to the back or a disk problem is diagnosed. UWT therapy can decrease pain and increase flexibility in many of these animals.

Many retired racers have traumatic injuries to their joints. While some are sub-clinical injuries from the concussive forces of racing, others are more dramatic and can be the reason for the career change from racing star to couch potato. Although these injuries are often racing-related, they can also happen in the backyard.

Common Greyhound injuries include fractures of the wrist, foot, hock, ankle, and toes. We also see sprains, avulsions, and tendon and ligament tears. Even if these injuries are healed, there can be arthritis, pain, or decreased function of the affected joint. These can all be ameliorated by physical rehabilitation and work in the UWT.

Problems can occur when a minor lame-

ness causes a weight shift off the affected limb. With decreased use, muscles start to atrophy, the spine can shift out of alignment to compensate for the change in gait, and problems intensify. Because of the water's buoyancy, exercise on the UWT can provide relief from the concussive force of gravity. This allows a more complete range of motion for the joints/limbs involved. Better motion means increasing neuromuscular stimulation, better muscling, enhanced circulation, improved joint fluids, greater flexibility and strength, and a return to normal function.

### Walking in Water

Although not born swimmers, Greyhounds do surprisingly well on the UWT. Because they are deep chested, they maximize buoyancy with pool depth. This is key to providing exercise while decreasing impact on the joints. Their lack of fur makes evaluating gait easier and muscle atrophy and redevelopment more obvious. Their statuesque physiques show noticeable changes, and treatment protocols can be tweaked as they recover. Greyhounds seem to enjoy the challenge presented by the water — and, naturally, the treats provided by our staff.

Rehabilitating a Greyhound on land can be difficult. If they do fall or buckle over, it's a long-leggy way down. Their skin, which has little padding, tears easily. They tend to prefer a quick sprint to the slow workouts needed for recovery. UWT provides a



Chester, fostered by Judy Greenfield and Will Mahoney of Denver, Colo.

consistent and therapeutic workout without over- or undertaxing the patient and, obviously, falling is not an option in the water-filled chamber. Since Greyhounds are exquisitely sensitive to temperature extremes, we keep the water between 85 and 90 degrees Fahrenheit for their comfort and safety.

The gentle cardiovascular workout on the UWT is great for Greyhounds in most conditions. Studies have shown that subjects can walk at slower speeds in water while expending the same amount of energy. Blood pressure remains lower while the heart rate increases, so that the safety and efficacy of the aerobic exercise is improved.

### One Greyhound's Story

One of my Greyhound patients, a 14-year old sweetie named Amber, initially made me think twice about using the UWT. Her chronic arthritis and muscle weakness was an issue, but my chief concern was her history of laryngeal surgery. If she breathed in any water, it was a straight shot into her lungs. To make matters worse, when she walked, she held her head down low. Her weakness, opened larynx, and delicate age were all against her. But after conversations with her family, we decided to pursue UWT.

We discovered that if we held an empty bucket in front of her head, she could put her head into it. We were able to raise the water level enough to give her proper buoyancy without her breathing in water.

With gentle reminders not to tuck her rear legs under herself and float, she walked on the treadmill. The treatment required both her parents, my technician, and me to make it work, but Amber was quite thrilled with the attention.

The results of UWT have been terrific for Amber. She is now mobile and comfortable. She plays and uses stairs better and is noticeably stronger. Her owners say she is doing activities that she hasn't done in a long time. Amber reminds me how willing the body is to heal itself if provided the right atmosphere and proper stimulation.

Veterinary rehabilitation can provide a huge service for Greyhounds. They can stay fit, recover from debilitating impairments, and regain mobility using fewer medications. We can help decrease the need for surgery or help in post-operative recoveries. Greyhounds are an amazing breed. Greyhound owners tend to be among the most dedicated. It is gratifying to join forces with them to give these dogs a chance at a long, active, happy, and healthy life. ■

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*Dr. Royal practices at the Royal Treatment Veterinary Spa in Chicago, Ill. This article originally appeared in the Fall 2005 issue of The Skinny, Newsletter of Greyhounds Only, Inc. and was reprinted here with permission of the author.*



Lily, adopted by Gail Rios of Walnut Creek, Calif.

## Rehabilitation Techniques You Can Use at Home

While advanced techniques and modern equipment are tremendously effective, they are only a part of the rehabilitation process. There are many simple and effective things owners can do at home to help their dogs:

If arthritis is causing stumbling, gently squeeze the feet (firm handshake pressure) a few times a day. This gives the neuromuscular network reminders about the location of the feet to help proper placement and mobility.

If muscles are weak, do some short figure-8 patterns during walks. This will strengthen underused muscles.

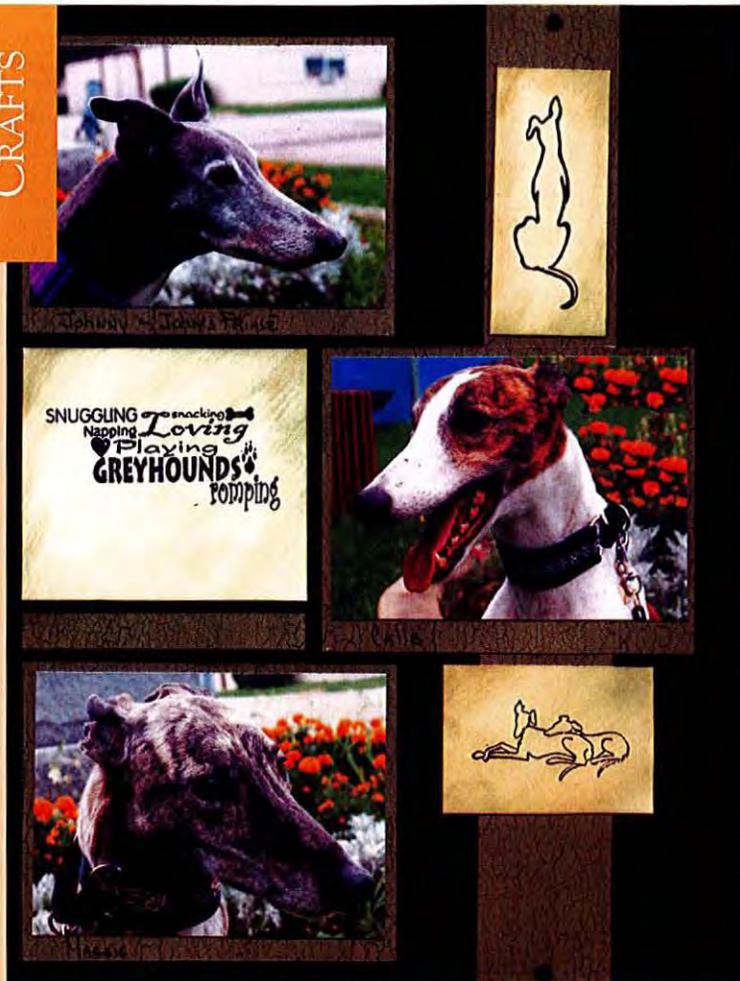
If your pet is overweight, decrease his food and treats immediately. Try to decrease carbohydrates, too. "Diet" foods and treats usually are not necessary if you can just get your pet to eat less. Try canned (low-salt) green beans as treats.

Beware of dry sand, which can be a hazard, especially for knees. Unstable motions on sand can cause strains or tears of ligaments or tendons.

Gentle, frequent, low-impact exercise is best for arthritis. Becoming more sedentary with arthritis causes a dangerous downward spiral. Healthy joints need motion and proper weight bearing to remain healthy. Arthritic joints may feel like they do not want to move, but without movement, they will deteriorate, muscles will atrophy, and function will be lost.

Although warmth may be helpful for arthritic patients, care must be taken not to overheat the Greyhound. A warm washcloth in a plastic bag placed over an affected area can give some relief.

Heating pads and microwave-heated compresses are not recommended because they can burn delicate Greyhound skin.



# Scrapbooking 101

## Greyhound Photo Keepsakes

By Lisann Porter and Becky Taggart-Redmond

**T**his article is the first in a series on scrapbooking techniques using Greyhound rubber stamps. Now is the time to organize, preserve, and display those treasured photographs and keepsakes!

### Getting Started

First, select your favorite photos. Any size photo will work; allow three to five photos per page.

Next, choose two to three colors of colored paper or card stock (acid-free paper is best).

Assemble your basic rubber stamping supplies: Ink pads, several rubber stamps, ruler, scissors, adhesive (glue stick, mono adhesive, or double-sided tape), permanent markers, colored pencils and chalk, cotton swabs, and brushes.

Optional supplies include a paper trimmer and fun accent accessories such as ribbon, colored brads, and wire spiral curls. Scrapbooking and rubber-stamping supplies are available at most craft stores.

Refer to the articles on rubber stamping in previous issues of *Celebrating Greyhounds Magazine* (Fall 2004, Winter 2004, Summer 2005, Winter 2005) for basic stamping instructions and specialty techniques. Copies of these articles are also available in the Greyhound section on our website ([www.voyagersjewelry-design.com](http://www.voyagersjewelry-design.com)).

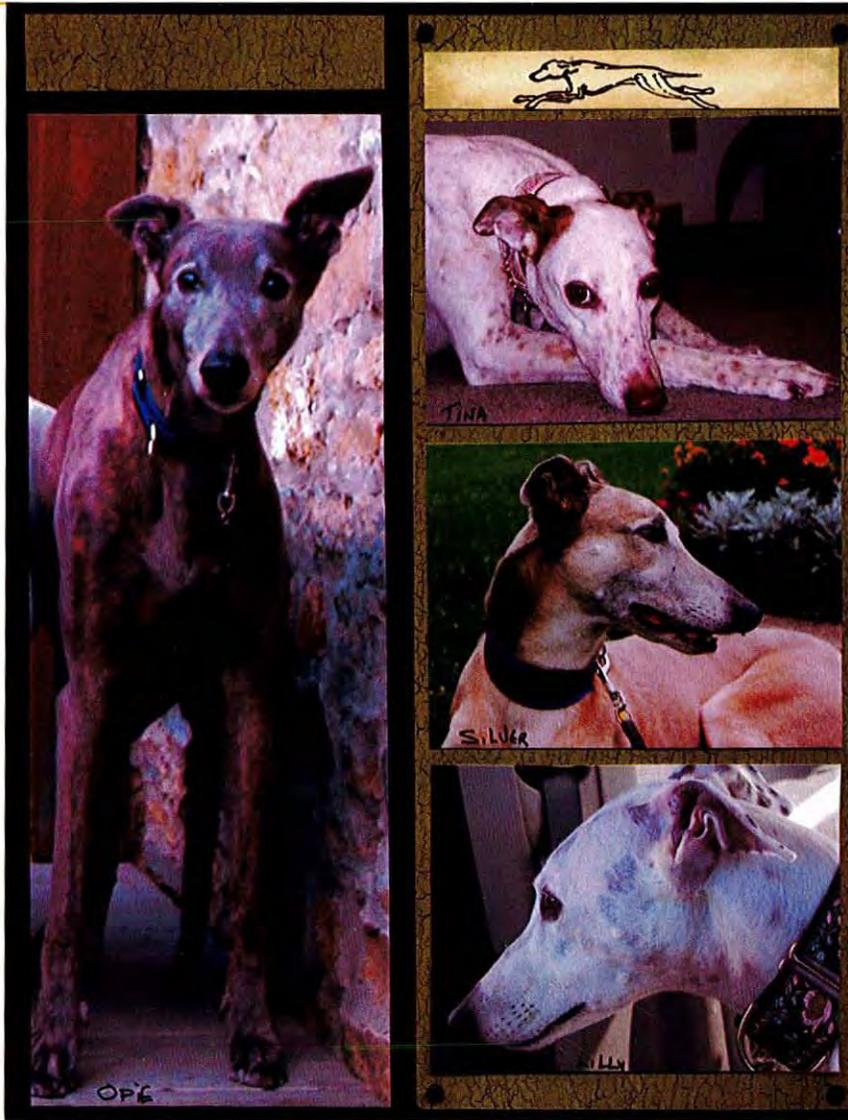
### Instructions to Create a Color-Block Scrapbook

Trim your photos if necessary. Mount photographs on blocks of patterned colored paper, leaving a rim of paper around the edges to add notes or names. The framing edges of paper can vary in width. Photos do not have to be centered in the blocks — they could also be arranged at angles.

You can make patterned paper by randomly stamping a medium-sized Greyhound stamp on a plain sheet of paper (try stamps such as #96V Live, Love, Laugh Greyhounds or #24V Tug-of-War hounds).

Use extra pieces of the patterned paper and a light colored card stock to create a “block” effect. Stamp a variety of Greyhound rubber stamps on the lighter-colored blocks. Add special effects by distressing the stamped paper with chalk and mixing several colors on a brush or cotton swab.

Mount all blocks to the larger sheet of paper. Add brads to a few blocks in the corners. The finished sheet can be added directly to a scrapbook or mounted on a standard scrapbook page.



Items used for these color-block scrapbook pages:

Black heavyweight paper

Olive green crackle-patterned paper

Cream card stock

Greyhound rubber stamps:

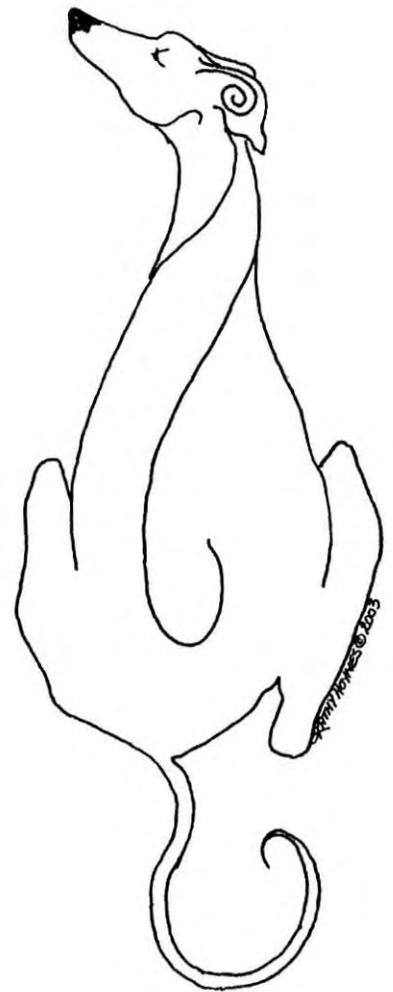
#8V, Can't Lose

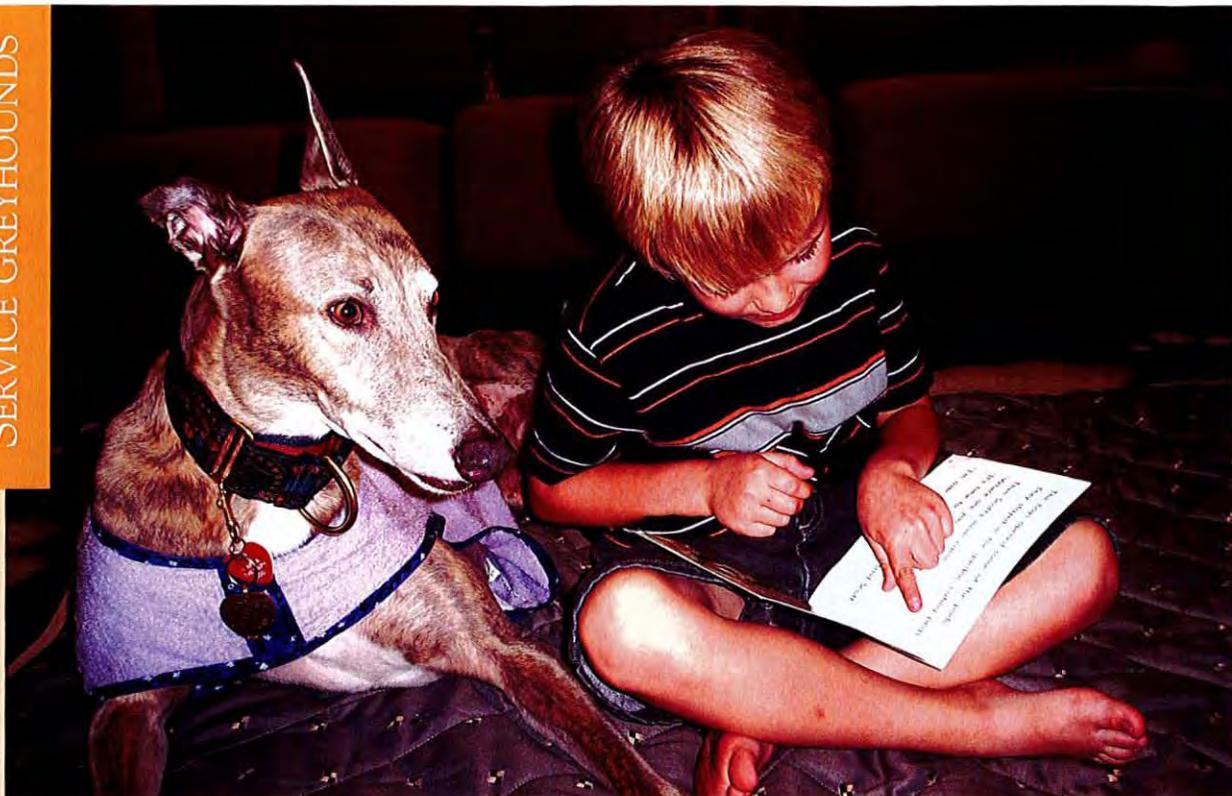
#99V, Greyhounds Greyhounds

#5V, One Ear Up Hound

#3V, Two Hounds Resting ■

*Lisann Porter and Becky Taggart-Redmond (and their Greyhounds) work together and promote Greyhound adoption every day at The Voyagers Jewelry Design in Cambridge, Wisc. The Redmonds have been adopting Greyhounds for over 15 years. The Greyhounds continue to be their inspiration for Greyhound jewelry and rubber stamp creations. Over 100 original design Greyhound rubber stamps are available at The Voyagers ([www.voyagersjewelrydesign.com](http://www.voyagersjewelrydesign.com)).*





Greyhound Monet is an avid listener in the Reading to Rover program. *Dana Provost*

## Retired Racers Support Children's Reading Therapy Dogs in Schools and Libraries

By Dr. Mary Renck Jalongo

**Y**ou've no doubt seen them at health care facilities, but they are not service dogs. They were there in the aftermath of the September 11th tragedy, but they are not search and rescue dogs. Therapy dogs have a different job description: their role is to offer emotional support to human beings. You may be familiar with the use of therapy dogs in nursing homes, but therapy dogs can also promote literacy in children. Many adopted Greyhounds are well suited for therapy dog work for the following reasons:

Therapy dogs must be completely non-aggressive toward people and other dogs. Greyhounds are renowned for their gentleness and have been socialized with other Greyhounds (and perhaps other breeds) if they were fostered.

Therapy dogs must be obedience trained, but unlike many service dogs, they are not required to engage in independent problem solving. Greyhounds can shine when it comes to sensitivity and responsiveness to human beings, which are the therapy dog's stock and trade.

Therapy dogs need to be calm and steady in unfamiliar experiences. Retired racers are accustomed to the loud noises and crowds of the track and may have participated in adoption group meet-and-greets, which are a good predictor of therapy dog potential.

Therapy dogs must walk on a loose lead without pulling and are taught not to bark or lick. Adopted Greyhounds often do these things already or can be taught to do so without much difficulty.

Therapy dogs must be neat, clean, and

odor-free. Greyhounds are much lower maintenance in the grooming department than many other breeds.

Therapy dogs must follow, trust, remain calm, and attune themselves to people. Greyhounds are naturally trusting and sensitive to the people and environment around them.

A reputable Greyhound rescue group can assist you in selecting a dog that is outgoing, yet calm, eager to please, thrives on attention, and likes children. (For more on Greyhounds as therapy dogs, see the Winter 2002 issue of CG.)

### The Scientific Basis for Animal-Assisted Therapy

The documented health benefits of interacting with animals, particularly dogs,

have been widely reported in the media. Physician/researcher James J. Lynch (*A Cry Unheard: New Insights into the Medical Consequences of Loneliness*, Baltimore: Bancroft Press, 2000) found that the presence of a dog can reduce signs of stress in people of all ages by returning elevated blood pressure and a rapid heart rate back to resting levels. What does all of this have to do with reading? Research has found that children's physical indicators of stress when they are reading aloud are highest when reading with a teacher, next with a peer, and the lowest of all when reading with a dog. Endorphins, the chemicals that are associated with positive mood, are increased when children interact with a mellow dog. Evidently these effects are reciprocal: stroking a dog's fur serves to relax the animal as well as the child. Findings such as these have made therapy dogs an increasingly valued part of educational programs and an innovative way of addressing the national goal of improving children's reading skills.

### Reading in the Company of Greyhounds

As any reputable dog trainer will tell you, it takes many repetitions under different circumstances for a dog to respond reliably to commands. Children who are learning to read are in a similar situation, for they cannot become fluent and confident readers unless they practice with many different kinds of books. "Read/dog" programs capitalize on the therapy dog's reassuring presence to relax the child who is anxious about reading aloud. In Intermountain Therapy Animals' ([www.therapyanimals.org](http://www.therapyanimals.org)) Reading Education Assistance Dogs® (R.E.A.D.) program, the handlers are trained as reading mentors who have mastered basic techniques for supporting a child's reading efforts. The R.E.A.D.® program also includes a wide variety of resources for therapy dog handler teams, including award-winning advertising materials, a training program for handlers, a list of recommended children's books, materials to duplicate and distribute to the children (such as business cards and book marks with the dog's picture), and various record-keeping aids (such as permission forms and activity logs).

### What Children Need in Order to Read

Generally speaking, there are at least four keys to success in learning to read.

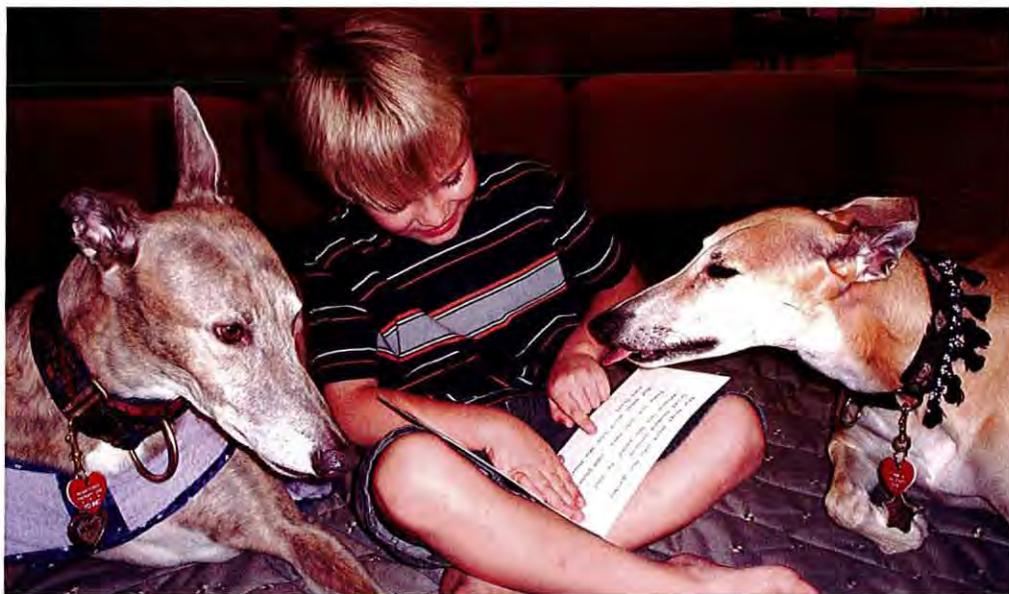
*Motivation to read.* Most of us avoid things we think we are not "good at," and children are no different. For many children, dogs can be a powerful inducement to read. When the library advertises that the therapy dogs will be there, children often persuade their families and friends to participate in the event and are more likely to borrow materials while there. At school, therapy dogs are a way to make learning to read more inviting, relaxing, and pleasurable for children who struggle with or dislike reading. Therapy dogs do not criticize or grow impatient. As one third grader wrote in her journal, "I like the dogs because the dogs can listen." R.E.A.D.® handlers are taught to avoid causing the child to feel tested or put on the spot. Instead of saying, for example, "What's this word?" the handler might say, "My Greyhound Speedy doesn't know that big word. Can you help him out?" All of these things provide the sort of gentle encouragement that motivates children to keep trying to read.

*Guided practice.* When people are attempting to learn something for the first time, working alone to figure it out tends to be inefficient. Learning proceeds more smoothly with support, and that is what read/dog programs are intended to provide. A child who reads out loud with a therapy

dog team gets individualized attention, helpful feedback, and recognition for effort. There is a caring adult there to supply the undecipherable word so that the child does not lose heart and stop reading. The handler also connects the child's experience with the book by responding to the child's comments and questions.

*Access to appropriate reading materials.* Readers need books that interest them and that are neither too easy nor too difficult. When the therapy dog teams visit, they rely on the teachers, reading specialists, and librarians to identify books at the correct reading level so that the child comes to the therapy dog team carrying several suitable book choices. In many of these read/dog programs, children can earn free books — another way to get books into children's hands and homes.

*Focus on meaning.* The therapy dog serves as an intermediary as the handler checks the child's understanding by asking the young reader to explain the gist of the story — to the dog. For example, while reading *Harry the Dirty Dog*, the handler might say, "Dash is confused. Why don't the children recognize their own pet?" Your Greyhound therapy dog also can be a living, breathing instructional tool. If a child is unfamiliar with the words like "tail," or "collar," pointing to them on the dog offers a clue and usually results in a smile of recognition from the child.

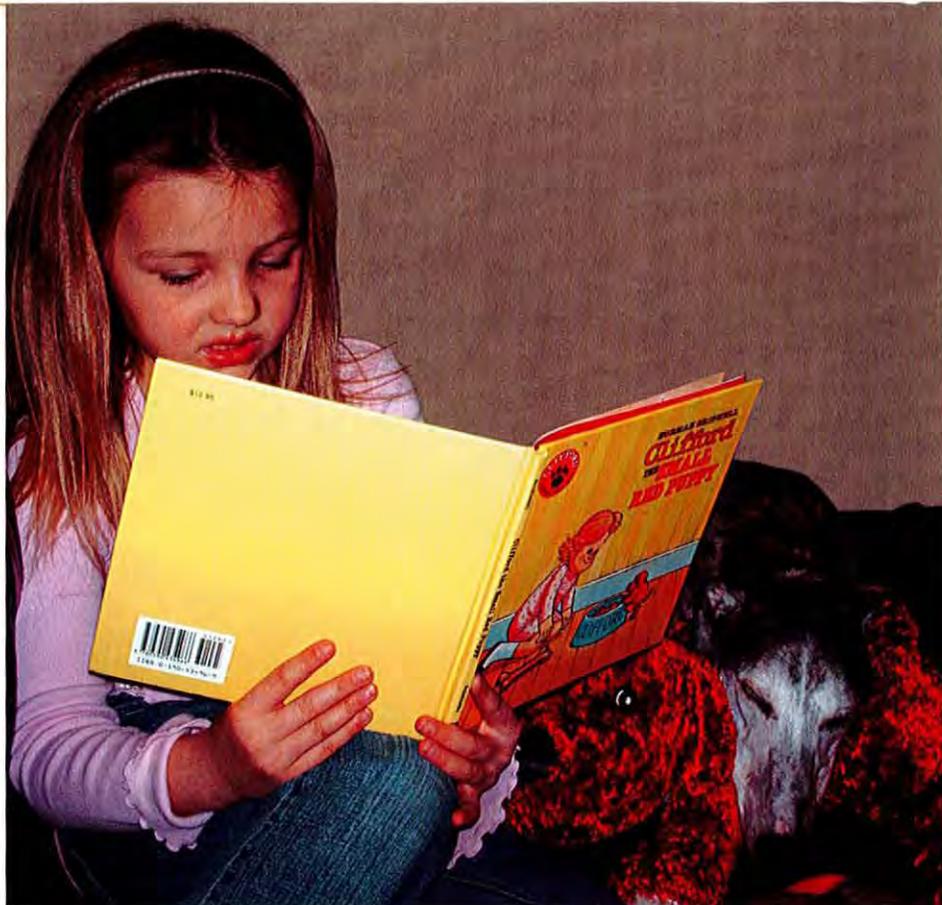


Greyhounds are good participants in reading programs because of their gentle nature, as Monet (left) and Renoir (right) illustrate. Dana Provost

Does reading with dogs really work? Longitudinal research collected over three school years by R.E.A.D.<sup>®</sup> suggests that it does. School personnel had identified all of the children who participated in the program as high risk for academic failure; yet, after reading with the dogs on a weekly basis, they improved their reading scores significantly and several children advanced by two (or more) grade levels. It isn't just reading test scores that are affected, as important as that is. Children need to be in school to benefit from instruction and read/dog programs improve attendance. More positive attitudes about reading and school are another measurable outcome. When we asked families from Rayne Elementary School to evaluate a Summer School Program, 34 out of 35 parents indicated that their child was more enthusiastic about attending summer school when the therapy dogs were there and 29 indicated that their child talked about reading with the handler and dog.

### Getting Started in Schools and Libraries

The first step is to become or find a registered and insured therapy dog handler team. Most therapy dogs are registered through Delta Society ([www.deltasociety.org](http://www.deltasociety.org)) or Therapy Dogs International, Inc. (<http://www.tdi-dog.org/>) and are group-insured, while other dog handlers have individual coverage. The next step is to find some dog-friendly professionals in schools and libraries and comply with their policies (for example, most schools require a criminal record check and visitor's badges). Start small and build mutual trust and respect. Even educators and librarians who are reluctant to open their doors to dogs often will agree to a dog safety program. The American Kennel Club has materials that can be used for this purpose (see also Lee Livingood's article "Kids are Kids, and Dogs are Dogs," Spring 2005 CG). Other types of group presentations that are often well received include an elementary school visit for students who are studying pets or visiting with your Greyhound to familiarize children with the breed. Group activities give your dog a chance to get acclimated to the sights and sounds of these settings. After



Wrangler makes reading more enjoyable for Erysha Graber. *Patti Graber*

establishing these community connections, you may want to try tutoring just one child after school to get comfortable with the process of supporting a child's reading while handling your dog simultaneously. The federally funded reading support program, Title I, has smaller classes and may be receptive to weekly therapy dog visits. You will also want to avoid overtiring the dogs, so include a time and place for breaks outdoors. If you are insured by Therapy Dogs International, Inc., note that your insurance coverage is limited to volunteer work as an individual member of TDI, Inc. If you are insured by Delta Society or an individual liability policy and want to do the R.E.A.D.<sup>®</sup> program with a small class of 15-18 students you will need at least eight to 10 completely reliable teams who are available during the day and a minimum of four teams present on any given day to allow each child to have a 15-20 minute appointment with the dog.

### Conclusion

Therapy dog activities are a unique way of celebrating Greyhounds. By collaborating

with your local therapy dog groups, Greyhound adoption agencies, and community members dedicated to supporting literacy, you and your retired racer can make a lasting contribution to the reading education of children. ■

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*Mary Renck Jalongo, Ph.D. is a college professor who has written about children and animals in the book *The World's Children and Their Companion Animals: Developmental and Educational Significance of the Child/Pet Bond* (Association for Childhood Education International, 2004) and in articles published by the National PTA's *Our Children*, in *Early Childhood Education Journal*, and *Childhood Education*. She is an Advisory Board member for *Intermountain Therapy Animals* ([www.therapyanimals.org](http://www.therapyanimals.org)) as well as a member of *Monica's Heart Greyhound Adoption* ([www.monicasheart.org](http://www.monicasheart.org)) and an advisor to the local *Therapy Dogs International, Inc.*, chapter, D.R. P.E.T. Her adopted Greyhound is DP Cuddle Bear (Cuddles).*



Barbie's stay in her foster home will prepare her for her forever home.

# On Loan To Love

By Jo Langer

The first potty trip of the day is behind us. Tummies are pleasantly full from breakfast and my hounds sprawl out around me in various positions of contentment. As much as I love to watch them as they sport about at playtime — running with wild abandon at the sheer delight of being Greyhounds — I think the satisfying hush of early morning is my favorite time of day. Peace and tranquility envelop me as I sip my coffee.

My immediate attention focuses on my newest foster girl, Barbie. Within arms' reach, she is such a delightful spirit, with the happiest of souls and the most grateful of hearts. I listen to the calming sounds of her breathing as she settles in for a nap at my feet. Slowly, softly, breathing in, breathing out. Rib cage expanding with the breath of newly-found freedom, only to deflate with a long, purposeful sigh of blissful comfort. Mouth making tiny nursing sounds as she drifts unavoidably towards slumber. Eyes, though growing heavy, glance up at me occasionally, as if to be reassured that the last thing she knows before sleep overtakes her is the safety of my presence. I remind myself, as she unknowingly tugs at my heart, that we are only on loan to each other.

As our day unfolds, this idyllic scene of Greyhound serenity replays itself frequently. Punctuated by more potty trips, spontaneous spurts of energy, and the competition of the hounds vying for my undivided attention, daytime will turn into nightfall. All too soon, my adoring comrades will be out like little lights for the entire night, cozily wrapped in the cloak of love. Tomorrow is a new day, and we will enjoy it in similar ways.

Fostering Greyhounds who are fresh from the racetrack adds a fulfilling dimension to my life. Excitement stirs within me when I receive news of an incoming group of dogs. I answer the call for help in cleaning their ears, trimming their toenails, bathing them, and if necessary, de-ticking them. When the work is done, I return home accompanied by a new Greyhound — on loan to love.

The dogs vary in size, color, gender, and personality. Each is unique in her special way, each similar in her desire to feel kindness and love. Some arrive like boisterous children at a playground — randomly dashing here and there with infinite enthusiasm — eager to investigate every inch of their new environment. Others, frightened by unfamiliar situations, hide timidly behind veils of doubt and uncertainty. But given time, patience, structure, consistency, and love, ex-racing Greyhounds quickly become confident, well-mannered houseguests.

Foster homes are the lifeblood of most Greyhound adoption groups. Adoption organizations that do not own

kennels rely solely on volunteer foster homes as a means of interim housing during the Greyhound's transition from racing dog to family pet. The number of people who are willing to open their hearts and homes to Greyhounds in need of temporary care is in direct proportion to the number of Greyhounds who can be placed in adoptive homes. It is a simple equation: More foster homes equal more adopted Greyhounds.

The responsibilities of the foster parent/family are numerous. The most obvious one is to provide for the dog's basic needs of shelter, food, and a safe, stable environment. Additionally, there are endless opportunities in which to train the newly retired Greyhound and prepare her for a future as a family member. It is the foster parent's role to ensure the safety of all those concerned — from the foster dog to the resident family members and pets.

Fostering Greyhounds can be very demanding. Each incoming hound presents herself with individual needs and a unique personality. New retirees often develop diarrhea from changes both in their diet and environment. The situations facing the foster dog in her temporary home are new experiences. Some Greyhounds suffer from separation anxiety and benefit from "alone training." Although generally crate-trained and having learned not to eliminate inside their crates, Greyhounds need to be housebroken. Learning to navigate stairs and to avoid glass doors, and even learning how to play with toys, are all new adventures.

The speed in which the Greyhound makes her transition from track life to home life varies. The first week seems to be the most difficult for all concerned with the bulk of problems being resolved well within the first month. Through the ups and downs — the sleep-interrupted nights and potty accidents on the carpets — the foster parent benefits from the assurance that no matter how challenging a foster situation may be, it is only temporary.

Others find fostering to be appealing because it is more affordable to add a foster dog to their family than it is to add a permanent pet. Adoption groups typically assume financial responsibility for veterinary bills that may be incurred. Some adoption

organizations even supply a kennel to be used in the foster home, as well as food for the new arrival.

The benefits of living in a Greyhound-savvy foster home are huge to the new retiree. She has a wonderful opportunity to acquire confidence and knowledge that will ultimately make her a better family member. This is even more beneficial to the hound who is adopted into a home where the owners are first-time Greyhound adopters.

An experienced foster parent is also able to screen the new Greyhound for future placement. Observations made regarding the dog's likes, dislikes, and any potential problematic behaviors help ensure that the right Greyhound is adopted into the right home.

If you decide to become a foster parent, my advice is to keep the Greyhound's future best interests in mind. Err on the side of conservatism when deciding which behaviors to allow. Do not allow fosters on your furniture or to sleep in your bed. If she gets adopted into a home where she is not permitted these privileges, it is more stressful to reverse the behavior than if it was never allowed. Also, I strongly recommend the use of a crate, at least for part of each day. First, because she is used to it and often finds it comforting. Second, because she may be adopted into a home where the owner insists on using a crate while away.

Fostering Greyhounds is not for the weak of heart. For many, the rewards of fostering are bittersweet. Often, bonding relationships form immediately between the foster parent and the Greyhound on loan to love. It is very easy to become attached through the process of Greyhound parenting, and very difficult to say goodbye when the dog is adopted into what is, hopefully, her forever home. The sense of loss for the foster parent is tempered with hope for the dog's happy future.

As a final act of devotion and responsibility, the foster parent often becomes a support person for the adoptive family — offering advice and answers to their questions.

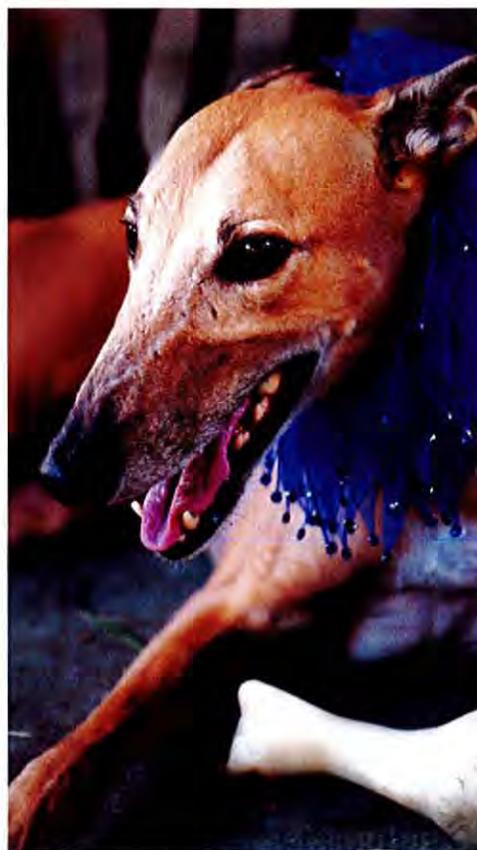
Foster Barbie will eventually move on to her forever family, and in leaving will exchange a piece of my heart with a piece of hers. My only hope is that she finds as much

love waiting for her in her new home as she has in mine. I embrace the unparalleled opportunity that fostering Greyhounds brings, providing me the chance to make a difference in their lives as they relinquish their racing careers for well-deserved retirement. To quote Gaines Brewster, coauthor of *Charlie's World*: "In labors of love, every day is payday."

The beauty of each day is in the belief that what we give to others returns to us tenfold. What a gift they are — these Greyhound fosters — on loan to love. ■

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*Jo Langer is dedicated to spreading the word that Greyhounds make terrific companions. She is active in Greyhound rescue, and volunteers as a foster mom for Nittany Greyhounds, State College, Pa. In addition to welcoming foster Greyhounds into their home, she and her husband, Dick, share their lives with two ex-racers: Hope, who occasionally does therapy visits at a local nursing home, and Max, who was "her first failed fostering attempt." Barbie has since moved on to her forever home, and is getting spoiled as she so deserves.*



Mikey, adopted by Colleen Summerfield of Monterey Park, Calif.

**Saturdays, Sundays, and President's Day, February 11-April 2**

Arizona Renaissance Festival  
Greyhounds of Fairhaven  
10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.  
Highway 60

East of Apache Junction, Ariz.

For the 11th year, the Greyhounds of Fairhaven will be promoting Greyhound adoption at the Arizona Renaissance Festival. If you live in or are visiting the Phoenix/Tucson area, come out and meet our most noble hounds. Contact: Marsha Roe, (602) 493-1063 or arf@marshasmartingales.com; www.greyhoundsoffairhaven.org

**Friday through Saturday, March 3-5**  
**Sandy Paws – Greyt Fun in the Sun**

Greyhound Gathering  
Hosted by Greyhound Guardians  
Presented by Jacksonville Greyhound  
Racing/Greyhounds as Pets of N.E.  
Florida

Jekyll Oceanfront Resort  
Jekyll Island, Ga.

Third annual Greyhound weekend celebration features vendor shopping, seminars, Gilley Girls Dancing Greyhounds Drill Team, human and hound ice cream social, Greyt Roo-Au (Polynesian-themed dinner—costumes encouraged!), talent show, salute to seniors, Parade of Greys, blessing of the animals, Greyhound games, crowning of the King and Queen at the Royal Roo Coronation, memorial service for those waiting at the Rainbow Bridge, and much more. Guardian Angel Awards will be inaugurated this year. Other breeds welcome. Contact: Wayne Baldwin or Dayle Kelloway at boomer0150@bell-south.net; www.sandypaws.org

**Sunday, March 19**

Hound Dawg Howliday  
GPA/Emerald Coast  
11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
Ebro Greyhound Park

Hound Dawg Holiday is an event welcoming all retired racing and non-racing Greyhounds. Games, food, vendors, and

raffles. Greyhounds will be allowed to participate in straight line racing on the Ebro track. Contact: Ann Bollens, (850) 479-0715 or annbo47@cs.com

**Friday, March 24**

National Specialty — “Fiesta de Greyhound”

Greyhound Club of America  
8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
Amon Carter Complex  
Fort Worth, Texas

Conformation and obedience show for AKC registered Greyhounds. Raffle and auction, evening banquet (all attendees invited; call for reservations). Lure coursing (details to be announced). Contacts: Showchair — Donna Drake, (817) 251-8614 or dugancd@aol.com; Publicity and Advertising — Dr. Sheryl Bartel, (360) 422-7804 or sbartel@sos.net; www.greyhoundclubofamerica.org

**Sunday, April 2**

Houndfest 2006  
Greyhound Pets Inc.  
11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
Benoschek Building  
Thurston County Fairgrounds  
Lacey, Wash.

Food, vendors, silent and live auctions, raffle baskets, doggie games, foster dogs available for adoption by pre-approved adopters, GPI Warehouse of goodies, bake sale and more. Contact: Edie Gutierrez, (360) 438-3699 or greymomof5@yahoo.com; www.greyhoundpetsinc.org

**Sunday, April 2**

Eighth Annual Funday and Reunion  
GPA/Daytona Beach  
11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
Daytona Beach Kennel Club  
2201 W. International Speedway Blvd.  
Daytona Beach, Fla.

A fun day for Greyhounds and their families. Hound games and contests, raffles, vendors, a great silent auction, food, and fun runs on the track for the retired racers. Contact: Chris Miller, (386) 239-3647 or gpadaytona@cfl.rr.com

**Saturday, April 22**

Dance into Spring Featuring the Gilley Girls  
Philadelphia Greyhound Connection, Inc.  
11:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
Pavilion 11  
Core Creek Park  
Langhorne, Pa.

Join us for the second annual Dance into Spring Featuring the Gilley Girls. This year, in addition to the Gilleys, we will have lots of great vendors, great food, and great fun. Low-cost microchipping, Ask the Vet table, animal communicator, and several seminars. Contact: Sheryl Vona, (215) 676-7075 or info.pgcgreys@verizon.net

**Sunday, April 23**

Greyhound Fair and Expo  
Buffalo Greyhound Adoption, Inc.  
11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
Grange Building  
Erie County Fairgrounds  
Hamburg, N.Y.

Spring gathering of BGA adopters and Greyhound Friends. BGA will be “Celebrating 15 Years of Greyhound Adoption.” Vendors and educational information. Contact: Laura Pike, webmaster@b-g-a.org

**Friday through Sunday, May 5-7**

Greyhound Gathering  
Greyhound Gang  
Kanab, Utah

Three days of Greyhound partying, including parade, Blur of Fur, carnival booths, hikes, speakers, memory wall, meals, photos, maybe a Guinness Book of World Records attempt . . . and more. Contact: Claudia Presto, (435) 644-2903 or Claudia@greyhoundgang.org; www.GreyhoundGang.org

**Saturday, May 6**  
Shades of Grey  
Renewed Life for Greyhounds, Inc.  
12 noon to 4:00 p.m.  
Helder Park  
Zeeland, Mich.

Greyhound gathering in a beautiful park featuring a huge silent auction and many Greyhound vendors. Contact: Lynda Hegg, (616) 335-8725 or [staff@renewedlife.org](mailto:staff@renewedlife.org); [www.renewedlife.org](http://www.renewedlife.org)

**Saturday, May 13**  
Greyhound Event of Michigan  
GreyHounds of Eastern Michigan (GEM)  
11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.  
Taylor Sportsplex (rain or shine — indoor facility)  
13333 Telegraph Road  
Taylor, Mich.

Join us for a great day with old friends and new. Great vendors, great auctions, great raffles, great hounds, plus great people = one great time. Contact: 877-GEM-DOGS, [www.GEMgreyhounds.org](http://www.GEMgreyhounds.org); Susan Buza, [slmc@digirealm.com](mailto:slmc@digirealm.com); Heather Brooks, [hbrooks@umich.edu](mailto:hbrooks@umich.edu)

**Saturday, May 13**  
Swinging with the Dogs  
GPA/Greater Orlando  
6:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.  
St. Margaret Mary Parish Hall  
Park Avenue  
Winter Park, Fla.

An evening of fine dining, cocktails, wine tasting, dancing to the music of Michael Andrews and Swingerhead, and of course, fundraising for the Greyhounds. Contact: Lisa Nolet, (407) 332-4754 or [gala@greyhoundpetsorlando.org](mailto:gala@greyhoundpetsorlando.org)

**Saturday and Sunday, May 20 & 21**  
Annual Spring Open House  
Greyhound Friends, Inc.  
Noon to 5:00 p.m. both days  
167 Saddle Hill Road  
Hopkinton, Mass.

Please join Greyhound Friends, Inc. for the annual spring open house. Good food, great company (lots of visiting adopted Greyhounds!), shopping for humans and hounds, silent auction and raffle, Not Quite Westminster Dog Show, nail clipping. Let your Greyhound run in the fenced field. Visit the Greyhounds in the kennel waiting for homes — they always love visitors! Everyone is welcome with their hounds. Contact: Louise Coleman, (508) 435-5969, [greyhndfds@aol.com](mailto:greyhndfds@aol.com)

**Friday through Sunday, June 2-4**  
Mountain Hounds 2006  
Greyhound Friends of North Carolina  
Gatlinburg, Tenn.

A weekend of fun and games, including vendors, catered picnic, and contests for the Greyhounds. Come enjoy the Tennessee mountains and the company of fellow Greyhound owners. Proceeds benefit Greyhound Friends of North Carolina. Contact: Bob Navarro, (704) 283-1547, [bob@2houndsdesign.com](mailto:bob@2houndsdesign.com); Lynda Montgomery, (704) 392-7868 or [gfncreyhound@bellsouth.net](mailto:gfncreyhound@bellsouth.net)

**Thursday through Sunday, June 8-11**  
Greyhound America — 2006  
Race the Wind Greyhound Adoption, Inc.  
Sterl Hall  
Abilene, Ks.

This annual event, sponsored by Race the Wind Greyhound Adoption, Inc., is attended by participants from all over the U.S. and Canada. Watch your dog participate in a fun run, visit several Greyhound farms, discover a wealth of information at the Greyhound Hall of Fame and the National Greyhound Association, and bid on the many items available during the fun-filled live auction. Mark your calendars now and plan to join us in June! Contact: Judy Sparks, (316) 688-1369 or [greydogs@cox.net](mailto:greydogs@cox.net)

**Sunday, June 11**  
Ninth Annual Reunion Picnic  
National Greyhound Adoption Program  
South Jersey Volunteers  
11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
Atlantic County Park at Estell Manor  
Mays Landing, N.J.

Raffles, prizes, contests, etc. Contact: Merci Riccardi, (609) 266-7818, [mercibar1@aol.com](mailto:mercibar1@aol.com)

**Saturday, June 17**  
Summer Blast  
Monica's Heart Greyhound Adoption  
10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
Legion Park  
Hollidaysburg, Pa.

Lots of games, vendors, food, prizes, auctions, raffles, pet photography. Fun for Greyhounds and their people. This is Monica's Heart's tenth anniversary, so we're planning some new things! Contact: Kay McNelis, (814) 942-3145, [houndmom@atlanticbb.net](mailto:houndmom@atlanticbb.net); Peg O'Brien, (814) 943-1475, [obie@alt3.com](mailto:obie@alt3.com)

**Friday through Sunday, July 14-16**  
Greyhound Festival of the Bluegrass  
Shamrock Greyhound Placement  
3:00 p.m. Friday through noon Sunday  
Holiday Inn Hurstbourne  
Louisville, Ky.

Weekend of Greyhounds (all events indoors) with vendors, speakers, classes, raffles, and live auction. Registration required, attendance limited to 250. Greyhounds welcome. Contact: Jennifer Watkins, (502) 241-3140, [questions@greyhoundsofshamrock.org](mailto:questions@greyhoundsofshamrock.org)



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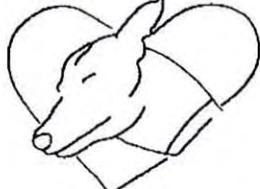


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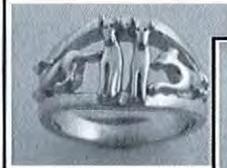
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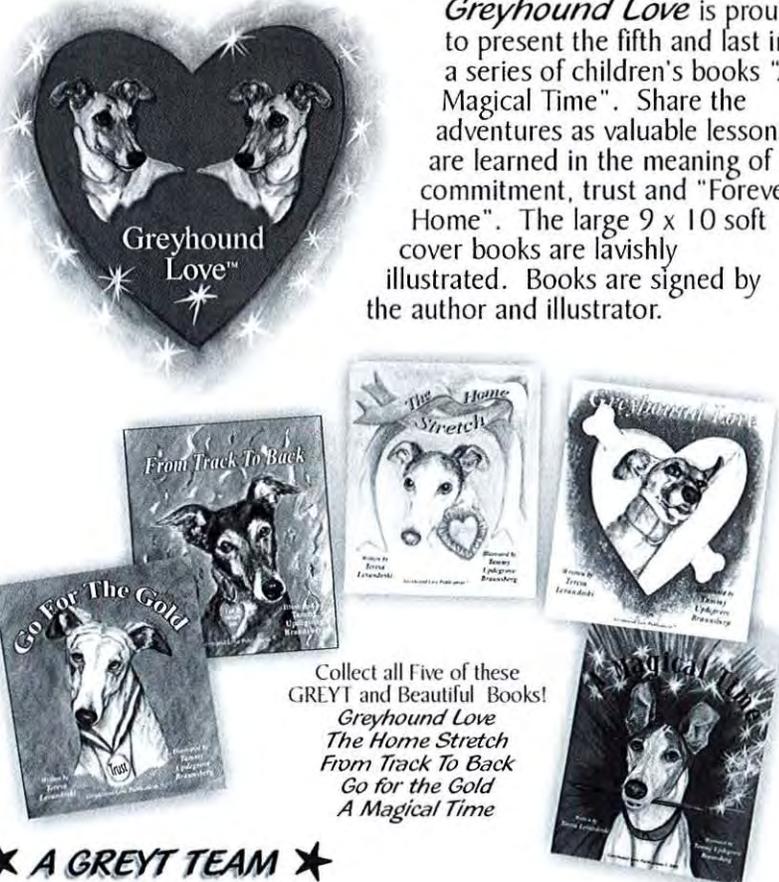
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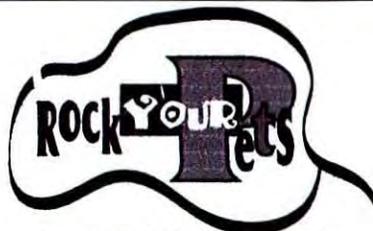
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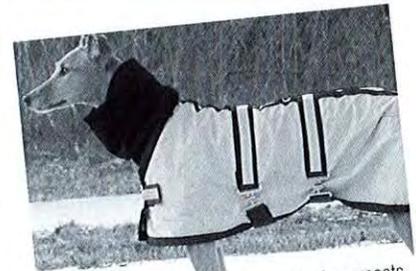
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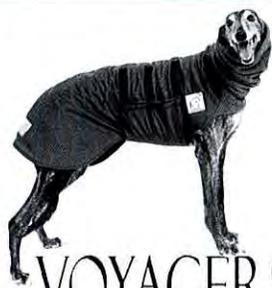
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**Booker (Boonoonoonoos)**  
1991-2005

Adopted and loved by Ed and Deb Maxwell of Brookfield, Mass., Booker was pictured on page 30 of the Fall 2005 issue of CG with his friend, Sahra. His racing name means “the very best” in Jamaican. Adopted at 10 years of age as a bounceback, he introduced the Maxwells to the world of Greyhounds. Booker was a smiler and roached with gusto. One would never have guessed his age by watching him do his twirlies in the living room with his stuffies, chasing his family around the house, and yelling at all the squirrels. He allowed the Maxwells to adopt three more hounds and foster several others. He never complained, and he made sure that all the new ones knew that he was alpha and the house was his. As his family watched him age, they were astounded by his good nature and his pure love of life. Although they knew he could not stay with them forever physically, he will always live in their hearts.



**Capri (Capri Cruise)** 1993-2005

Capri was pictured on page 8 of the Fall 2005 issue of CG. The last year of Capri's life was shared by Cathryn Holdgraf. In June 2005 Capri made a road trip to Abilene, Kansas to attend Race the Wind's

Greyhound America event. Capri made the trip especially memorable for her doting aunties from Delaware, Iowa, and Florida, who one-upped each other to serve her. Although it had been a decade since her last race, Capri came alive that day, barking, jumping, spinning, and biting the leash. She knew very well what she was supposed to do: Get the bunny! In time, she chose to spend nights alone downstairs rather than coming up to bed with the rest of the pack. Then she seemed intimidated by tiled surfaces. On a Sunday, she began to hold up her right rear leg. The next day, an x-ray confirmed the worst — osteosarcoma. Capri was dear and utterly charming, and she left her paw print on the hearts of all lucky enough to have been loved by her.



**Mo (In Motion)** 1994-2005

Mo's successful battle with colitis was chronicled in “Managing Colitis with L-Glutamine” (Winter 2003 CG). Mo had a spotty racing career at Dairyland, where he was reported to be the most loving of all in the kennel. When he retired to his professional career as a cockroach on the couch, his trainer sent him off with a homemade sweater and teary kisses. His favorite pastimes were eating, sleeping, and performing the Greyhound shove at meet-and-greets (butting his head straight into a person's stomach, giving them full access to his neck and the area behind his ears). As an ambassador for Greyhound adoption, he demonstrated to everyone how loving (and lazy) these gentle creatures can be. Knowing she would miss him terribly, but needing to end the ravages of osteosarcoma, Roberta Poulton kissed the last bit of color off his graying muzzle and sent him on his

way to the Rainbow Bridge. She is grateful to Rodger and Donna Barr of Foley Boulevard Animal Hospital for being with them as Mo took his final journey.



**Yoko (Yoko Wink)** 1995-2005

Yoko Wink was chosen by Nacho Drive and adopted by Kathy Forde and Yvonne Zipter on January 15, 2000. She was featured in “Yoko: The Medic-Alert Greyhound” (Fall 2001 CG), “The Family Dog” (Winter 2003 CG), and on the back cover of the Spring 2005 issue. Yoko had a personality as big as her ears, which won an award for their size at the fifth annual Greyhounds Only reunion. Yoko was an exuberant tail wagger, joyful playmate for Nacho, and inveterate squeaky-toy lover. Always into mischief and frequently disobedient, she was redeemed by her charm and her sweet disposition. A fierce competitor to the end, Yoko was plagued by muscle problems and, ultimately, by two ruptured disks in her neck, a degenerative condition that paralyzed her hind legs. She was put to sleep on December 24 when complications following surgery for the ruptured disks began to mount. She was frugal with her kisses — making them all the more special when she decided to bestow one on you — but she was never stingy with her love.

*Without the Greyhounds whose stories and images populate its pages, Celebrating Greyhounds Magazine would not exist. With In Memoriam, we express our gratitude and bid farewell to those who have, in previous issues of CG, enriched our lives by sharing a bit of themselves with us.*



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