

# Celebrating Greyhounds

*The Magazine*

Winter 1997 Vol 2, No. 4

## *Inside*

Greyhound Senior Citizens  
Special Needs Hounds

Greyhounds who serve  
Greyhounds and anesthesia  
and more...



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A Magazine for Greyhound Adopters,  
Owners & Friends

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### Cover Photo:

Mr. Bones is a greyhound of mysterious lineage. He has no tattoos and was an older dog who suddenly had no home when his previous owners ran into financial difficulties. Knowing that he had already been in several homes, Marcia Herman, editor of **Celebrating Greyhounds**, and her husband Doug, found a place for the old gentleman in their home. Mr. Bones is "over twelve" and has been a delightful addition to the other greyhounds and all the cats in the Herman household.

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### Coming next issue:

Your Dog's Heritage - Pedigrees; Lure Coursing; more on Special Needs Dogs; Greyhounds and Children; Activities; and an array of articles on care and feeding, medical management, crafts, and more.

**Moving?** Please send your new address to the CG Magazine Subscription Office in Holbrook, Mass as soon as possible. Don't run the risk of missing an issue.

**Back copies** of CG are sometimes available for \$4.50 each including shipping and handling. At press time we still had some copies of the Spring, Summer and Fall 1997 issues. Please check with the Subscription and Advertising Office regarding magazine availability.

### A reminder about your subscription....

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## Is Advantage™ Safe to use on Greyhounds?

by Joan Dillon



This question came to us from a New Hampshire subscriber who was concerned because of an article that appeared in a Vermont Greyhound advocacy group's newsletter. The article told of the death of a Greyhound, supposedly from an adverse reaction to Advantage™.

In order to respond to this question, we consulted several sources.

The first was a listing on the Internet Greyhound List by Stacy Pober. She obtained from Bayer a copy of their Technical Profile on Advantage™ that contained the results of their Dog Safety Study: General Safety Evaluation in Greyhound Breed of Dogs. This report states:

"Twelve Greyhounds (3 male and 9 female) were used in a study to evaluate the safety of Advantage™ solution applied topically to this breed of dogs. Four dogs received Advantage™ solution at the labeled dosage rate (2.5 mL for dogs 21-55 lbs or 5 mL for dogs weighing over 55 lbs) at 14 day intervals for 2 months; 4 dogs received 3X the labeled dosage rate at 14 day intervals for 2 months and 4 dogs served as controls and received an equivalent volume of blank vehicle at 14 day intervals for 2 months. Advantage™ and the blank vehicle were applied by parting the hair of the dog between the shoulder blades and applying the solution on the skin. Parameters evaluated included evidence for dermal irritation and clinical observations for adverse reactions.

"Body weights were maintained. No clinical signs or evidence of dermal irritation at the site were observed. No adverse trends developed in the clinical parameters.

"The findings of this domestic animal safety study indicate no adverse effects in Greyhound breed of dogs following 3X the labeled dosage rate and

twice the labeled frequency of retreatment."

We also solicited responses from veterinarians who specialize in treating Greyhounds. One of these veterinarians is Neal C. Andelman, V.M.D. who practices at West Bridge Veterinary Hospital in West Bridgewater, Mass. Dr. Andelman has many Greyhounds in his practice, both racers and pets. He has served as a consultant to the Greyhound industry and has assisted GPA/Mass. with their spay/neuter program for many years. His response is as follows:

"Before we started to use Advantage™ at our hospital for flea control this year (1997), we contacted the manufacturer (Bayer) and asked if they had any experience with Advantage™ in Greyhounds. There had been Greyhounds treated during the clinical trials with no adverse effects, and as of this spring there had been no adverse drug reactions related to Advantage™ in Greyhounds reported either to the FDA or Bayer. We have a considerable number of Greyhounds in our practice on Advantage™ and have had no report of adverse reactions.

"I have no knowledge of the Vermont 'incident,' nor do I know how the conclusion was reached that the problem was due to Advantage™. I assume that any veterinarian making such a claim would have completed an 'adverse drug reaction' report and filed that report with either Bayer or the FDA.

"Not being a pharmacologist I cannot comment on the safety of the drug, but it has been our clinical experience that it is a safe drug to use in this breed."

A second veterinarian who responded was Rodger Barr, D.V.M. of Foley Blvd. Animal Hospital in Coon Rapids, Minn. Dr. Barr has been an owner of racing Greyhounds and for many years operated the only Grey-

hound adoption program in his area. His response is as follows:

"In response to your note on the product Advantage™, I personally, in my practice and in my personal situation, have not had any problem with Advantage™. The only difficulty I have is in application in the short dense-coated Greyhounds. Occasionally we'll have a local area of irritation where the product is applied but never have had any unexpected reactions.

"I doubt that anybody could interpret the death of a Greyhound or any dog to an allergic reaction due to Advantage™. There are so many things that could cause these allergic reactions that it is hard to pinpoint and somebody could have drawn that conclusion. I believe that both Advantage™ and Frontline™, and Program™ for that matter, are extremely safe products for use on Greyhounds. I guess my rule of thumb is that, if you can use it on cats, it is generally safe on Greyhounds.

"We have used virtually thousands of doses on Greyhound breeds and have not had a problem. On the other hand, in a racing kennel situation, I think that there is occasionally a situation where the animals' performance seems to suffer, but anything can cause the animals to perform differently, even a trainer wearing the wrong clothing. Advantage™ is a perfectly safe product."

Like humans who are allergic to penicillin, a few dogs can also have allergies to some substances. If your dog appears to have a reaction to any particular substance, discontinue its use immediately and report the incident to your veterinarian.

CG will keep you posted as more information about Advantage™ becomes available.



# CG Readers Speak Out

I have enclosed a copy of an article that you might want to share with fellow *Celebrating Greyhounds* readers.

We recently took our dog Sabre to the veterinarian for a routine teeth cleaning. When we picked her up that evening, the veterinarian who took care of Sabre assured me that it would be all right to feed her even though she still appeared to be heavily medicated.

When we arrived home, we fed Sabre as always. I noticed she was having some difficulty swallowing, and before I could take her food from her, she began to choke and stopped breathing altogether. I thrust my fingers down her throat to remove the food and stimulate her gag reflex. She was still so affected by the anesthesia that even her gag reflex was impaired.

There were a few tense moments but eventually the food was dislodged and she began to breathe normally again. She wandered around in this drunken stupor for the remainder of the evening and even halfway into the following day.

Steve Matheson  
Houston, Texas

*Thank you for the article. CG previously planned an anesthesia article for this issue. Please see the article on page 10 by Regina Downey, a veterinarian from Salisbury, Massachusetts. — Ed*

My wife and I have been receiving *Celebrating Greyhounds* (from which we have received very much interest and pleasure) as through our voluntary group we have been involved in greyhound rescue in this area.

A number of years ago we formed Canine Friends with the view to raising funds for local dog charities. However, before long we became involved with greyhounds as there was an apparent need for the provision of coats for rescued greyhounds which were very of-



**Anne Carnevale is a retired senior citizen who adopted her brindle greyhound in April of 1996. Pictured are Matisse-Jai, owned by Anne's daughter Michelle, Anne, and her greyhound Lexi. The photo was taken at the beach at Bay Head, New Jersey, where they love the sand and sound of rough water.**

ten in poor condition and desperately needed warmth and comfort to enable them to put on weight. Consequently, much of the funds we raised were used for the purpose of purchasing material to manufacture dog coats, both waterproof for wet weather walking, and other material suitable for sleeping coats.

In the United Kingdom there are many short-coated breeds as whippets, lurchers, dobermans, etc., who lose their natural coats due to shock, stress and other traumas brought on by cruel treatment. The coats not only immediately give the dogs a sense of well-being but

help them recover quicker as their metabolism is not also fighting the cold as well as the effects of their medical problems.

I make coats to measure for dogs as requested by any rescue Organisation but these tend to be mainly greyhounds, lurchers or whippets. We also provide coats and a helpline to owners who have just adopted a greyhound. All coats are supplied free of charge and in the period September 1996 through April 1997, 133 coats have been supplied to needy cases, with similar numbers in previous years.

I would very much like to correspond with any person who would be interested in exchanging history of historical buildings of the UK and the USA.

Fred Mason  
63 Cherry Orchard  
Pershore Worcs WR10 1ET  
UK

What a great asset your publication is. As a new greyhound owner, I am always eager for new information concerning all aspects of the breed, everything your publication covers. There are so many questions that I have, and with all my combined resources, they seem to get answered. I read each issue from cover to cover, and wait anxiously for the next issue.

I must also let you know of a change in my address so I will be sure to get my next issue on time.

Jennifer Palmer  
Jacksonville, North Carolina

*We appreciate your telling us about changes of address. The post office does not always forward magazines, despite our "Address Service Requested" as printed on the back cover. — Ed.*

Please see next page

Continued from previous page

High praises and congratulations on such a wonderful magazine! This is only my second issue and I can't get enough to read about these fabulous dogs. I devour every written word! Are back issues available? I'd be very interested!

Currently I work with a small but devoted greyhound rescue group in Canton, Ohio. They had never seen your publication before; needless to say I passed it around. Most likely you'll be getting some new subscribers soon.

Lois Kerklo  
Ravenna, Ohio

*Thank you for the compliment. Yes, we have some back issues available. Please see page one for details. — Ed.*

My husband and I (and our grey, of course!) enjoy your magazine tremendously! Smiley brings joy to our lives and *CG* brings us the valuable information we need.

Smiley has become the ambassador for her breed in our neighborhood. We enjoy talking "dogs" with our neighbors while she enjoys the attention and making new canine friends. In the last couple of months we have learned about something that few dog owners would want to know about. Smiley has cancer.

Just as we feel fortunate to share this time with Smiley, we would like to share your magazine with several new greyhound families we have met. Do you have a small quantity of sample magazines that we could share with them and our veterinarian's office? People are always asking for resources and we have loaned out all of our issues! Thanks you for your response!

Kathleen Folz  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

*Yes, please ask the subscription department for details. Thanks. — Ed.*

I enjoy your fact-filled magazine. It is worthy of the dogs it features.

Do you have Writer's Guidelines? Please send to this address. Thank you!

Richard Askeland  
Syracuse, New York

*Yes, we do. And if you have an e-mail address, we can send them to you on-line. — Ed.*

Please start my subscription to your wonderful magazine. Thanks for your in-depth article on flea control; it has already helped a friend of mine choose the right kind of medication for her dog!!



**The Stack Family has added four more greyhounds, four more mutts and two or three of the sickest long-term foster dogs in the five years since this photo was taken.**

I am looking forward to all of the issues over the next year and all of the catalogs I'm sending for in the back of the magazine. I've already had dealings with some of these people and have been very pleased with all of the things they have to offer.

John R. Crawford  
Tulsa, Oklahoma

Please find enclosed my renewal form for *Celebrating Greyhounds: The*

*Magazine*. We don't want to risk missing a single issue!

The enclosed cheque is in the amount of \$25.00 (U.S.). This is to cover the above subscription renewal and to provide a donation towards the newsletter, which I also receive.

Congratulations on a job "well done" to all the dedicated people responsible for making these publications available, not to mention the other worthy Greyhound Project credits.

Lynda Seed  
Ontario, Canada

*Celebrating Greyhounds* is marvelous. I've reread each article and ads several times. I have learned a lot and got a kick out of the article stating that "Greyhounds are like potato chips."

I now have four potato chips and hanker for more but alas — not enough room.

I raised Siamese cats and showed them for years and am amazed at the similarities to greyhounds; both so elegant looking; both so absolutely dingy and zany. Keep up the great work.

Dorothy  
Lefler  
Cincinnati,  
Ohio

We enjoy your publication very much. I just saw it for the first time (Winter 1996 issue) and was so pleased that I sent in a subscription order right away. I will admit that I think the "Martha Norwalk Speaks" article was full of a lot of bad advice and misinformation. What makes her an expert? It seems as though she has never had the pleasure of owning a greyhound, just as many child psychologists have never

**Please see next page**

Continued from previous page

had children!!) Keep up the otherwise excellent work

Elizabeth Kelly  
Volunteer for Homes for Hounds  
Westlake, Oregon

*CG's philosophy is to present information from varying points of view.*  
— Ed.

I am a greyhound and whippet lover in Hong Kong (although I do not have any dog in my home). Last week when I discovered a summer 1997 issue of *Celebrating Greyhounds* in my mail box I was very surprised and overjoyed. Surprised because I had not subscribed to *CG* myself. (Whoever did that may God bless him/her!) Overjoyed because *CG* is such a greyt greyhound magazine! So I write to tell you that you had done a great job and also to find out who is that lovely one that did the subscription for me. I guess he/she must be an American greyhound friend of mine, and I like to say thank you to him/her.

Chan Ka-Leung  
Kowloon, Hong Kong

*As a courtesy, The Greyhound Project is providing four issues (one year) of Celebrating Greyhounds to all former Greyhounds Today subscribers. Welcome! — Ed.*

I was prompted to write by the *Sharks to the Rescue* article about a greyhound with osteosarcoma in your Summer issue. There is a common fungal infection here in Arizona called coccidiomycosis or "valley fever," which looks just like an osteosarcoma on x-ray. Since the desert southwest is the only part of the country where "cocci" is found, veterinarians in other parts of the USA are unfamiliar with it. Unless they do a bone biopsy, they may misdiagnose these lesions as bone cancer. If your greyhound has ever raced in Arizona and winds up with something that looks like bone cancer on x-ray, please have a coccidiomycosis blood titer checked. True osteosarcoma in greyhounds usually occurs at the distal end of the radius bone (ankle area).

Most valley fever dogs respond to

treatment, but usually require long-term medication (years). The medication is very expensive but is one fourth the U.S. price in Mexico. So if your greyhound is diagnosed with cocci, please contact Arizona Adopt A Greyhound at (602) 971-6935 and we can help you get some.

Also, a money-saving tip for adoption kennels: the human form of Droncit® (praziquantel) is called Biltricide® and is far cheaper. For \$65, you can buy a bottle that will treat 24 greyhounds for tapeworms (each quarter tablet equals five Droncit® tablets).

And, a life-saving tip for anorexic greyhounds: If you are trying to nurse a greyhound that won't eat back to health, they are extremely easy to force-feed. Just put a can of a firm brand of dog food in the fridge for a day. We use Science Diet Growth™, Hill's Prescription P/D™, and Pedigree Puppy™ which are nutrition-packed and work. Use a butter knife around the edge of the can to dump the whole meat roll out in one piece. Then, slice the roll into five or six slices and cut each slice in half. Then, simply open greyhound's mouth and poke a half slice way back into throat. 95% of greyhounds accept this easily and it only takes a minute. Thus, you can give your sick hound as much food as he needs until his appetite returns.

Suzanne Stack, D.V.M.  
Somerton, Arizona



### Compliments, Comments, Criticisms:

Dear Readers:

*We welcome and will publish as many letters as possible — positive or negative — as long as they are written in a constructive manner and do not malign anyone's character.*

*Letters should be 300 words or less. They may be edited for brevity or clarity.*

*Please send them by mail to the editorial office or, even better, via e-mail to: [greyhound@aol.com](mailto:greyhound@aol.com)*

Sincerely,  
Marcia Herman,  
CG Editor

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***Please consider giving someone a gift subscription to Celebrating Greyhounds: The Magazine! Or give yourself a gift and renew now.***

Your subscription — \$15 (U.S. funds) in North America; \$20 (U.S. funds) World — supports the Greyhound Project, Inc.'s *Celebrating Greyhounds Calendar*, *The Adoption Resource Directory*, *Speaking of Greyhounds* newsletter (free to adoption volunteers), the upcoming *Manual of Fund-Raising Ideas* and other Greyhound Project, Inc. undertakings. For non-U.S. subscriptions, please send an international money order.

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# House Calls

by Julia Carter, DVM.

## Common Conditions of Old Greyhounds



King Tut, at fourteen, has become a bit unstable on his feet as age, muscle atrophy and stiff joints all become more of a problem. Photo courtesy of Joan Belle Isle, Newton, Mass.

### Orthopedic conditions and degenerative joint disease

Those of us who know and love retired racers know that their previous careers often leave them with musculoskeletal injuries. Sometimes these injuries are obvious; fractures or extensive soft tissue damage with scarring; and we anticipate some disability as they age. But often previous injury is invisible to the new 'parents,' especially in young to middle-aged dogs who have not been strenuously exercised during their rescue or fostering experience. Subtle injuries may include dislocated toes and tails; sprains or strains of ligaments or tendons that were not appropriately rested following initial injury with resulting contracture (shortening) of scar tissue and decreased range of motion; hairline fractures; and spondylosis, an arthritic condition of the spine. Greyhounds as a breed can also suffer from immune-mediated arthritis when they are young, leaving them with long term degenerative joint disease. Note that few of these dogs survive to be racers or rescue candidates.

Any or all of these preexisting conditions may surface months or years after adoption, often when the grey is given the opportunity to run with other dogs or lure course.

Your veterinarian will determine the source of your grey's discomfort using palpation and range-of-motion examinations, gait analysis and perhaps some form of imaging. Imaging includes x-rays, computed tomography and magnetic resonance imaging and bone scintigraphy. Most veterinary practices have efficient radiology equipment on site to take x-rays. CT scans and MRI's (fancy computer-guided, 360° x-rays with high contrast between bone and soft tissue) and bone scintigraphy (imaging of radioactive isotopes that selectively go to areas of high cell activity such as fractures) all require extremely expensive, highly technical equipment and are generally provided by veterinary referral centers such as the Animal Medical Center in New York City or teaching hospitals such as Tufts University School of Veterinary Medicine.

### If your dog is diagnosed with degenerative joint disease

Several medications are available to slow the progress of arthritis and relieve pain. It is important to understand that arthritis is like a ball rolling down a hill. Once the process is initiated, we can't stop it or reverse it. But we can slow it down. Chondroitin sulfates, available at

health food stores or from veterinarians as Glycoflex® or Cosequin®, act to nourish cartilage cells lining joints to slow the progress of arthritis. Anti-inflammatory drugs, either steroids (such as prednisone or non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs such as aspirin, butazolidin and Rimadyl®) can decrease the activity of inflammatory cells in the joints and relieve pain. High doses of Vitamin C have also been useful in slowing arthritis' progression.

Several herbal therapies have been used in Traditional Chinese Medicine and Euro-American herbalism for arthritis discomfort and disability in humans and animals. These include bay, cayenne pepper rubs, feverfew, yucca and tumeric, to name a few. A more complete recommendation can be made by a practitioner of herbal medicine. Along with herbal and nutritional therapies, pet owners interested in holistic treatments may want to look into acupuncture, chiropractic and magnetic therapies as treatments which can offer pain relief and increased function to some animals suffering with chronic arthritic conditions. The International Veterinary Acupuncture Society and the American Veterinary Chiropractic Association pro-

Please see next page

vide training and certification to veterinarians.

### Senile Vestibular Syndrome

Occasionally, older dogs are presented with symptoms of sudden onset of ataxia or wobbly, uncoordinated gait, disorientation, loss of balance and a pronounced tilt to the head in one direction. Sometimes these dogs circle to the side of the head tilt. There may be nausea and vomiting and the eyes may exhibit nystagmus (rapid, uncontrolled movement).

The organs that control balance make up the vestibular system in the inner ear. Any infection, tumor or injury that affects the inner ear can cause poor balance, head tilt, disorientation and vomiting due to a sense of motion sickness. Examination of the ear canals and x-rays of the skull to examine the inner ear for signs of disease are a first step in diagnosing vestibular syndromes.

If no evidence of infection, tumor or injury can be found, idiopathic or senile vestibular syndrome is diagnosed. This is a diagnosis of exclusion; there is no test for senile vestibular syndrome. We just rule everything else out. "Idiopathic" basically means we don't know why it happens, but approximately 40% of all canine vestibular disease falls into this category.

Fortunately, dogs recover from senile vestibular syndrome in three to six weeks. Various medical treatments have been attempted, including steroids and intravenous fluid therapy, but no particular treatment hastens recovery. Good nutrition and nursing care to ensure that the dog doesn't injure itself staggering around are probably the most important components of recovery. Occasionally there is some residual head tilt, but all dogs recover. If the dog fails to recover, the diagnosis should be reconsidered.



*Please send your veterinary questions for Dr. Carter to the editor, Marcia Herman, at 895 Tuttle Avenue Extension, Hamden, CT 06518.*

## HERO HOUND

### Niles:

Once,  
Twice,  
Three

## Times a Hero

My retired racer, Niles, is an unlikely candidate for the title of Hero Dog. He is so very mellow that he doesn't appear to be paying much attention to the world around him.

When a semi-truck driver tried to turn his rig around in my circle driveway, the truck's axle got hung up on a landscaping boulder and the only way off was through my dance studio. Niles incessant barking woke me and with his intimidating presence and a little help from the police, the driver's hit and run plan was foiled.

Our family has grown to three dogs and one human, so walking in the park takes a little more vigilance and dexterity on my part. I keep a wary eye out for



**Kama, at eleven, made a full recovery from a small stroke affecting her vestibular centers. Photo courtesy of Joan Belle Isle, Newton, Mass.**



by Connie Cassidy

dogs off lead, and try to avoid them if possible. On one morning walk, though, we encountered an aggressive, leashless Lab. He approached us with his hackles raised, barking and snapping. Both of my females pulled to the ends of their leads. I planted my feet and prepared for a nasty fight, afraid that one or maybe all of us were going to be hurt.

I tried yelling "No" several times, in my loudest most commanding voice, but the Lab kept coming. Niles stood quietly at heel, until the Lab was about six feet from us. Then he sprang into action: leaping, growling, showing his teeth. The Lab dropped to the ground like someone had let the air out of him, then tucked his tail and went yelping back to his irresponsible owner. We finished our walk with Niles strutting jauntily in front of his three proud females.

On the second occasion, the greyhounds were asleep in the yard while my Scottish terrorist, Quincy, was chasing bugs and birds and anything else that moved. Suddenly Niles began to bark the high pitched, "something is wrong" alarm. I ran to the yard and saw the reason for Niles' barking. There was Quincy on the wrong side of the fence, heading at a trot toward the busy highway in front of our house. The diet I've had her on must be having an effect, because somehow she'd squeezed that fat little body under the closed and locked gate.

I yelled, "Quincy, wait!" and to her credit and my amazement, she stopped and waited for me. I scooped her up and carried her back to the yard, where Niles waited, grinning and wagging his tail. He knew that he'd done a good job.

Niles may be retired from racing but he's taken on a new position in our little family. Niles is our Career Hero Dog.

# Site Hounds

by Bruce Skinner



**"If you pick up a starving dog and make him prosperous, he will not bite you. This is the principle difference between a dog and a man." - Mark Twain (1835-1910)**

A greyhound may be tagged as "special needs" due to: Medical Issues; Behavioral Issues; Advanced Age; Circumstance

These lovely animals often take much longer to be adopted out because many folks have never considered adding a special needs dog to their family. On the Internet you will find much to change your mind!

**"Old age has its pleasures, which, though different, are not less than the pleasures of youth."— W. Somerset Maugham**

Start with the *Geriatric Hounds* page at "Grandmother's Attic" at <http://www.wizard.com/~dancer/Geriatric.html>. The site's creator, Joyce Smith, has dedicated her pages "...to those 'older', and still greyt greyhounds." Within you will find numerous stories and photographs like: *Granny Annie* (9yrs) rescued from an El Paso pound. See *Shannon* (13yrs) doing agility; *Josh* (10yrs) with a mystery background; *Hampton* (13 yrs) a former blood donor with quite an amazing background.

**"There is nothing stronger in the world than gentleness."— Han Suyin**

Support for animals with behavioral problems is as close as a phone call to your adoption agency, who will be most familiar with your special needs dog. To add to their advice, be sure to check out *The Association Of Pet Behaviour Coun-*

*selors* at: <http://webzone.ccacyber.com/www/apbc/>.

Cindy Tittle Moore, the keeper of all dog FAQs, has an excellent behavior resource at [http://www.zmall.com/pet\\_talk/dog-faqs/behavior.html](http://www.zmall.com/pet_talk/dog-faqs/behavior.html). Here you will also find information on a number of mailing lists (<http://www.zmall.com/pets/dog-faqs/lists/email-list.html>) to which you might want to subscribe. These might include the *GREYHOUND-L*, the Aggressive Behavior List (*AB-L*), Senior Dogs (*SENIOR-L*), and Shy Dogs (*SHY-K9S*).

Behavioral, training and medical issues are also discussed in the message boards of *A Breed Apart* (<http://www.abap.org/webx/webx.exe?13@.ee6b2ac>), where greyhound owners exchange advice and information.

Helane Graustark's story about her hound Robbie at <http://www.abap.org/robbie.htm> is proof positive of the dramatic change that can occur when patience, love and proper guidance help to bring an emotionally crippled greyhound out of her shell.

**"You give but little when you give of your possessions. It is when you give of yourself that you truly give." — Kahlil Gibran**

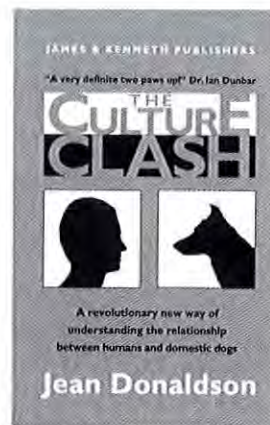
Interested in adopting or fostering a special needs dog? Locate the group(s) nearest you by visiting the agency listing at The Greyhound Project's *Adopt A Greyhound* site at <http://www.adopt-a-greyhound.org/adopt.html>.

A number of groups utilize the "Special Needs Dogs for Adoption" board (<http://www.abap.org/webx/>)

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# Book Talk

by Jody Frederick



***The Culture Clash: When Two Worlds Collide: Exploring the Differences between Human and Dog Culture***  
by Jean Donaldson, 1996

James & Kenneth Publishers, 2140 Shattuck Ave. #2406, Berkeley, CA 94704. ISBN 1-888047-05-4

If you share your life with dogs, you owe it to yourself and your canines to pick up a copy of Jean Donaldson's book *The Culture Clash*. It will give you new and amazing insight into dog behaviour that will provide you with ideas of how to improve your relationship and understanding of your best friend. The book emphasizes training but it is very basic. The everyday dog owner can learn a great deal about dog behaviour from this book even though they might not be interested in obedience competition.

Donaldson starts by exploding the popular "Walt Disney dog" myth that suggests that dogs are moral, extremely intelligent beings that are capable of understanding and solving complex problems. For years, we have believed that dogs think, feel and act like humans. The truth (supported by scientific research) is that although dogs are great learners, they do not think abstractly, do not have morals, do not understand language, and cannot move mentally forward and backward through time. Therefore, many of the previous training

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**Book Talk continued from previous page**

methods and approaches to understanding dog behaviours are built on misinformation.

When you bestow intelligence and morality, you bestow the responsibility that goes along with them. If the dog knows it's wrong to destroy furniture yet deliberately and maliciously does it, remembers the wrong he did and feels guilt, it feels like he merits a punishment, doesn't it? Well, that's just what dogs have been getting — a lot of punishment. (page 13)

Dogs cannot understand the difference between right and wrong. What

away is self-rewarding with no consequences (safe) but doing the same while the human is home has negative consequences (dangerous). Dogs are also incapable of recognizing the economic value of our possessions. Everything is a potential chew toy!

Donaldson also explains the "eager-to-please" fallacy — the idea that our dogs are dying to do as we wish and furthermore know what we want of them. Again, this is based on our anthropomorphic vision of dog behaviour and intelligence. Dogs learn by the immediate consequences of their actions. Dogs are self-interested. If there is something in it for them, they will do it. If there is nothing in it for them, they require motivation.

"The Dominance Panacea" is another myth that Donaldson takes apart. Ever since humans discovered pack order in wolves, dog owners have been explaining every conceivable dog-dog and human-dog interaction in terms of dominance. "Dogs misbehave or are disobedient because they haven't been shown who's boss." How many times have we heard that? Donaldson believes that this viewpoint amounts to yet another opportunity for punishment-based training methods. Behind a dog that rushes through doorways first, fails to come when called, or pulls on its leash is a human who has not taught the dog what is inappropriate. In other words, we should rule out lack of training before we immediately assume the dog is planning a coup of our leadership.

Other important behaviours can be understood when you recognize that dogs are predators. Predatory behaviour results in searching, stalking, rushing, chasing, biting, and dissection.

Furthermore, the dog is a pack animal and is programmed to be constantly around others to survive. Separation

from the group activates behaviours that help reunite with the pack. These behaviours include agitation, distress vocalizations, scratching, digging and chewing.

Aggressive behaviour in domestic dogs is another issue that needs to be addressed, according to the author. Biting is natural, normal dog behaviour, which is why it is so prevalent. She states:

Biting and threat displays (which are simply the indication of intention to bite) are how dogs settle both minor and major disputes and defend themselves from any perceived threat they cannot or opt not to flee from. In dog culture there are no letters to the editor, slanderous gossip and backstabbing, guilty feelings, democratic institutions or litigation lawyers. There are growls, snarls, snaps and bites. (page 57)

The problem is that dogs have been domesticated into our culture which views biting as a betrayal of trust and is met with capital punishment. With these few examples, you can begin to see how very different our cultures truly are.

To say that this book has been eye-opening for me is an understatement. Donaldson's frank and often humorous descriptions of dog behaviour have challenged my beliefs and values to their very core. I highly recommend this book to anyone who's interested in moving beyond the "Walt Disney dog" myth and seeing a dog for what it really is...and isn't.



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**Site Hounds continued from previous page**

webx.exe?13@@.ee6b2b2) Maybe Casper in Oklahoma, an eight year old "raggedy" looking fawn would pull at your heart strings? Or nine and a half year old Shari in RI who turned up at a pound? Perhaps Passion, a sweet five and a half year old brindle female in N. Texas who is blind in one eye? Or Charity, also in Texas, a beautiful two year old blue fawn brindle, who lost one of her back legs to a coyote trap.

Open your hearts and your home.



**When dogs chase, pounce and catch, they are simply demonstrating hunting behaviors. Katie. Photo courtesy of Cynthia Stuckey and Sherry Katz, Los Angeles, Cal.**

they can understand is the difference between safe and dangerous. That is, chewing the sofa while the human is

## Anesthesia in Greyhounds

By Regina M. Downey,  
DVM



Whether it is major surgery or routine teeth cleaning, every greyhound will need anesthesia at some point in its life. At the age of seven, Raker had major surgery at Tufts Veterinary School to remove a ruptured disk in his neck. He made a full recovery and is back to chasing the crows out of the yard. Photo courtesy of Lisa Harrod, Newton, Mass.

So often I have clients, particularly owners of greyhounds, who express genuine concern with having their pets sedated or anesthetized.

Certainly greyhounds require special consideration when administering anesthesia. However, by following proper protocol and adjusting for the physiological differences of the greyhound, anesthesia can be administered safely and with minimal distress to the patient.

### **I begin by taking a history and asking some simple questions.**

Is this patient just recently retired off the track? Or is this a family pet with a less stressful lifestyle? Has this greyhound had any serious illness? Has this patient received prior anesthesia? How did he or she respond? What is the dog's age?

Although most recently retired greyhounds do not have complications, occasionally a patient will be particularly slow in recovering from anesthesia or may have excessive bleeding.

They may have underlying liver, cardiac or kidney disease or perhaps they have just come off hormonal therapy to prevent estrus in females. Unknown but recently administered medications can effect the liver's ability to metabolize an anesthetic. Certain

hormones can cause prolonged bleeding times. So aside from the obvious age and health status of the greyhound, the dog's activity level/lifestyle should also be taken into consideration.

### **In the pre-anesthetic evaluation, a thorough physical exam including an oral exam should be done.**

In cases of middle-aged to older patients, blood screens, and possibly chest radiographs and bleeding times should be checked.

These tests are definitely indicated pre-surgically on ill patients such as the greyhound who ate his bedding three days ago and now has an intestinal obstruction, or the hit-by-car patient. Certainly in a patient with chronic vomiting, blood gases should also be evaluated if possible. Therefore, depending on the health status of the patient, the veterinarian may advise particular tests prior to anesthesia.

### **Age is a particularly important variable.**

Often my clients will allow me to use my judgment on whether or not to perform a pre-anesthetic blood screen.

My feeling is that greyhounds in the 7-8 year range are entering their geriatric years. A large percentage of these dogs will also require dental care. In this

age range or older, I like to perform a blood screen to evaluate red and white blood cell counts and do a few basic chemistries including blood glucose, blood proteins, kidney and liver values and perhaps a thyroid level.

Even in the healthy, older greyhound, respiratory function may be diminished and geriatric patients have a decreased cardiac reserve. This means they may have difficulty adjusting for cardiovascular changes that occur during anesthesia. Also geriatric patients are more susceptible to cardiac arrhythmias. Of particular importance is evaluation of liver and kidney function since these are the organs that metabolize and eliminate most anesthetics.

### **Particular physiologic differences should be noted.**

The non-obese greyhound has a decreased percentage of body fat and increased muscle mass as compared with other breeds of dogs. Therefore, they are more prone to fluctuations in body temperature during and after anesthesia, i.e., hypothermia and hyperthermia.

Several studies have demonstrated that greyhounds are indeed slower to recover from barbiturate anesthesia. I have known instances where grey-

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Celebrating Greyhounds

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hounds remained unable to stand for two to three days following intravenous administration of an ultra-short acting barbiturate. Theories as to why greyhounds are three to four times slower to recover from ultra-short acting barbiturates (example, Thiamylal and Thiopental) are attributed to differences of certain blood values in greyhounds, particularly the packed cell volume and total blood protein levels.

Packed cell volumes (percentage of red blood cells in whole blood) are significantly higher in the greyhound compared with other breeds and mixed breed dogs. This higher PCV and therefore probable increase in blood viscosity may decrease blood flow to the liver thereby decreasing the rate of metabolism of the barbiturates.

Because greyhounds have lower total protein values and because barbiturates are higher protein bound, it is theorized that this lower protein may play a role in the prolonged recovery times.

Finally, physiological differences to recall in evaluating blood chemistries are: High cholesterol, higher bicarbonate and lower blood calcium levels.

It has been reported, and unfortunately has been my experience, that greyhounds are prone to hysteria during the induction and recovery phases of anesthesia. I find that intravenous valium quickly calms the patient during these episodes. And if I document that a particular drug causes hysteria, I will avoid its use again in that patient and perhaps other greyhounds.

As for the particular tranquilizers, sedatives and anesthetics, this could become an extensive topic, therefore, I will limit the discussion mostly to what I have had personal experience in administering.

Typically, for elective procedures such as spays, neuters and dentals in healthy greyhounds, I've found a combination of valium and Ketamine intravenously at a 2:1 ratio and Atropine intramuscularly or subcutaneously is very safe for induction of anesthesia.

Maintenance is with inhalant Isoflurane and oxygen once an endotracheal tube has been placed.

The tranquilizer valium is used to calm the patient and produce mild se-

Ketamine is also an analgesic. The Ketamine Valium combination is generally very safe although on rare occasion a greyhound may experience hysteria or seizure activity. Generally an additional dose of intravenous valium will reverse those side effects.

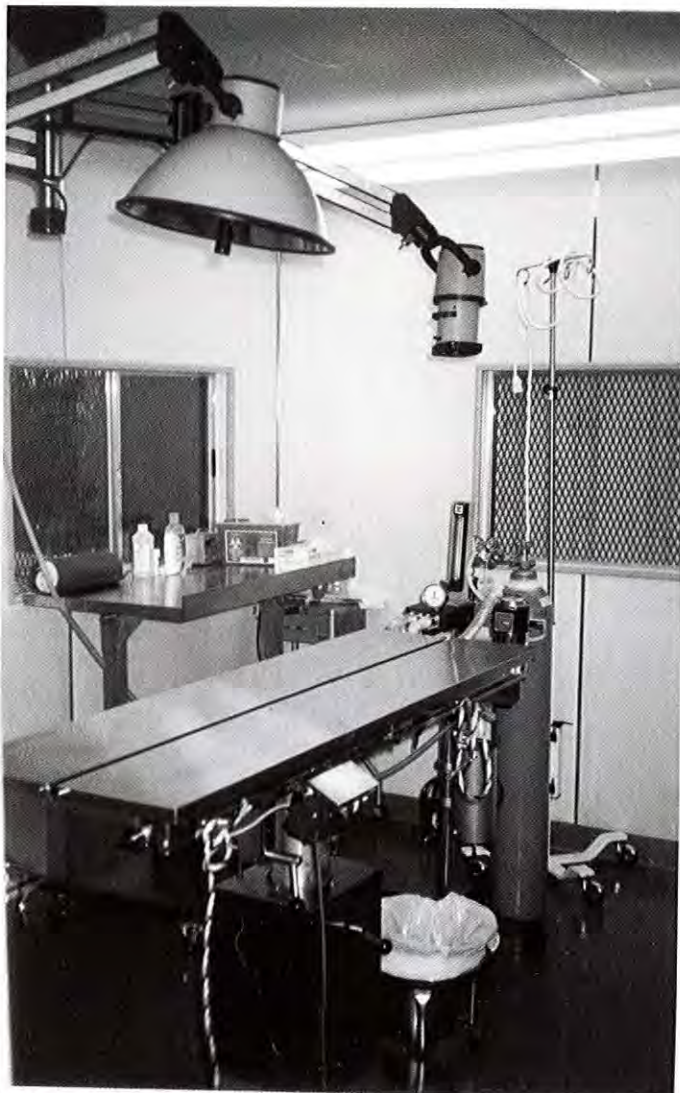
Atropine is also administered with this combination to help reduce salivary secretions (which are increased due to Ketamine) and to help prevent bradycardia (slow heart rate) which occurs during general anesthesia.

Certainly, the safest inhalant anesthetic gas in veterinary medicine today is Isoflurane. It is nearly considered malpractice to administer anything but Isoflurane to birds. Isoflurane also has become much less expensive over the last year so hopefully more veterinarians will be switching to this gas in their practice.

For extremely short procedures, such as minor lacerations or wart removals, I generally use intravenous Valium and Ketamine. Recently, I have started using a newer anesthetic called Rapinovel (Propofol) for procedures lasting approximately five to ten minutes, and in some cases for induction of anesthesia.

Rapinovel is given intravenously and is extremely fast acting and very rapidly metabolized. I have found in greyhounds, it is ideal to administer intravenous valium first to eliminate any pain or distress the patient may experience while injecting this drug which causes irritation to the vein.

Since Propofol must be injected over sixty to ninety seconds, Valium also helps with restraint of the patient. As already discussed, I feel that the use of barbiturates should be avoided



The surgical suite at the National Greyhound Adoption Program in Philadelphia, Penn.

dation and mild muscle relaxation. Ketamine is a dissociative anesthetic, meaning it produces a temporary loss of consciousness with increased muscle tone and a perception of being separated from one's environment.

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in greyhounds, although in other dogs this may be a good option for short procedures.

#### Types of Anesthetics

For the geriatric or critically ill greyhound, Ketamine doses should be reduced since this drug is metabolized by the liver. Acepromazine, a popular tranquilizer in veterinary medicine, should be avoided or used only in reduced dosages, since it must be biodegraded by the liver.

I avoid the use of Acepromazine in recently retired greyhounds also because of their questionable liver status.

In general the geriatric or ill patient should be monitored especially closely and the required drug dosages will usually be reduced. These patients will often maintain on a lower percentage of gas anesthetics.

Isoflurane gas versus Halothane or Methoxyflurane is definitely preferable in these patients. On rare occasions for a fractious or extremely anxious greyhound, an intramuscular anesthetic must be used because of difficulty in accessing a vein.

In these cases, Telazol can be given intramuscularly. Telazol is a combination of two tranquilizers. Because it does not produce good muscle relaxation or analgesic, Telazol alone is only appropriate for diagnostic procedures, minor

surgery or dentistry.

Some veterinarians also routinely use this drug intravenously. Telazol should be used cautiously in the geriatric

***“For the geriatric or critically ill greyhound, Ketamine doses should be reduced since this drug is metabolized by the liver. Acepromazine, a popular tranquilizer in veterinary medicine, should be avoided or used only in reduced dosages, since it must be biodegraded by the liver.”***

because of its cardiovascular effects and because it must be metabolized by the liver.

#### Pain Management

For pain management in the greyhound following major surgery, my choice for analgesia is a drug called Butorphanol (Torbutrol or Torbugesic).

Butorphanol is mainly used as a cough suppressant in small animal medicine but it is also a potent analgesic. Butorphanol is usually safe in geriatrics because it does not greatly depress the respiratory or cardiovascular systems. Also, if necessary, its effects can be quickly reversed with an antagonist called Naloxone. For pain management Butorphanol's effect generally lasts two to four hours.

Although, this list does not cover all anesthetics available for use in dogs, hopefully this will give the pet owner a good general overview of anesthesia in greyhounds.

The pet owner should be aware also that the past year has seen many new anesthetics become available to the small animal veterinarian, some of which, I have not yet had experience in administering.



*Regina M. Downey, DVM, owns and operates the Coastal Animal Clinic in Salisbury, Massachusetts.*

## Presidential Greyhounds

by Joan Dillon



**Young Woodrow Wilson's sketch of Mountain Boy, the family greyhound**

A majority of American presidents have been dog lovers. George Washington had his Foxhounds; George Bush, his Springer Spaniel. Even President Clinton, owner of the current First Cat, "Socks," once owned a Cocker Spaniel. Although you can probably list the names and/or breeds of dogs owned by many of the more famous or recent chief executives, you may be unaware that three presidents (Rutherford B. Hayes, John Tyler and Woodrow Wilson) owned Greyhounds.

Rutherford B. Hayes was president from 1877-1881. Over the years, his family menagerie included a Siamese cat, a goat, a mockingbird, and a variety of dogs. Among them were a Cocker Spaniel, an English mastiff, a Newfoundland, two shepherd dogs, a small black dog, several hunting dogs and "Grim" the greyhound.

In his writings, Hayes describes Grim as a "beautiful brindle, mouse-colored greyhound ... good-natured and neat in his habits" and adds that he "took all our hearts at once." Unfortunately, Grim developed a dangerous habit — standing in the road and making carts swerve to avoid hitting him. He was killed instantly when he tried this with a train. Following Grim's untimely and tragic death, President Hayes received

condolence letters from all over the country.

John Tyler was vice president when William Henry Harrison died from pneumonia shortly after his inauguration. Quickly sworn in as president, he served from 1841-1845. After the death of his first wife in 1842, Tyler met Julia Gardiner and, although thirty years her senior, married her in 1844. Following his presidency, Tyler and his young wife returned to Sherwood Forest, his plantation on the James River in Virginia. At least one greyhound — "LeBeau" — accompanied them and is buried in the small cemetery set aside for the family's pets.

In "Presidential Pups," an article in the February, 1992 issue of *Dog World*, author Terry Sue Shank, states that LeBeau was "one of a pair of handsome greyhound dogs selected by Tyler's second wife, Julia Gardiner Tyler." The article further states that, in a letter to her sister in 1844, Julia mentioned she had purchased the elegant animals "to grace the White House lawn." Differing information in *First Dogs*, a recently released book, states that LeBeau was imported from Naples, Italy as a surprise gift from Tyler to his new wife and describes LeBeau as both an "Italian greyhound puppy" and a "young racing dog." This

description is confusing but may indicate that LeBeau was a greyhound from Italy as opposed to an Italian Greyhound.

(Thomas) Woodrow Wilson served two terms as president from 1913-1921. Although Wilson did not bring any dogs to Washington, his family once owned a greyhound called "Mountain Boy." Young Wilson drew the accompanying sketch of Mountain Boy in one of his schoolbooks. Although the curator at the Woodrow Wilson House/National Trust in Washington, D.C. is unsure of the original sketch's current location, it is believed to be with other Wilson memorabilia at the Library of Congress or Princeton University.

In addition to the presidents who owned greyhounds, there were two others presidents with greyhound connections. President Theodore ("Teddy") Roosevelt was an avid outdoorsman. In his writings, he describes several hunts with greyhounds, some of whom were descended from those owned by General Custer. More recently, President Dwight D. Eisenhower, who grew up in Abilene, Kansas, center of the United States greyhound industry, once worked on a greyhound farm.



## Greyhounds Who Serve

Canine  
Working  
Companions  
Greyhound Project

by Kathy Helmke



Shue Fly at work with and for Linda Bender, a busy wife and mother who also has Multiple Sclerosis. Photo courtesy of Kathy Helmke.

The American Greyhound Council had approved our grant proposal and was going to fund the selection, training and placement of a Greyhound Service Dog as well as a Greyhound Therapy Dog.

Someone sent Gary Guccione of the National Greyhound Association a copy of an article about the Canine Working Companions Greyhound (CWC) Project that had appeared in the former magazine *Greyhounds Today*.

Gary became very interested in our project and requested further information about Canine Working Companions, our Greyhound Project and its goals. *The Greyhound Review*, the official publication of the National Greyhound Association, reprinted the article. As a result, we prepared a grant proposal and submitted it to the American Greyhound Council to further our research in the selection, training and placement of Greyhounds as Service, Hearing and Therapy Dogs. We were delighted when the proposal was funded.

### How we chose Shue and Lotto

When we chose Shue and Lotto, we contacted Paul Botticello of WAG, Inc as well as Plainfield Pets at Plainfield

Greyhound Park. We hoped to have a large selection of dogs to choose from.

Past CWC Executive Director Pat McNamara and trainer Kathy Helmke made the trip to Connecticut to select potential dogs for the project. Neither one had ever seen a greyhound race before and planned to watch a few races before visiting the track's adoption facility.

### Temperament-testing

Helena Begley who is charge of the adoption kennel allowed us to temperament test the dogs individually as we went through the selection process. She answered questions about the dogs' basic temperament and patiently let dogs in and out for us to test.

We temperament-tested all the available dogs and carefully narrowed down our possible choices. We have been refining the selection process during the project and adding tests which we hope will give us more information about the dogs we select.

The ideal greyhound Service Dog candidate is large, heavy boned with a thick coat, soundly moving, no large scars, and no broken teeth. The best age is two years or less, strikingly beauti-

ful (this never hurts), and colorful. Personality traits are confident, not at all spooky, friendly to everyone, not dog aggressive and have a happy, tail wagging attitude. Two more very important traits are that the dog be not too sensitive and forgiving (toe pinch) and possess high, high energy. Retrieving a tennis ball is of the utmost importance!

I'm sure Helena thought we were crazy after we explained carefully how we wouldn't take a black dog due to the prejudices associated with black dogs. People tend to fear them due to the contrast of large white teeth in the black face. After testing all of the available Greyhounds, one stood out in our minds. It was a solid black female named JD's Shue Fly.

We selected Shue because she was a dynamite retriever, even bringing the ball back covered with sand. She was outgoing, friendly and her long black tail never stopped wagging.

### Shue-Fly: Service Dog With a Health Problem

Shue Fly was the first of our Greyhounds to develop any health problems.

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She had not been spayed, so an appointment was made for a spay as well as a hip x-ray and other diagnostic tests. Since this was a research project we wanted to cover as many bases as possible including ruling out any health concerns that may impact on the working life of the dog.

Shue was spayed and returned to her foster home. Shue Fly was fostered by Linda Jones, an experienced CWC Puppy Raiser. Our first indication that something was wrong came when Linda called to inform us that Shue was still woozy and lethargic several days after the surgery. She vomited back anything she attempted to eat and was losing weight.

We commend Linda for the excellent care that she gave Shue during her long convalescence and recovery.

When Shue was turned in for advanced training, we were unsure if she would be suitable for a Service Dog because of her health problem. Until that was resolved we concentrated on teaching her basic obedience and worked on tricks. Shue quickly learned how to sit up and beg, high five and bow in addition to the more mundane but also more useful skills of sitting, lying down, opening doors and retrieving.

After she had received a clean bill of health from the vets at Cornell, Shue concentrated on her Service Dog work. She practiced her skills at the training facility until they were perfected, then tried them out in public. Shue was es-

maintain her balance when climbing or descending stairs. Shue retrieves dropped items for Linda as well as opening doors for her. Shue's bright orange backpack identifies her as a Service Dog and also holds items that Linda may need.

### **Lotto: In-Residence Therapy Dog**

The next dog we selected was a fawn female named NJ's Lotto. Lotto was at the WAG facility and had just come back from the veterinarians after her spay. Her recent surgery didn't slow her down for a moment as she raced around the yard. We were very impressed when she picked up her metal food dish and carried it over to Paul!

Lotto passed our temperament test with flying colors and joined Shue in the back of the van for the long ride home. We had foster homes waiting for both girls and their new foster mothers were waiting for them back in New York. Lotto was fostered by CWC's Gail Gilroy.

Lotto was turned in for advanced training at about the same time as Shue. Lotto was slated to be an in residence Therapy Dog for a Nursing Home or other residential facility. Her training consisted of basic obedience as well as learning how to visit, standing quietly for petting and special training to assist in the Physical Therapy Department. The Van Allen Nursing Home in Herkimer, New York, was selected to be Lotto's new home.

Lotto's placement went off with out a hitch and she continues to delight the residents in her new home. The CWC Greyhound Project continues and we hope to add to our knowledge about these fascinating dogs.



*Editor's note: the CWC acquired two more Greyhounds this past August from the Plainfield Pet Kennel via REGAP of CT., Inc. Spencer and BJ are getting ready for their new lives.*



**Lotto brightens the day for Evelyn Brown as a part of her daily work as a residential therapy dog. Photo courtesy of Kathy Helmke.**

After many vet visits as well as a visit to the Small Animal Clinic at Cornell University it was determined that Shue's esophagus had been scarred. Her stomach acids started back washing during or after her surgery. Linda fed Shue milkshakes of macaroni and cottage cheese pureed in a blender until her throat had healed enough to tolerate dog food which had been soaked until it was soft enough for her to swallow.

pecially good at opening doors, whipping them open with enthusiasm.

Shue was paired with Linda Bender, an active woman with a busy life as a wife and mother and who also has Multiple Sclerosis. Linda has balance problems and Shue's height makes her perfect to aid Linda maintain her balance. Shue's backpack has a handle that Linda can hold on to for assistance in rising from a chair and which helps Linda

# Wings For Greyhounds

by Maggie McCurry



Maggie McCurry with one of her recent passengers.

A California pilot is on a mission. The cargo is precious and is handled with the greatest care. Beneath the aircraft, the barren deserts of the Southwest give way to the smoggy urban sprawl of Los Angeles and then the rich farmland of California's Central Valley. Arriving at the destination, I prepare to unload. Tails wag; tongues lick, and two more retired racers are safe.

I am a pilot with twelve year's experience and a small, aging, twin-engined Beechcraft airplane. Last summer I began flying retired racing greyhounds between the rescue groups at the Arizona racetracks and the adoption centers throughout California. In October of 1996, Wings For Greyhounds, Inc. was established. The greyhounds needed transportation, and we were there. Wings For Greyhounds now makes frequent trips on behalf of any greyhound rescue and adoption agency in the area that calls on us.

Our airborne service forged what has become an important link in the retired racer adoption chain operating in the Southwest. Greyhound rescuers

from the racetracks usually deliver large numbers of dogs to the adoption groups via truck. If a home is available, or an overload condition occurs at the Arizona kennels, or there aren't enough dogs to make the eleven hour trip from Arizona to Los Angeles a worthwhile proposition, we can pick up and deliver a couple of dogs at a time by plane in a fraction of the time it takes to drive. For the adoption groups in Central and Northern California only able to handle small numbers of animals at any one time, the greyhounds are usually driven into Los Angeles as part of a large load, and then

picked up and flown North on a Wings For Greyhounds flight. I fly regularly to Hollister on behalf of Greyhound Adoption in nearby Gilroy, and to Redding for Retired Greyhound Adoption, Inc. This saves the driver, usually Gary Tracey from the Greyhound Adoption League, two days on the road from the Tucson racetrack to California and back to Tucson.

The greyhounds lie on blankets, pillows and cushions in the back of the airplane where the two back seats used to be and

are secured by harnesses in case we encounter turbulence. With greyhounds being greyhounds, they often decide to come to the front of the plane for a cuddle. They seem to consider the airplane to be no more than a really nice dog trailer. In fact, we often have a hard time getting them to get up off the cushions at the end of a flight. I love greyhounds, and I love flying, and we tried this and found that there is a need for the service we provide. And being a lady pilot flying greyhounds, we are able to

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attract media attention everywhere we go. To me, the more we can get their faces on the TV and in the newspapers, the more we can make people aware that these lovely animals do make great family members.

Wings For Greyhounds and the groups who work with us (The Greyhound Adoption League in Tucson, Retired Racers Greyhound Rescue & Adoption Inc. of Los Angeles, and the groups in Gilroy and Redding) all agree on one thing: we don't do ego's. It's all about the dogs. If I can put my skills to use to help the animals, then I'm doing something worthwhile. We all have something to contribute, and this is one thing I can do.

In addition to flying greyhounds to wherever they need to be, Wings For Greyhounds gets frequent invitations for speaking engagements at schools, aviation and civic groups. I find the awareness level surrounding the racing greyhound to be astonishingly low in the public at large. This summer we were invited to exhibit at two major aviation Expos - the West Coast Pilots Expo attracted 10,000 people, and the Van Nuys Airport Expo had an attendance of some 400,000 over two days. We work these projects with the help of Retired Racers Inc. and the Greyhound Adoption League and local greyhound owners. Our booths are always swamped and almost to a person we answer the same questions "...Is that a greyhound?... Aren't they hyper?...How many?...In this country?..." Our greyhounds love to work the crowds like the professionals

that they are and we introduce the animal to people who have never seen a greyhound before. It's a very effective way of letting the public meet them and we invariably get quality adoptions from these efforts. A recent story about our

day operating expenses of the organization. A bigger airplane would be handy. We could move more greyhounds for just about the same as it's costing us now. It's a long shot, but if we make it a goal, we might just get there.

Wings For Greyhounds is different, I'll admit, but it works. We fill a transportation need. We get publicity for the greyhounds. We also interest people in greyhound adoptions. And it's fun!



**Up, Up and Away and Where's the Red Barron? Lyndie is a genuine flying greyhound accompanying her owner, Camille Cyr of Brunswick, Maine on recreational flights all over the Northeast. Photo courtesy of Camille Cyr.**

project on Fox TV News ran six times in a week and resulted in dozens of new adoptions in the Los Angeles area. It is expected to air nationally over the coming weeks, and should help greyhounds all over the country find homes.

***"A bigger airplane would be handy. We could move more greyhounds for just about the same as it's costing us now."***

These successes make it clear that Wings For Greyhounds' work provides real help to the retired racers, but we still need all the support we can get. Fellow pilots are stepping up to volunteer aircraft and pilot skills. However, there is a continual need to keep the aircraft airworthy and provide fuel for the flights as well as the need to meet the day to

Maggie McCurry is a native of Great Britain and lives in the San Fernando Valley area of Los Angeles. She holds a commercial pilot's license with instrument and multi-engine ratings and flies Wings For Greyhounds' missions from the Van Nuys Airport. Wings For Greyhounds, Inc. is a non-profit organization operating under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. No fees are charged to the agencies using the service and our funding comes from public donations, grants from foundations and corporate sponsorship. For more information about the project write to WINGS FOR GREYHOUNDS, INC., 11288 Ventura Blvd., Suite B436, Studio City, Ca. 91604. They may also be reached via e-mail at WEFLYM@aol.com, or by phone at 1-888-4WEFLYM. Wings For Greyhounds also has a website at [www.wingsforgreyhounds.org](http://www.wingsforgreyhounds.org), where the group maintains updates on their current activities.

# Veterinary Care For The Veteran Greyhound

by Helane Graustark

Depending on your veterinarian's office policy, your greyhound should begin having annual visits for geriatric check-ups around the age of seven. (If your hound has particular medical problems for which he is under treatment, your veterinarian may want to see him more often.) During this annual examination, the

vet should thoroughly examine your dog. In addition, your vet may suggest your dog have certain tests performed in order to ensure that his heart, kidneys, liver and other organs are functioning normally. Detailed below is what you may expect during this annual geriatric check-up:

## Thorough Physical Examination

This includes a careful check of lymph glands, ears, teeth, throat, eyes, heart and lungs, abdomen, all joints, skin, and possibly a rectal examination to check anal glands. This is the time to voice any concerns you've had about your aging greyhound, or any changes in his habits, condition or behavior.

In particular, the vet will focus on condition of the teeth and gums in order to determine whether your Greyhound needs a dental cleaning and/or extraction. The vet should examine the eyes with an ophthalmoscope to check



Despite needing a bit of special care and attention, older greyhounds have a special grace and dignity that only comes with age. Hampton. Photo courtesy of Kevin and Connie Murk, Sarasota, Fla.

for the presence of cataracts or other abnormalities; the corneas should be checked for signs of pannus or ulceration. The vet should perform a detailed examination of heart and lungs. The veterinarian will be listening for heart murmurs, an irregular heartbeat, or other abnormalities that might suggest that the heart is not functioning normally. Lungs are carefully auscultated for sounds of fluid, which might indicate congestive heart failure or infection. The abdomen will be palpated to ensure that there is no enlargement of the organs, or presence of masses. Joints should be checked for mobility and swelling, as well as for signs of pain. The coat and skin are examined for general condition as well as abnormal growths or skin disease.

## Blood Tests

Your vet may suggest blood tests be done to determine if your

greyhound's organ systems are functioning normally. The tests usually ordered are:

## Complete Blood Count ("CBC")

This quantitates red blood cells, white blood cells and platelets. Red blood cells (via hemoglobin) carry oxygen throughout the dog's body. A low count ("anemia") requires careful evaluation. White blood cells help your

dog to fight infection. There are many types of white blood cells, and these will be quantitated in what is referred to as a "differential." An elevated white blood cell count may indicate infection or stress. Platelets assist with clotting. A low platelet count may lead to excessive bleeding, and would require further work-up. Normal ranges for the CBC will vary slightly from lab to lab.

## Blood Chemistry

This test measures your greyhound's metabolic status by checking kidney and liver function, as well as important electrolytes. Blood Urea Nitrogen (BUN) and creatinine are determinants of kidney function. Liver enzymes (ALT, AST, alkaline phosphatase, GGT), bilirubin, or LDH may all be elevated in the presence of liver disease, such as hepatitis or malignancy. The

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## "Panty, Queasy and Fainty"\*

\*aka "Tice," Lynda, And Lori

by Lynda Adame



Sometimes the gifts our greyhounds bring include an occasional injury. Ernie. Photo courtesy of Margie and Jim Duggan, Lake Zurich, Ill.

Please do not continue reading this story if you are a squeamish type. Consider yourself warned.

Today was Tice's return trip to the veterinarian; our first trip back since her toe amputation surgery. Since I drive a hatchback (Honda CRX) and I have a herniated disc in my back, I coerced my friend Lori to join us and assist me in lifting Tice in and out of the back of the car. Lori was happy to help us.

As we pulled into the parking lot of the veterinarians, Tice began to pant. By the time we got into the waiting room, Tice was shaking so hard she was vibrating across the floor, drooling, and her heart beat was well over 180 bpm (I think we can safely assume she doesn't like going to the vets anymore).

The vet tech (sweet but dim) arrived and began cutting the bandage off. Tice was staring straight ahead with a vacant look on her face. I knew that whatever this girl was doing to Tice was hurting her. The panting level turned up a notch.

At one point I was forced to re-direct the scissors as the girl was starting to cut right over the amputated area. I asked for the Vet, please. I also asked for a bowl of water to soak the bandage

off. In came a bowl of water. Two minutes later the water was so red that it had to be changed. I began to work, work, work, the wet bandage until it pulled off. I'm feeling sick and very light headed. The vet was still not in the room, the wound was bleeding all over, and Tice was shivering and panting and panting and panting.

Lori says, "I don't feel so good. I wish the vet would get here." I am near panic. At that moment the vet entered the room. I saw spots swimming before my eyes and I sat down hard. The vet began to examine the wound and was pleased with the healing. All of a sudden the vet screamed, "She's going down!" while my friend Lori faints. Lori hits the wall (with her head) and then slammed to the floor. The vet tech ran out of the room, Tice lost her balance, and I remained seated — feeling faint myself and yet horrified that my friend has surely died. The vet made sure Tice was OK, then moved to assist Lori, who had now sprung up into a full seated position with a wild confused look on her face. Vet yelled for vet tech, who came in, white faced, with a piece of candy for Lori to eat. Vet was pleased

that Lori was up so quickly and unhurt, vet was pleased that Tice was healing so well, vet was pleased that I did not faint as well. The vet wrapped Tice up in a huge pretty pink bandage. Tice was still panting like a freight train. What a lovely picture we made: panty, queasy and fainty. Needless to say, we will not be in direct attendance at Tice's next toe bandaging. Lori is fine. Tice is fine. I am fine.



### **Veteran Care continued from previous page**

tests also measure minerals (calcium and phosphorous) and electrolytes (potassium, sodium, chloride) as well as glucose (to detect diabetes) and serum proteins (albumin and globulin).

Based upon the results of the physical examination or the studies listed above, additional tests that your vet may order include urinalysis, thyroid function tests, tick panel, or others.

### **Electrocardiogram ("EKG")**

The EKG provides information on the electrical conduction system of the heart. It can identify irregular rhythms ("arrhythmia"), heart enlargement, or signs of injury or inflammation to the heart.

### **Chest Radiograph**

A chest x-ray can help determine heart size. A markedly enlarged heart may be an indication of congestive heart failure or cardiomyopathy. It can show presence of fluid in the membrane surrounding the heart ("pericarditis"), or fluid in the lungs (indicative of pneumonia or CHF). It can also detect tumor.

### **Additional Testing**

Any abnormal findings on the above, or on clinical examination, may require additional tests, such as ultrasound, CT scan, radiographs, biopsy, or even surgery. These tests (and reasons for ordering them) are beyond the scope of this article.



# Canine Asthma

by Missy Taft

Asthma, or chronic bronchitis, is rare but not unknown in dogs. As with people, canine asthma is set off by a "trigger," or environmental irritant. Airborne allergens, such as pollen or house dust, or environmental pollutants, such as cigarette or cigar smoke, can cause long-term irritation of the bronchial airways. The condition is seen most often in older dogs.

Once coughing begins in response to the "trigger," a vicious circle starts. Coughing irritates the lining of the bronchial airways, which swell and produce excess mucus. The dog coughs more to clear the mucus from the airways. Continued coughing causes the muscles around the bronchial tubes to tighten, further reducing the size of the airways and increasing coughing.

To understand what happens to inflamed asthmatic airways, consider the following analogy. Lightly scratch the top of your hand with your fingernail. Do it once and nothing happens. Do it every twenty seconds around the clock for three or four days, and you will have an open, swollen, weeping sore on your hand. The lining of the bronchial tubes reacts in a similar way to chronic coughing.

Dogs with a persistent asthmatic cough will gag or retch to try to clear the mucus. Diagnosis of the condition is made in otherwise healthy animals. A physical exam, history, x-rays, and an endoscopic exam can help diagnose it. Other diseases that produce coughing, such as viral or bacterial infection, heartworm, heart failure, or cancer, need to be ruled out.

Medical treatment of the condition is roughly the same as for humans, al-



**Knight also suffered from a respiratory problem caused by laryngeal paralysis which severely restricted his activity level. Characterized by labored breathing and difficulty swallowing, "LP" can be treated. Photo courtesy of Joan Belle Isle, Newton, Mass.**

though dogs obviously cannot use inhalers! The dog can be given bronchodilators if it is having severe trouble breathing due to bronchial swelling. These drugs relax the muscles around the bronchial tubes, thus allowing expansion of the airways and freer breathing. Long-term administration of low doses of corticosteroids reduces bronchial inflammation, which in turn reduces mucus production. The key to breaking the vicious circle of inflammation and coughing is to reduce the inflammation. Expectorants that loosen the mucus can also help.

Dogs with bronchial asthma should never be given over-the-counter cough suppressants. These do not prevent the source of the cough, which are bronchial inflammation and swelling. Cough suppressants do not help the dog cough up the offending mucus, either. Mucus buildup and airway narrowing can be worsened.

Bronchial asthma is not an automatic death sentence for a dog, but it requires careful management. Asthmatic dogs cannot exercise for long periods without becoming fatigued. This is especially true of older dogs. Too much exercise can set off an attack of coughing. Too much excitement or pulling at a leash can also set it off. The owner

needs to be sensitive to his/her dog's physical limits, and stay within them. Removal of the environmental "trigger" is another important step in breaking the cycle of inflammation and coughing. It is not always easy to figure out what the "trigger" is. But as in human asthma, one needs to play detective and eliminate possible offending substances.

Proper medication is critical for controlling the disease. Dosage requirements and side effects of medication are determined by consultation with a veterinarian. Some dogs take oral medication while others receive shots. These issues must be determined by a veterinarian the basis of the individual dog's needs. Side effects of long-term medication need to be discussed, too. These will obviously be a function of the dosage and frequency of administration.

If an asthmatic dog's owner is mindful of the pet's physical limitations and day-to-day health, then there is no reason not to expect the dog to live successfully with the disease. As with human asthma, understanding and careful management are the keys to success.



*Missy Taft is on the board of Greyhound Options of Ware, Massachusetts, and lives with her family and greyhounds Ice and Gizmo.*

# Kira's Story: Part 2-Life Triumphs

by Patricia Gail Burnham

On the second day after the birth I took Sheena to see Barrett for an after delivery check and she was pronounced fine. I, on the other hand, was seriously short of sleep. When I described giving the puppies to Sheena in shifts, he suggested putting them all with Sheena at once, and then taking her away from the puppies for rest breaks.

So I took her home and tried that, but when I took her away from the puppies for a break, she paced, panted, worried and finally threw up from sheer anxiety. I let her have her puppies back.

The little mewling sounds that contented puppies (and babies) make act as a tranquilizer on the female nervous system. Most dams will not leave their puppies except to eat and potty for the first few days after delivery. They lie so still that they can develop pressure sores if their bedding is not soft enough. Barrett had said that he couldn't tranquilize Sheena while she was nursing but I didn't want him to. I could let the puppies act as natural tranquilizer just by keeping them near her. So, through the day we rotated puppies. As each one filled with milk and fell asleep I would pick it up and offer it to Sheena on its back so that she could lick it clean. Instead of just worrying about the puppies, she was learning to feed and clean them. She was getting the hang of motherhood.



Kira gets some private time with Sheena where she does not have to compete with her larger littermates. Photo courtesy of Patricia Gail Burnham.

That night the doorbell rang. It was Betty Lou bringing a birthday cake; a bouquet of eleven pink tulips; and a cluster of eleven cards: six that said "It's a boy," and five that announced "It's a girl." We took a more leisurely look at the puppies and celebrated their safe arrival in the world. The puppies had all looked to be about the same size at birth but after two days of nursing, noticeable differences in both overall size and plumpness had developed.

Eight of the puppies were plump and doing well. There were two boys who were on the scrawny side: the pale silver boy and one of the blue brindles. And then there was Kira. She was tiny, half the size of any of the other puppies and desperately hungry. She was the color of dark coffee. I knew that if she lived, her fur would lighten to a red gold color but she was so small and so helpless that the odds were against her surviving.

That night I put all the puppies in with Sheena for the first time. I finally slept, on a day bed in the same room. In the morning I started to put the puppies into their nest box so I could feed them in shifts to be sure the weak ones ate enough. There were puppies packed all around and under Sheena and I was picking

each one up for its trip to the box when my hand touched a small stiff body. One of the blue brindle girls had crawled underneath Sheena's body to stay warm and had been suffocated during the night. I was desolate. She was so small and so helpless. And I was so guilty. Now she would never have a chance to grow up. All of her futures were ended.

It turned out that neither Sheena nor I could keep track of eleven puppies at one time, so I went back to the rotation system of keeping the litter together in the box while they slept and letting them spend shifts with their mother. I would let the three weakest puppies nurse first, and more often than the others. I would hold Kira cradled in my hands to keep her in position while she nursed. Against the palms of my hands I could feel the warmth of her life, the rise and fall of her breathing and her beating heart behind the fragile layer of ribs. It was like

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holding the essence of life in my hands. She never gave up trying to nurse. Her will to live was strong; you could see it burning in her. But she was so small and weak that she had trouble claiming and defending a nipple. Because eleven is such a large litter, all of the puppies had been born on the small and gaunt side. In the first week most of them filled out and grew plump. The blue fawn and blue brindle boys quickly caught up to their littermates, but Kira never seemed to get enough to eat. She would nurse endlessly without ever getting full.

If dog breeding were truly survival of the fittest, she would have been pushed aside and died. Certainly Sheena had no interest in Kira's survival. Sheena would let the other puppies push her away from her nipple and push her away from her warmth. But I wasn't prepared to see Kira die. There had already been enough death in the litter and more than enough guilt.

I gave Kira extra nursing sessions, and prevented stronger puppies from pushing her away from her nipple. I let her nurse first when the nipples were fullest. In puppy photos of the litter she looks like a stray from a different, younger litter. As emotional insurance against finding her dead one day, I wasn't betting that she would survive, but she and I were both putting up a good fight. Hearing that I was exhausted, my sister came to visit and was concerned for the tiny red puppy.

By the end of the first week the puppies were looking less like thin rats and more like real puppies. They were delightful to hold. Adult greyhounds have soft fur and puppy greyhounds

have incredibly soft fur. It is as if they were covered in warm velvet. And they smelled wonderful. Years earlier I had taken a puppy to a veterinarian for shots and he had picked it up and smelled its milk fed puppy breath with obvious enjoyment. Since then I have become a connoisseur of puppy breath.

When the litter was seven days old Helen stopped by to see the puppies. She had bred her greyhound but the pregnancy didn't take so she was feeling puppy deprived. She arrived with a friend and when the two of them came in the front door Sheena met them growling. Sheena had not objected to visits from Betty Lou or my sister, but she was not allowing casual acquaintan-

than goldens of the same age. That surprised me, since the puppies at this age were all head and body with tiny little legs. How could anything have smaller legs than these greyhound puppies?

Everyone asked about the little red puppy and whether she could survive. I didn't know. I let her nurse and then tucked her under my shirt, against my skin for warmth. She always sought the warmest places. When the puppies were nested in a heap Kira would always be at the bottom, buried by her brothers' and sisters' warm bodies. When I took her out of the pile for her extra nursing sessions she would kick and struggle so hard while I carried her to her mother that I feared dropping her



**Kira and her nursing buddy, Starfleet, also known as The Gentleman. Compared to Starfleet, her very tiny size is more evident. Photo courtesy of Patricia Gail Burnham.**

She wasn't strong enough to make Sheena let down milk so I would also put a strong puppy with her to start the milk flow. This job quickly fell to the blue brindle boy that we called "The Gentleman" because he was the only puppy that would not push Kira off her nipple. They were nursing buddies and even when they weren't nursing, she always slept touching him. He would eat until he

was full and fell asleep with a round tummy but she never looked full. She got to nurse three times a day with just the Gentleman. Then they joined their brothers and sisters for Sheena's regular feeding sessions.

After the first week I went back to work part time, but still came home to make sure that Kira got her noon feeding. I would call Sheena into the living room, and pull Kira from the warm bottom of the heap of puppies, taking longer

was full and fell asleep with a round tummy but she never looked full. She got to nurse three times a day with just the Gentleman. Then they joined their brothers and sisters for Sheena's regular feeding sessions.

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to select the Gentleman from the three blue brindles. Then I would carry her into the living room kicking and screaming until I could set her down next to her mother, and they would nurse while I watched reruns of the Equalizer on television. The Equalizer is a show that specializes in stories where the underdog overcomes obstacles with the Equalizer's help. The Equalizer runs an add in the New York City Papers that reads "Need Help? Odds Against you? Call the Equalizer." It seemed like an appropriate choice. The odds were definitely against Kira, and she needed help. On the other hand she was a fighter. She wanted desperately to live. She would struggle in among the other puppies whose body heat she needed. She would nurse for hours at a time even though she never seemed to get full. But she wouldn't stop trying. When she was nursing with the whole litter she had her own designated nipple. It was out of the traffic, high up on the flank. It wasn't a terribly productive nipple, but at least she could usually keep it to herself. I would move any puppy that took it away from her, and the others gradually learned to leave Kira and her designated nipple alone.

During the second week, Betty Lou was on the phone with me during a feeding session, when she asked, "Does Kira know she is staying with you?" That startled me. After all I am a breeder. I had put a lot of time, effort and money into this litter. It made sense for me to keep the best of the puppies, sell some of the extras, and find good pet homes for the pets. I never had any doubts that this tiny red puppy would be a pet. But the truth is that winning a fight against

death forms a bond between the puppy and the breeder, and in my case that was too strong a bond to be broken. So Kira could be a pet; she could be my pet if she survived.

There was also the unpleasant possibility that there might be a physical reason for Kira's poor start in life. That as she grew up she might turn out to have immature kidneys or a liver shunt, something that could kill her as a young adult even if she survived her puppyhood. And it wouldn't be fair to let a new owner become fond of her only to lose her. In my case the damage was already done. I was already bonded to her. I had taken a stand against death, and she and I were waging a fight for her survival. If we



Even after it was clear that Kira would survive, it was also clear that she would be a small puppy. Kira and Shalfleet. Photo courtesy of Patricia Gail Burnham.

won we would stay together.

In the second week the puppies' eyes opened. At first there were just tiny slivers of eye visible between the slightly parted eyelids but in a few days their eyes were fully opened and the puppies could see for the first time a world that had been just scent and touch to them. Except for Kira. Her eyes didn't open until three days after those of her brothers and sisters. I began to suspect that Kira had been the last puppy conceived and that she had been born prematurely. She had been planning on

spending another three days inside Sheena when the litter was delivered.

The puppies' eyes were either light blue or dark brown depending on their coat color. Blue brindles and blue fawns are born with pale blue eyes that darken to a medium brown by the time the puppy is four months old. But the reds and red brindles are born with dark brown eyes that don't change over time.

Once the puppies' eyes were open they started to explore their world.

I kept finding them in odd corners of the living room as they crawled off the bean bag bed. And they started climbing out of their sleeping box so it was time to move them to new quarters. That was an empty closet in the dog

room. It had no door so a couple of boards nailed across the bottom of the doorway kept the puppies in while allowing Sheena to step in and out. A layer of thick artificial fleece blankets made it soft and warm. But here Sheena and I were at cross purposes. I kept straightening out the fleeces. She kept digging them up and piling them into a heap. She would dig. I would straighten. She would dig. I would straighten.

We never came to an agreement on the shape of a proper puppy bed.

She was happier with my own sleeping arrangements. I put a single mattress next to the closet to make myself a bed and spent my nights there, waking to help with feedings. Sheena approved heartily and moved in next to me. She could sleep next to me as she always had, only going in to do the midnight feeding and care for the puppies between naps. By this time Sheena was

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taking full care of the rest of the litter and I was putting most of my time into helping Kira survive. She never did seem to get enough nourishment from nursing. There are artificial bitch milk replacers for orphan puppies, but Kira was not an orphan and as long as she could nurse then the best food for her was Sheena's milk. We struggled through the three weeks until she was old enough to lap from a dish. Then I offered her a half cup of evaporated goat's milk at full strength. I was helping her to stand up, holding her body cradled in my hands. She dropped her muzzle into the dish, lapped, gasped and snorted. She struggled to drink with the same intensity that she had used toward nursing. And she lapped the entire dish clean. It was the first time that I saw her with a full, rounded, belly. Within two days she was drinking like a pro. She had turned the corner, and from then on she made steady progress.

Usually littermates will pick on the smallest puppy and I feared that she would have a tough time when the puppies started to play together. But she proved to be fierce. When her bigger brothers and sisters tried to chew her ears, she would fly at them screaming and they would back off. It is not behavior that I would normally encourage, but in her case she needed it to survive her puppyhood. When the litter was twelve weeks old, the litterboss would drop into a stalk and target Kira. Her head would come up when she saw what he was doing and she would fly at him and chase him around the yard. That was his idea of a good game and the reason he would stalk her in the first place.

And she would run "rabbit" for the litter, inviting them to chase her and then outrunning them. During the hot Sacramento summer she was the only puppy that learned to get into the wading pool that I keep on the patio. And having learned how to cool herself off, she would then play tag with her littermates until their tongues were hanging out, while she remained bright and bouncy and ready for another lap. Her difficult early start had no effect on her speed or stamina and I began to wonder if she



From her special place on top, Kira gives a mighty yawn while the rest of the litter continues to feed. Photo courtesy of Patricia Gail Burnham.

would like lure coursing. We went to her first obedience practice and she thought that was great fun, happily heeling and sitting for treats.

The other puppies went to new homes one by one but I kept her and her friend, the Gentleman puppy, neither of which were show dogs. (Being a breeder, I also kept two of the show kids.)

Looking back, she was probably born prematurely. The breeding had been done by artificial insemination over an eight day period. She was most likely conceived on the last breeding and was the last puppy to implant in the uterus. That, combined with the large litter having been born a week early, meant that she was born earlier than she had planned on. Her eyes opened several days later than the rest of the puppies.

Her adult teeth came in so much later than the rest of the litter that I wondered if she would ever have all her teeth. It was funny to see her brothers and sisters happily chewing dog biscuits while pieces fell out the sides of her gap toothed mouth. One of her brothers would eat his and then rush over to clean up the pieces that she dropped. But eventually she did get all her teeth.

Gradually the weight difference between her and her sisters closed. She weighed eighteen pounds when they

were twenty five. But when the biggest girl weighed fifty one pounds, Kira weighed forty seven pounds. She might always be a few pounds lighter than her sisters, but she won't be two thirds their size, as had looked possible in the beginning.

She is graceful and deer like, spoiled and hot headed. She is absolutely fearless, and affectionate. Her favorite maneuver is to hang her head over my shoulder and pull her chin in toward her chest, giving me a neck hug. Was she worth the effort it took to keep her alive? Absolutely.

When it came to "Survival of the fittest" Kira was plainly not the fittest. It was a large litter. Sheena was not interested in feeding her. Kira could easily have been pushed aside, chilled, and died. Keeping her alive was more work than the rest of the litter put together. I wasn't feeding her artificially because, as long as I can help a puppy nurse from its mother, I feel that is the best source of food.

I watched a lot of mid-day "Equalizer" TV reruns while going home at lunch to make sure she had her mid-day feeding.



# Savanna's Story

SPECIAL NEEDS: CANCER AMPUTEE

by Kim Campbell Thornton



Savanna poses with the cats before she was diagnosed with cancer. Photo courtesy of Kim Campbell Thornton.

When our ten and a half year-old greyhound, Savanna, was diagnosed with bone cancer last year, we were faced with a wrenching life or death decision: whether to amputate the hind leg of an animal whose *raison d'être* was speed, whose legs were her livelihood.

Without amputation and subsequent chemotherapy sessions, Savanna would die in a few short months. With them, she stood a good chance of living a year or more. The decision had to be made quickly.

As the former editor of *Dog Fancy*, I knew from readers that three-legged dogs adapted well to their new state. Although I had never seen a three-legged dog in action, I was struck by the number of people who told me about three-legged dogs they knew "that did just fine."

But in most cases, those dogs were young. Savanna was old, entering the last few years of her fifteen year life expectancy. Was it fair to put her through such a violent surgical procedure at her

advanced age, merely so my husband and I wouldn't have to give up the pleasure of her company just yet? She lived for long walks. Would a three-legged greyhound think life was worth living?

Most troubling was that the diagnosis was not rock-solid. Without a biopsy, the veterinarians could only speculate, albeit with authority, on her condition. With a biopsy, there was a risk that the cancer, if indeed that was what it was, would spread further throughout her body. But what if the veterinarians were wrong and ended up removing a healthy limb? Never had the phrase "between a rock and a hard place" held so much meaning.

After forty eight hours of agonizing, we gave the go-ahead for surgery. Despite her reputation for acting as if she were being killed when her nails were trimmed, Savanna was the most game dog we knew. If amputation would give her a quality life, we wouldn't deny her the chance.

The trouble all began with a slight,

almost unnoticeable limp that usually began toward the end of our nightly one-mile walks. Along with our vet, we chalked it up to arthritis settling into Savanna's ten year old bones. He suggested a shot of cortisone to see if it helped the problem. Savanna seemed fine, otherwise, until during one nightly walk she just toppled over without a sound. We rushed her to the emergency clinic, where they took x-rays but found nothing conclusive. "It could be any number of things, including bone cancer," the attending veterinarian said. "Bone cancer is the least likely of all those possibilities, though." Savanna's regular vet concurred. In a few days we were leaving on vacation, and Savanna would be boarded for two weeks. If she wasn't better after the two-week rest, we decided, we would take her to a specialist for an MRI, or magnetic resonance imaging.

When we returned, she was still limping, so we made an appointment for

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her at All Care Animal Referral Center in Fountain Valley, California, the largest private referral hospital in the western United States. All Care has all the most current diagnostic tools and treatment facilities any animal hospital — and some human hospitals — could ever want.

Less than twenty four hours later, the results of the bone scan were back. They were not favorable, indicating what appeared to be a tumor near the top of the right rear femur. Bone cancer — osteosarcoma — was the tentative diagnosis. A biopsy was not recommended because of the concern that the surgery could spread the cancer more quickly throughout the body. Savanna's veterinarian, Dr. Craig Bergstrom, recommended amputation and chemotherapy.

We scheduled the surgery for two days later. We spent those two days giving Savanna lots of walks and a special meal — chicken pot pie made by her friend Jane — the evening she was to go to the hospital. That night, near tears, we brought Savanna to All Care. Kim, who worked in the kennel area, fussed over Savanna and made sure our bony greyhound had plenty of soft padding in her cage. Then she did her best to reassure us. "I'll be here all night," she said. "You can call me any time to see how she's doing." We took her up on her offer and called at 4 a.m. — after a restless sleep filled with nightmares that the wrong leg would be removed — to see if Savanna had gone into surgery yet. She hadn't, but Kim assured us that she was resting comfortably.

After the surgery, Dr. Bergstrom recommended that we wait a day or two to visit since Savanna was still sleeping quite a bit, and he wanted her to get as much rest as possible. When we did visit, nothing could have prepared us for the shock of seeing her lying there with a missing leg. We shed many tears over the following weeks, wondering if we had done the right thing. Our dog was depressed and turned her head away when we offered food — something she had certainly never done before.



Savanna discovered snow for the first time after her surgery while on a trip to New Mexico with Kim. Photo courtesy of Kim Campbell Thornton.

When Savanna wouldn't eat, ICU technicians brought us cooked chicken, specially prepared in the on-site kitchen, and baby food so we could hand-feed her. Other techs stopped to tell us how Savanna had been during the day, what she had done and whether she was eating. Frequently Savanna's cage was surrounded by animals recovering from surgery. The activity around her gave Savanna something to be interested in, and the exposure allowed the techs to keep a close eye on her.

Finally, it was time for Savanna to try walking. Greyhounds tend to be wimps, and she was no exception. But only rarely did we hear a whimper when big but gentle technician Vince Russell

carefully lifted her out of her cage and carried her outside so we could "walk" her, using a towel to support her rear. Savanna seemed to like being outdoors, so during one visit Vince and Dr. Bergstrom's assistant Rita Ben-Or prepared a bed for her behind the clinic and brought out her food and water so we could all enjoy the sunshine for a while.

Despite the efforts of the staff, this recovery period was a very difficult time for us. Besides not eating, Savanna had become snappy when touched or made

to do anything she didn't want to do. And all she wanted to do was lie there. The supervisor of the graveyard shift, Dennis Arrout, told us that dogs rarely have a problem with amputation, "In more than ninety percent of the amputations, they don't seem to be aware of it, or at least they don't think about it like we do," he said. But he has seen a few cases of depression in dogs, including Savanna. "You

have to physically take them outside and show them there's a world out there, and that life's not over," he said.

The adjustment is hard for owners, too. The veterinarians and technicians suggested that we were coddling her too much, yet with our knowledge of her gentle, submissive personality, we could see no other way of handling her. For the first two or three weeks, we were convinced that we had made the wrong decision in having the leg amputated. Savanna spent much of that time in the hospital, which is unusual. Most amputees are home and doing well by the fifth day if not earlier. However, Savanna was

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still depressed, her wound had quite a bit of drainage, and her stitches split two days after we got her home. (I learned later from Robert Rooks, All Care's chief veterinarian, that Savanna had been a learning experience for them. Greyhounds have quite a bit more muscle than other breeds, and it drains much more than fatty tissue does.) Dr. Bergstrom and Dr. Rooks sewed her up again and made the decision to keep her for another week. We visited the hospital twice a day, often leaving in tears.

Arrout understood how we felt. "Most clients put their own feelings into what their animal is experiencing, and that's what causes them grief," he said. "But animals, if they're not debilitated by their trauma, will more or less ignore it and get on with life, whereas we would whine and cry and be a pain in the neck for everyone around us. Dogs don't do that . . . but it's difficult to explain that to the client."

But finally we were able to bring Savanna home. She regained her appetite and sunny personality, learned to negotiate our stairs with confidence, and slowly built back up the distance she was able to walk. Her long face with its happy smile greeted us at the top of the stairs when we came home. She had four chemotherapy treatments, which she took like a trooper. The only apparent side effect was a marked lack of energy for two or three days afterward.

It has been more than one year since Savanna's surgery, and there are no signs that the cancer has spread. Recently, however, she has given up

walks, content only to make the trek downstairs and across the parking lot to a grassy area where she does her business. One of us carries her back upstairs,



A safe, comfortable spot is a consolation even for a healthy dog. Savanna has her special place. Photo courtesy of Kim Campbell Thornton.

which has done wonders for our biceps. She seems to still enjoy life, coming at a run and then skidding to a stop and a sit when she hears her dinner being prepared, and stealing cat food whenever she gets the chance. A shadow still hangs over us, but for now it has receded.



*Kim Thornton is the former editor of DOG FANCY magazine. She is now a freelance writer and editor who specializes in pets, wildlife and travel. Books Kim has written include Your Aging Cat, Why Do Dogs Do That?, Why Do Cats Do That?, Dog Treats, and For the Love of Dogs, co-authored with Virginia Parker Guidry.*

Photos: Jerry M. Thornton

## Living with an Amputation

Besides bone cancer, amputation might be required in such instances as trauma, for instance being hit by a car or shot; certain aggressive soft tissue cancers; and nervous system disorders, such as radial nerve paralysis. The thought of amputation frightens most of us because we relate it to how we would feel about losing a limb. But animals facing amputation have two advantages over us: They have four legs to start with, while we have only two, and they don't have any preconceived notions about their looks or their ability to get around on only three legs.

Veterinarian Roberta Downing of Windsor Veterinary Clinic in Colorado, who has performed about one hundred amputations during her ten-year career, says:

*"The adaptation to amputation, for the most part, is remarkably rapid and remarkably unremarkable. Dogs adapt to their change and center of gravity remarkably quickly and well. Most animals walk later that day. Usually, they're discharged from our hospital the day following surgery."*

Recovery takes a little longer for older dogs or dogs with cancer, but they can still do well.

Life with a three-legged dog isn't much different than living with a four-legged dog. What's most important is keeping the dog's weight down since it has only three legs on which to support itself. Putting on even a few extra pounds can make it more difficult for the dog to get around. An older dog, or one with degenerative joint disease, might need other help, such as ramps on stairs or up to furniture.

# Adopted at Eleven: Sadie's Saga

by Cara Brockhoff



**Sadie, Sadie, Married Lady.** Sadie shows all of the character, wisdom and joy of an older greyhound in her beautiful graying face. Photo courtesy of Loretta Nickolaus, McKinleyville, Cal.

Does having children late in life keep one young? If Sadie (HR's Shade) is any indication, this is a viable philosophy.

## **Born December 20, 1986**

Sadie was over eleven years old when she was spayed and came to live with our family in Northern California this summer. Sadie had two careers before her retirement: one as a professional racer and another as a professional mother. Her demeanor makes it clear she enjoyed both thoroughly. Though we've learned little about her racing talents in the month that we've had her, we assume that she wouldn't have been bred had she not proved herself on the track. Sadie's well-used undercarriage, however, attests to the fact that she has most certainly performed prolifically in her second career.

Sadie is the sixth dog to enter our Northcoast Greyhound Support Group NW in Salem, Oregon. In conversing via

phone and e-mail with the chapter president, Pat Toman, about these recent adoptions, she bemoaned the fact that eleven year old "Shade" was languishing in the kennel. Pat had filled all her foster homes with dogs going to adopters and had four dogs with broken legs. "She's a real sweetheart," said Pat, with full intention of manipulating my heartstrings. It worked. After the loss of our eleven year old Esther ("Essie"), there was a gaping hole in our home. There's little doubt in my mind that Esther herself guided Sadie and me to each other. It took Jerry and me a few moments at most to decide we needed a fifth dog!

Houseguests and a trip out of state would have postponed for a month the drive to pick up our new Sadie. Jerry and I decided she had already been in the kennel too long. We made arrangements with Pat to have her shipped from Portland to the Arcata/Eureka airport just around the corner from our home.

## **A Skinny Wolf Arrived**

After a lot of nail-biting anxiety about shipping this old girl, I opened her kennel upon arrival and thought Pat had sent me an extremely skinny wolf! Sadie is a silver-brindle with an all white face: a lovely, very unusual color. Even after her flight, unsettling for any hound, she emerged with a wagging tail and a smile of relief. Ignoring the attentions of Dave (nine), Alice & Ruth (both five) and our six year old, one hundred pound chow/shepherd, Schroeder, within eight minutes of her arrival, she was enthusiastically exploring our house and yard. Esther, too, had been a brood bitch when she arrived at over ten years of age, so we knew better than to expect Sadie to be feeble or slowmoving. We did not, however, expect her to display so many comical characteristics!

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### Motherhood Agreed With Her

Each day brings new proof that she thrived in her role of motherhood and living among batches of playful puppies. Sadie plays extravagantly with toys, tossing them to the ceiling and ripping helter-skelter through this crowded household with them. If other dogs snag her toy or Dave (The Play Police) barks at her, Sadie shows no offense, but just fetches another toy and resumes activity. Even when Schroeder attempts to play with her (well, OK, and mount her, too), she'll put a paw on his back as though to instruct him in proper behavior and give him a cheerful "YAP." She never gets angry, and we're careful to assure he doesn't push the point too far.

In our bedroom are two couches and two beds with comforters for each of the greyhounds; there are dog beds and regular couches throughout the house like any other greyhound home. Sadie, however, seems to prefer closeness and, ignoring empty beds, has no qualms about curling up closely with any one of the others. This is new behavior to her housemates who are accustomed to lounging alone, but perfectly normal to one who's been minding lots of puppies in close quarters. This happens even when bones and biscuits are passed out, so we're watchful about

this, too. Regardless of where or when Sadie is sleeping, she does it always with one paw hooked behind her ear, as though to say, "Have at it, kids, I'll just be napping!"

### Sadie: The Entertainer

Mornings are particularly entertaining since Sadie arrived. Butchie the cat, like clockwork, wakens us at 5:45 a.m. for his breakfast. When one of us gets up to feed him and make the coffee, the dogs know our bed is available to them for the coffee/news hour. Sadie is usually first up now, wriggling on her back and pawing at the air so energetically that she can't keep an occasional "YIP" from escaping. If others are up there with us, she has no concern about stepping over and among (and on) all of us as though we were puppies in a whelping box. As a girl who has undoubtedly lived with scheduled routines, Sadie adapted to our own almost immediately. She expects our daily trips to Schroeder's Swamp (nineteen fenced acres of natural wetlands) and sprints circles around me and the other dogs who follow placidly on my heels, like cows on the way to the barn. "Come on, you guys, it's exercise time!" There seems to be no limit to her energy level!

Despite her very healthy appearance, we used Sadie's arrival as an excuse to run blood tests for various pur-

poses on all the dogs. We were comforted to discover Sadie's CBC, chem panel, tick titers and thyroid tests all came back attesting to the fact that she's a healthy and happy camper: motherhood agreed with her! Being a mother after her racing career, Sadie naturally considers herself Alpha, though she makes this point through sheer cheerful enthusiasm and without a hint of bullying. She's just determined to be first at everything.

### Still Sharp At Eleven

She's no dummy when it comes to figuring things out. On the afternoon she arrived, she discovered in which closet the box of bones is kept and has been first in line ever since. It took Sadie about ten days to figure out that Schroeder got treats every morning for fetching the paper from the sidewalk. Now, when he brings it in, she takes it from him. If only she'd figure out that she's supposed to bring it to me in bed, like Schroeder does.... Once it's there, however, she does love to shred the pieces we're reading — mostly when she's upside-down. This is just her way of making our little nest more comfy, I guess

Lately, our main attention-getter has figured out how to get even more: by finding boots in the very back of my closet and by pulling papers out of briefcases and articles off our myriad bookshelves. She never does this when we're out, but only when she can bring the stolen articles to us for our amused responses. It's impossible not to find it laughable. "Jerry, what's that Sadie's got now?" Jerry replies "Skeleton Canyon by JA Jance." I say "Well, give her Stones From the River instead. It's in paperback."

I told you she's smart. So are we. From now on, all our new greyhounds will be old greyhounds.



*Cara and Jerry Brockhoff live in California with their greyhounds Dave, Alice, Ruth and Sadie; and Schroeder, their chow/shepherd mix.*



Schoeder, Ruth, Sadie, Cara, Alice and Dave. Cara is the one with only two legs. Photo courtesy of Loretta Nickolaus, McKinleyville, Cal.

# Taking Care of Mamie

by Kate Bressler



In spite of her age, Mamie is still a chipper girl with enough energy to greet people at the gate. Photo courtesy of Kate Bressler.

I've had a geriatric dog for about two and a half years now. Actually, I adopted one. Shannon had just turned eleven when I chose her over approximately forty other greyhounds. Mamie came to my home as a foster dog who was eleven years, nine months old. Lucky for me, no one ever showed any interest in adopting her and I got to keep her. Shannon could pass for seven or eight years old, easily. But, Mamie ... well, earlier this year, I toyed with the idea of changing her name to "Money Pitt"! Mamie, you see, is my reason for learning so much about older dogs. She has cataracts, emphysema, arthritis, bursitis and a slight heart murmur. Because of her medications, she's somewhat incontinent and suffers from insomnia. She has an enlarged heart, her liver is about half its normal size, and her kidneys are invisible on her x-rays.

Both girls have had multiple surgeries for mammary tumors which are very common, but serious problems for re-

tired brood bitches. Mammary cancer accounts for about half of all cancer in bitches. The average age of affected bitches is nine to twelve years of age. Most females are predisposed to mammary tumors unless they are spayed before their first season. If they go unsprayed after their fourth season the benefit of spaying to reduce mammary tumors is all but lost. A monthly check for tumors is good preventative medicine.

## What I do for my girls

The girls get a geriatric exam once a year (twice a year for Mamie) and a few tests in between. They get good nutrition, adequate exercise and a few dietary supplements. I feed a lamb and rice kibble and vet-approved supplements. Mamie takes two daily medications for her emphysema plus prednisone. Since old greyhounds can lose weight quickly, a couple of extra pounds is a good cushion. To accomplish this, I add many

things to their kibble including pumpkin, plain non-fat yogurt, non-fat cottage cheese, mackerel, mustard greens and low-sodium V-8™ juice. Sometimes all I have to do is sprinkle a little powdered milk, non-fat parmesan cheese or garlic powder on their food.

About a year ago I changed to a kibble that contains 2% more protein. Both girls had had bloodwork done, and I knew there were no problems. Mamie absolutely blossomed with this added protein. It was as if she were two years younger, she had so much more energy, and she was happier. There are two sides to the protein issue. Feed less protein if there is any kidney deficiency or disease. If there are no problems, feed more protein to counteract the muscle loss of aging. Your dog must have a CBC (Complete Blood Count) and a Blood Chemistry Panel (Profile) to determine whether or not there is a problem. Do not guess. It is too important.

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### Geriatric Profiles

There are three levels of geriatric profiles (exams). Your pet's first geriatric profile should be taken at seven years of age. A Level I will provide a good initial baseline for comparison in subsequent years. My vet, Dr. Ward Brown in Kansas City, Missouri, offers three levels of geriatric exams.

The Level I exam is the most comprehensive exam. It includes a CBC, a Profile, a Urinalysis (U/A), x-rays (one view each of chest and abdomen), an electrocardiogram, a physical examination and a consultation. Unless conditions indicate a need, a Level II will probably suffice.

A Level II exam includes everything except an EKG. Since the girls have no serious heart problems we normally do this one.

The Level III exam is just a CBC and U/A, but this one tells a lot, too. (Please see page 18 for test explanations—Ed.)

### Mamie's Emphysema

Earlier this year, Mamie began panting laboriously after very short (one or two block) walks. I immediately thought of a heart problem because she has a Grade I (very benign) heart murmur. I immediately called Dr. Brown to make an appointment. When he listened to her breathing, he noted that it was only labored on the exhale — not the inhale! He was confident that she had emphysema. He confirmed it with a chest x-ray.

Emphysema! We don't know what caused it. Dr. Brown explained it with the analogy that a healthy lung is like a sponge, having tiny spaces to hold air. Emphysema changes a lung to look like someone cut out a bunch of the little spaces and made one big space. It shows up on an x-ray as a big black hole instead of little white membranes (blood/oxygen vessels). Since there is a big hole, the lung can't squeeze tight enough to expel all the carbon dioxide.

### Supplements and Medications

Grape seed extract and Vitamin E are both given for their antioxidant ef-

fect. GSE is a very powerful supplement and Mamie gets it every other morning with her 20mg of prednisone. Vitamin E (400iu) is given on the alternate mornings. Shannon also gets a Vitamin E tablet every other day. When this bottle is finished, I am going to cut back to 100iu of Vitamin E.

The label on the bottle of glucosamine reads "helps repair cartilage and promotes healthy joint function." Mamie hasn't been taking it long enough for it to live up to that claim and I'm going to give it at least two months before I give up and go on to something else. I haven't chosen what the next supplement would be, if it comes to that: maybe Glyco-Flex®, bovine cartilage or shark cartilage. But right now I'm giving the glucosamine every opportunity to work.

Some articles state that as many as 40% of the pet dogs are considered geriatric. This is probably why the canine drug companies are beginning to offer more and more medications specifically

*"Some articles state that as many as 40% of the pet dogs are considered geriatric."*

for our old friends.

Mamie has gone through a couple of refills of Rimadyl® for the pain of arthritis. Rimadyl® is an NSAID (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug) and its effects on Mamie were very encouraging. When Rimadyl® becomes ineffective, we'll probably go with Adequan®, an injectible arthritis drug. In addition to reducing inflammation, Adequan® promotes repair of the damaged cartilage itself.

Mamie has also become somewhat incontinent possibly due to the prednisone. But a percentage of spayed females develop "leaking" problems for many other reasons. The drug of choice is usually Phenylpropanolamine, an antihistamine which tightens smooth muscle tone.

One of the most exciting breakthroughs is a drug called Anipryl®. It

has actually long been used in the treatment of Cushing's Disease, but was recently approved for the treatment of Canine Cognitive Disorder (sort of Alzheimer's for dogs). Canadian vets have been using Anipryl® for some time to treat CCD with good results. It is encouraging to know that we might be able to give these old dogs a better quality of life if their minds begin to fail.

### So, what's wrong with Shannon?

Not a thing. She's a little thunder phobic, but that's a different story. When you have a dog like Mamie, it's easy to entirely overlook the wonders of a dog like Shannon. This amazing dog knows sit, down and stay. She shakes hands, catches treats in midair and she loves strawberries. She barks when I'm on the phone or if I've been at the computer too long. Shannon is the type of dog that always needs to be learning something. She doesn't bore easily, but when she's bored: look out!

When I think of my girls, I always think, "Mamie's my old dog." But the truth is they were born about six weeks apart. A common condition for old dogs is muscle loss. This hasn't happened to Shannon. At thirteen and a half she still jumps with ease into the back of the Jeep Cherokee I bought for her. This summer she took to the agility course like a champ. She took all three hurdles, begrudgingly did the A-frame and dogwalk and absolutely loved the tunnels. She's my girl: my "Perfect Shannon."

### Stacking the decks

While your dog is still young there are a few things you can do to stack the deck in their favor. Have regular check-ups; give proper dental care; maintain proper weight and provide good, balanced nutrition. No one can guarantee that your hound will live to be sixteen, but I'm envious of each of you who may have ten years or more with your beloved hound. I pray I'll have four to five years and I will do everything possible to provide them with continued health.



*Kate Bressler is a new CG regular contributor. She hails from Gladstone, Missouri and works for REGAP/KC.*

## Golden Year Greyhounds

by Lynda Adame

I've never owned an older greyhound. There, I feel much better being up-front with all of you about that fact. My own greyhounds, Cody and Tice, are both middle-aged dogs; still active, energetic, and healthy. Not too far down the road though, they will both enter their golden years and I want to be prepared for this inevitability. This led me to collect quite a bit of research and information about living with geriatric dogs, some of which might be useful to other greyhound owners as their own dogs approach old age.

### When is a greyhound considered old?

Based on the information I have gathered, the aging process varies with breed and lifestyle. Most veterinarians consider large dogs (fifty-one to ninety pounds) old when they are nine to eleven and a half years of age. We are beginning to see greyhounds, in adoptive homes, reach ages of twelve to sixteen years.

### What are the physical changes an older dog might undergo?

Surprisingly, research shows that aging dogs experience many of the same changes that aging humans undergo. Loss of muscle tone is usually the most obvious change, resulting in the neck and body looking flabbier. Weight management should be a high priority as greyhounds age, and weighing your dog

every few months can give you a heads up on physical problems. Extra weight is hard on most dogs but is particularly difficult for an aging greyhound, a breed that is meant to be lean. Daily grooming will keep you in touch with any new lesions, bumps, lumps, discoloration's or bad breath. If you find anything suspicious, report it to your vet. It's particularly important to note that female dogs spayed later in life are in a high risk category for mammary tumors; daily grooming will help detect these in your female greyhound. Grooming also aids in circulation, assists the dog in grooming areas it can no longer reach, and helps distribute natural skin oils leading to a healthier coat.

An impaired resistance to temperatures, both hot and cold, can become apparent in a geriatric dog. Since greyhounds are uniquely sensitive to heat and cold in their early years, be extra observant that their environment is neither too cold nor too hot as they age.

Arthritic joints may create aches and pains as a dog ages, making it more difficult for the greyhound to keep its anal-genital region clean. Arthritis and



Older greyhounds can become especially sensitive to cold, so particular attention needs to go into protecting them in chilly and cold weather. Rosie and Spencer in serious cold weather gear. Photo courtesy of Wilma Nathanson, Cambridge, Mass.

joint pain management are a key area to monitor in a retired athlete. Even if your dog showed no joint sensitivity as a youngster, old injury sites can flare up as they calcify with age. This type of discomfort is treatable with a variety of medications including: over the counter pain medication (Ascriptin® for instance), prescription medication (vet-dispensed) such as Rimadyl®, as well as homeopathic treatments such as Glycoflex, and shark cartilage. Acupuncture is another option for a greyhound with joint pain; check with your veterinarian for a referral. Greyhounds experiencing the aches and pains of ar-

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thrititis will benefit from a soft padded surface on which to sleep. Egg crate foam is highly recommended for this purpose, as it cushions joints and evenly distributes a dogs' weight.

### Grooming your older dogs

You may find you are spending more time as the toenails can require more frequent trimming and the dogs skin may begin to dry out. Loss of hearing may occur and should be suspect if your geriatric dog suddenly begins to ignore you when you speak to it. Problems in vision are a possibility. If your older greyhound suddenly begins to bump into furniture, injures itself more often, or becomes fearful of common things (such as canine and human friends, or going for a W-A-L-K) consider that its vision may be failing and have your veterinarian take a look.

Tooth and gum disease are fairly common in the older dog, and greyhounds are no exception. Most dental procedures require a dog be anesthetized for a short period of time. Be VERY certain that your veterinarian is using a greyhound-safe anesthetic, such as Isoflurane. Geriatric pre-surgical panels are required by most veterinarians after a dog reaches eight years of age. A standard panel will include a CBC and Urinalysis.

### Kidney disease and failure

Kidney disease and failure become more common as dogs age so keep an

eye out for increased thirst and other symptoms of kidney failure. Most veterinarians recommend testing organ function at least once a year in older dogs. New research is showing that high protein levels in food do *not* lead to kidney dysfunction. However, protein levels are important to monitor if the kidneys are already showing impairment. Incontinence may appear in older spayed females (and even some males) and is treated with estrogen supplements.



Older greyhounds can also be more sensitive to extreme heat and may not be able to tolerate heat and humidity as well as they could when they were younger. Careful monitoring of activity levels and reaction to heat is more important with an older dog. Poco. Photo courtesy of Pattie and Bob Banks, El Cajon, Cal.

While some conditions (like heart trouble) may preclude exercising your older greyhound, most healthy dogs will benefit from some form of regular exercise to help keep their joints supple, their weight down, and their minds active. Walking is probably best for an older dog, even if it's a slow walk.

### To Vaccinate or Not to Vaccinate

Automatically vaccinating a dog every year, or every few years, is an area of much controversy and research these days. It is now possible for veterinarians to check a dog's blood for appropriate antibody levels, rather than vaccinate the dog every few years. For older dogs, or dogs with compromised im-

mune systems, this may be an interesting new approach to canine vaccinations. For further information, have your veterinarian contact Colorado State University at (970) 491-1101 (ask for "Diagnostics"), or contact Protatek Reference Lab at (602) 545-8499.

### What if your greyhound becomes bed-ridden?

While this is an unpleasant thought, many dogs have spent content years in various stages of repose. Hammock-type

beds are recommended because they disperse the pressure placed on the dogs' body and allow urine to pass through where it can be soaked into a padded Bedliners (purchased through hospital stores). Pressure sores will likely develop on bed-ridden dogs. To help prevent pressure sores you will need to move the dog from side to side and mas-

sage the pressure points often. Ammonia breaks down the keratin layer of the skin, making sores worse, thus keeping the dogs' body elevated from its urine will help in treating and avoiding pressure sores. Desitin™ is wonderful to use on a bedridden dog as it forms a barrier between the urine and the dogs' body, thus protecting the most delicate of skin. You can also dab liquid antacid (Maalox™) on the sores, after cleaning and drying the area. The antacid changes the pH of the skin and promotes healing.

### Behavioral and Mental Changes

Older dogs tend to be more placid, less energetic and less curious.

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# Tips

## On Caring For Older Dogs

compiled by Maureen Nelms

### Feeding

The most important thing to ensure is that your dog is getting enough water to drink. Make sure the water is always fresh. If your dog does not appear to be drinking enough, offer the dish to the dog. Sometimes older dogs have difficulty moving and will become dehydrated before forcing themselves to the water dish. Try leaving fresh water in several locations in the house as the dog is more likely to drink if water is easily accessible. If your dog refuses to drink, try adding some low sodium baby broth (beef, chicken or lamb) to warm water and offer it to the dog.

Judi Miller's veterinarian gave her a special diet for her older dog. She mixed one pound of cooked, lean ground beef, two cups of cooked rice, two hard boiled eggs, and ground up a couple of Tums into the mixture. The Tums helped settle his tummy as well as adding calcium to his diet. Judi also soaked dog biscuits in warm weak tea and milk so her dog could eat them.

Pat Newman cooks a special stew to add to her older dogs' kibble. She cooks lean ground beef, carrots, potatoes, apples or blackberries (when they're in season), garlic, thyme and oregano, pasta or rice or oats. She occasionally adds tomatoes or lentils or any other leftover vegetables she has. (Do NOT add onions as these are harmful to dogs.) Pat also gives snacks throughout the day to which she adds baking soda to help settle older tummies.

Marcia Herman made her old dog, Chaucer, special meatballs with very lean ground sirloin and kibble ground up in the food processor. She used a basic meatball recipe but substituted the ground up kibble for the bread crumbs. Feed about eight half dollar sized round meatballs for each meal.

If your older dog is not eating well, you may want to consider trying some of the following tips: use raised feed bowls so the dog won't have to bend. Try warming up the food in the microwave. Add some hot water with a teaspoon of baby beef (or other meat) broth dissolved in the water. Spoon this over the dry food and let it soak in. Feed several smaller meals per day. Add 1% cottage cheese or low fat natural yogurt to the food.

### Best Foods for Older Dogs \*

There is no one best food for an older dog. Although pet food manufacturers advertise special "light" diets or protein-reduced foods for older dogs, there is actually no proven benefit from these special diets, and, in some cases, there may be some harm.

According to Dr. Delmar Finco, in an article in *Veterinary Forum* (September 1994), "Benefits from a reduced protein diet typical of existing canine geriatric products have never been proven, and the possibility exists that reduced protein diets are not in the best interest of the geriatric patient." Dr. Finco explains that there is very little scientific information about nutrition for senior dogs. He mentions one study that found older dogs have the same ability to digest and metabolize food as younger dogs do. And, in a study he himself conducted, Dr. Finco found that it was not clear whether older dogs gained weight because of lack of exercise or because of changes in their metabolism. Just about any of the premium dog foods will provide sound nutrition for your dog. Ask your vet to recommend one. If you'd like to read some in-depth information on dog foods, look into *The Collins Guide to Dog Nutrition* by

Donald R. Collins, CVM.

\*Material excerpted from the Senior Dogs Project. Website <[www.srdogs.com](http://www.srdogs.com)> 1997.

### Exercise

Remember that older dogs still need regular exercise. They may however, be unable to walk long distances. They will feel temperature extremes more and should wear coats in cool weather and remain indoors during the heat of summer. Shorter more frequent walks may benefit your canine senior citizen. Try three ten minute walks instead of one thirty minute walk. If the dog is unable to walk well, it will still benefit from a change of scenery. Take it for a drive to the park or the beach, allow it to stretch its legs for a few minutes and have a good sniff.

I often see an elderly lady arrive at our local park to walk her dog, an elderly, arthritic basset hound. The dog is unable to get in and out of the vehicle without assistance and his owner is able to give him limited assistance. Every day she puts a briefcase beside the car's back door, lifts the old basset's front legs onto the case, followed by lifting his back legs onto the case. Then she lifts his front legs into the car, followed by the back legs. He has to sit on the floor as she is unable to help him onto the seat. They repeat this in reverse when they get to the park. Obviously it would be much easier for her to stay home with him, but she knows he enjoys his walk and his drive, so she rarely misses a day even though they may only walk one hundred yards. When I see them I am reminded of what a good example she sets for us all.

Please see next page

Continued from previous page

### **Veterinary Care**

Anti-oxidants are especially valuable for older dogs.

At your pet's annual checkup, ask the vet for a blood test to check on kidney, liver and pancreas functions. A prescription diet for problems caught early on will prevent trouble later and give your pet a longer, better life. Regular dental exams are important too.

Older pets don't see or hear as well as they used to, so keep your routine as consistent as possible. Don't move the furniture around unnecessarily and keep food and water bowls in the same place.

## **Special problems**

### **Bladder Control**

For a dog who is not incontinent, but is simply unable to control its bladder for the same length of time as it used to, Beth Kinard recommends puppy training piddle pads. These pads have a faint urine scent to them and therefore the dog will be encouraged to use them. The use of these pads will allow the dogs free roam of the house but if there is no one home to let them out, they can safely go on the pads and not get in trouble.

Marcia Herman has successfully used wide-mouth bottles as canine urinals for a dog that is unable to stand and go outside.

One of the most common problems found in older dogs, particularly spayed females, is incontinence. There are many different ways to overcome this problem. Initially you should make an appointment for the dog to be examined by a veterinarian to rule out urinary tract infections or other problems. If it is determined that the dog is incontinent, your veterinarian may recommend drug therapy. The female urinary tract has a number of different types of receptors - estrogen receptors, histamine receptors and type A or alpha receptors. It is always best to leave hormone (estrogen or in the case of males, testosterone) therapy as a last resort.

I have a sixty pound female greyhound who takes 15 mg of Sudafed every second day. The active ingredient is

Pseudoephedrine Hydrochloride. You may need to start with a higher dosage and slowly reduce it. Always check with your veterinarian before giving your dog any drugs. If you do not want to use drug therapy, try one of the following:

### **For incontinent dogs**

Purchase "seasonals"—underwear specifically designed for females in season, or a jock strap for males. (See under Special Resources for the address to order these.) Another suggestion is men's jockey shorts. These can be lined with sanitary napkins for extra absorbency. Simply put them on the dog so the animal's tail goes through the front opening. Do them up at the waist with a diaper pin (do not use a regular safety pin as these can come undone). Boys' jockey shorts usually fit the females better.

Females with incontinence can also use diapers or often 'pull-ups,' the disposable diapers for older children. For the sake of economy, you might want to purchase cloth type diapers shaped like underwear. These are fully washable so two or three should be plenty.

## **Special Living Arrangements**

### **Problems with stairs**

Laurel Drew builds ramps for her older dogs. She recommends covering the ramp with rough carpet for better traction, or painting with several coats of paint, remembering to add sand to the final coat. Try not to have too steep a grade. It may be possible to simply place boards over your existing stairs if there aren't too many of them, but ensure it's not too steep. If it is, you will have to place the boards farther back to ensure there is a milder angle. Steep grades will require a lot of muscle power and you will have defeated the purpose.

### **Living arrangements**

Patricia Gail Burnham writes, "I have an 'old dog room,' which doubles as my box storage room since the old dogs don't chew cardboard. Its main feature is an oversized dog door—Great Dane Sized, set low to the floor so they

don't have to hop through. And bean bags and foam mattresses since they don't dig in the former or chew on the latter. It has industrial type, short-napped carpet, which my carpet cleaners said would last forever. Old dogs need the traction of carpet when they lose their ability to walk on slick floors. The dog room has the smallest yard since they don't need a lot of exercise. Louvered doors separate it from the living room so they can hear and smell us without mixing with the younger house dogs. Right now Star is the only resident and she isn't all that old, but she went there when I separated her from Sheena. She is active enough to have trampled most of the lawn into dirt which none of the really old dogs did."

### **Sleeping arrangements**

Laurel Drew recommends orthopedic beds for older, more frail dogs. She has purchased ready-made ones from HaHa Products or you can make your own. The bed is very thick foam in an absorbent cover and you can put an extra absorbent pad over top if required. Then the foam and pads go into a heavy nylon washable cover that has Velcro™ tape to hold it closed on one end and around the top edge. You Velcro™ an imitation sheepskin to the top for the ultimate comfort of an elderly dog. These beds come in any size as they are custom made. The bed can also double as a stretcher for an extremely old dog that needs to be moved, as the bed will slide quite easily while still keeping the dog flat and not jarring it.

### **Resources Internet & Others**

■ The Best Kept Secret - <http://www.qni.com/~k8nkc/BestSecret>

■ Grandmother's Attic - Geriatric hounds - <http://www.wizard.com/~dancer/>

■ Geriatric.html The Senior Dogs Project - <http://www.srdogs.com>

A discussion group exists for people with senior animals (Senior-L). Subscribe by sending your e-mail to: [LISTSERV@LISTSERV.AOL.COM](mailto:LISTSERV@LISTSERV.AOL.COM) with the subject line blank and SUB-

Please see *Tips*, page 37, Col. 3

## Games For Old Hounds

by Kate Crawford



Flash is one of Kate Crawford's greyhounds who at age eleven plays the "Shell Game." Photo courtesy of Kate Crawford.

Even though people think of retired greyhounds as couch potatoes, life doesn't have to be boring for them. The next time your dog looks at you as if to say, "What can we do now?" try one of these fun games for senior dogs.

### The Tunnel Game

Purchase a child's play tunnel from a local toy store. These are usually six-feet long when expanded but can be stored flat in a narrow box. Start with it scrunched up to three feet. Throw a toy or treat through or into it and guide your dog through the tunnel. Praise your dog and play the game again until you are able to expand the tunnel to its full length.

### The Find-It Game

There are two versions of this game: find the hidden treat and find the hidden person. Start with a favorite treat or toy and hide it behind a door or chair while your dog is watching you. Have someone hold the dog a short distance

away from where you are hiding the treat. Walk back to your dog and say "find it" in an excited voice and let the dog go search. You may have to help your dog find it at first, but they usually learn this game very quickly. Substitute a person instead of the treat if you want to play "hide and seek."

### The Shell Game

This game requires three lightweight opaque plastic bowls or containers. Play this game on the kitchen floor. Place the bowls upside down on the floor with the dog watching you. Next put a favorite treat under one of the bowls. Using both hands slide the bowls in different directions at the same time until they are in different order on the floor. Tell the dog to find the treat. It will sniff each bowl and then paw or overturn the bowl with the treat in it. Make a lot of fuss about how smart they are and how much fun it is to play this game.

Please see *Games*, page 37, Col. 3

## Greyhound Litter Box

by Cathy Feltych

With older dogs, a litter box can be one of life's necessities. If you don't have a dog door so your greyhounds have twenty-four hour access to the outside, a litter box set up in one corner with formica-type material covering the walls on two sides for splash protection, can be a life (or at least a carpet) saver! (See next pages for diagrams.)

Former track greyhounds take to a litter box naturally. It may remind them of the sand turnouts at the track.

The litter box is a three by four foot (or larger) rectangle of 2 x 4's on edge, lined with several layers of poly-tarp. Total material cost was less than \$31.00 including fifty pounds of litter.

Tuck the edges of the tarp under the 2 x 4 frame. Everything stays put since dogs don't dig like cats do. This size works fine for adult greyhounds. A plastic pylon from the sporting goods section of the local discount store can act as a target right in the middle if you have males who like to make a statement!

The clumping litter I use is made from bentonite, a natural clay that forms a colloidal mass when wet. It has no chemical additives and is screened for dust. It pours from the bag without raising a cloud. Bentonite is in bowel-cleansing products in health-food stores, so it should be non-toxic. There is also a new clumping litter made from wheat. While it might be a safer alternative, my dogs tried to eat it.

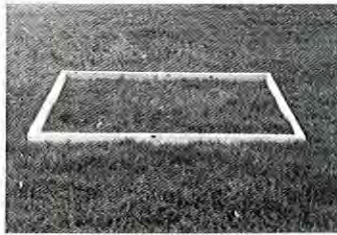
All my dogs who have had to use the litter box have known instinctively what it was for. My puppy housebroke herself to it completely without human intervention. For some, though, it may help to "innoculate" the litter with a bit of soil from a favorite elimination spot outdoors.



*Cathy Feltych lives in Nebraska with thirteen greyhounds, two cats, and a horse. She has been involved in greyhound adoption for fifteen years (about three hundred fifty dogs fostered and placed) first with REGAP and then while she was vice-president of GPA/Midwest.*

## Building the Box

Step 1



Step 2



Step 3



Step 4



Photographs by Monty Hopkins.

### Golden Continued from page 33

They may be forgetful and sleep more. Crankiness and irritability are common. The senior dog may become less tolerant of changes in its environment. You may want to consider having someone check on the dogs in your home, rather than kenneling them, when you must leave on vacation. Kenneling an older dog can be extremely stressful and it's not uncommon for them to go off their feed, become over-anxious, or bark frequently. Continuing to provide varied stimuli in their lives may help mitigate some of the more behaviorally rigid and less tolerant aspects of the aging process. This can be as simple as taking a different route on each day's walk, or working on some easy training commands or tricks.

What are the mental changes older dogs may experience? Cognitive dysfunction is a new area of research, in canine geriatrics, and some amazing breakthroughs have been made in recent years. Cognitive dysfunction, also referred to as senility, is recognizable by the following signs: Inattention to environment, loss of house training and the inability to recognize familiar people, places, or animals. Other signs include

confusion, changes in sleep cycle, decreased interest in food or unexplained weight loss, development of compulsive and/or repetitive behavior, tremors, shaking, whining and/or whimpering. Cognitive dysfunction can also manifest itself as Separation Anxiety in the older greyhound. The latest research centers around treating the dog with l-deprenyl, a medication that appears to enhance cognitive function in many older dogs.

***"Cognitive dysfunction, also referred to as senility, is recognizable by the following signs: Inattention to environment, loss of house training and the inability to recognize familiar people, places, or animals."***

The thought of our beloved greyhounds aging is something most of us would rather not contemplate. It is a reality, however, and knowing what to expect can help us better deal with the problems and issues that might occur. These dogs have become an integral part

Please see *Golden* next col.

### Golden continued

of our families. They deserve to live out their lives in a dignified and well cared for manner, surrounded by those that they love and who love them in return. I plan to share many more years with Tice and Cody, and wish the same for you.

### Recommended Reading:

Hampton, John K. Jr., Ph.D., and Suzanne Hampton, Ph.D. *Senior Years: Understanding your Dog's Aging Process*. Howell Book House. 1993. ISBN: 0-87605-734-2.

References: Carlson, Delbert G., DVM, and James M. Giffin, MD. *Dog Owner's Home Veterinary Handbook*.

Milgram NW, Ivy GO, Head E, Murphy PH, et al. (1993). "The effect of l-deprenyl on behavior, cognitive function, and biogenic amines in the dog." *Neurochem Res*, 18:1211-1219. *Dog Geriatric Care*; ASPCA Companion Animal Services



### Tips continued from page 35

SCRIBE SENIOR-L "your name" in the body of the message. To order jock straps or seasonals (bitches britches) contact: NU-NEE MKG #52-188 McCallum Road Abbotsford, B.C. Canada, V2S 3M7 Telephone: 604-859-0873 (8 a.m. to 10 p.m. PST) or check out their website at:

<http://www.compupets.com/nunee>



*Maureen Nelms is a new CG regular contributor. She hails from Saanichton, British Columbia, Canada, and works with GFN/NW. She has many rescue animals including her three greyhounds.*

### Games continued from page 36

#### Remote control Cars

Not many greyhounds can resist a remote-control car running around the living room. Buy the least expensive one available as some hounds are serious about catching their prey. Be sure to store it somewhere inaccessible to your dog when not using. My dogs will attack it even when it is not running.

Have fun as you will enjoy this as much as your dog will.



*Kate Crawford and her dogs have won many awards for agility and obedience.*

# Cougar's Courage

by Annette Beach

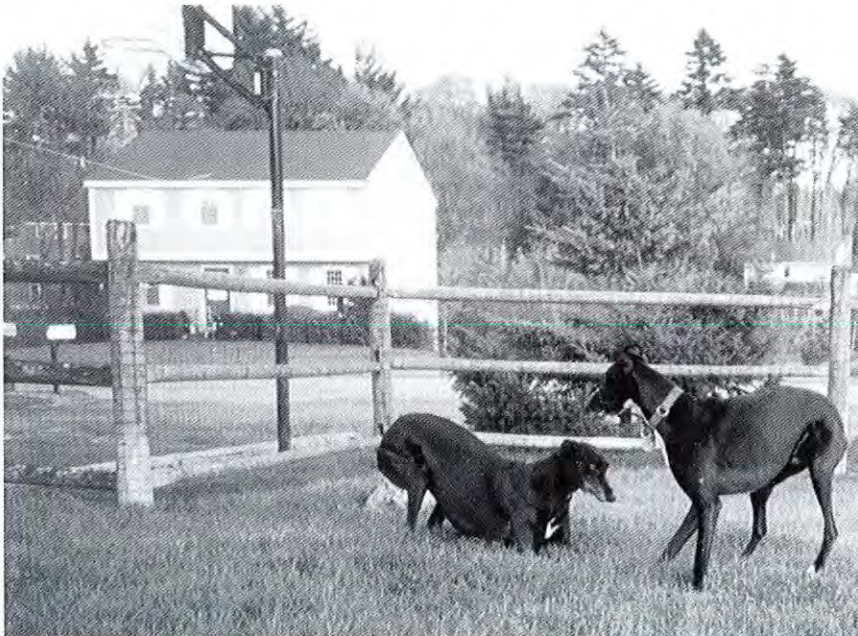
When Louise Coleman of Greyhound Friends in Hopkinton Massachusetts called us to take a "really nice, young greyhound" into foster care, we never really did know quite what to expect. We already had Tuck, with a broken leg that had never been set; Liza, who spent her first couple of days hiding on the couch in the basement; Jake, who had been in two other homes and had been returned, who now had lymph cancer; and Peato. Louise explained to us over the phone that Cougar had a progressive eye disease and was going blind. She thought that, if Cougar could be placed into a home with other dogs,

he would adjust to a home environment a little easier. She asked if we would come to Greyhound Friends with our four other greyhounds and see Cougar. All five seemed to get along fine so we took Cougar home.

On the day we brought him



As he became familiar with his new home, Cougar developed a whole range of adaptive behaviors to compensate for his blindness. He enjoys spending time in the yard listening to all the sounds. Photo courtesy of Annette and Jeff Beach, Marlboro, Mass.



Sharing his home with four other greyhounds, Cougar has learned to play. Photo courtesy of Annette and Jeff Beach, Marlboro, Mass.

home it was apparent that his blindness was worse than we thought. We watched him walk into walls, furniture, the other greyhounds and us, sometimes giving a slight yelp. The usual routine of being afraid of going up and down the stairs was doubled because he could not fully see what was expected of him. He screamed and tugged and fought us every time we tried to take him out. Eventually he refused to even go out the door, terrified that he would have to go down the stairs. At night he would not settle down. He was up every hour, pacing and whining. I was up every hour either trying to settle him down, take him outside or trying to feed him, thinking he was hungry (occasionally he was).

I have to admit that at this point I

Please see next page

Celebrating Greyhounds

Continued from previous page

had to do a lot of soul searching within myself. Part of me wondered if, even at two years old, he wouldn't have been better off put to sleep than spending the rest of his life walking into walls and being terrified of people and stairs. But part of me didn't want to give up because this was his last chance for a normal life. I had already spent four or five nights sleeping on the floor with him (in the middle of November) and had become very attached to him.

My husband and I agonized over the next couple of days, trying to decide if we were doing any good of if we had bitten off more than we could chew. Just as we became convinced that we would have to take Cougar back to Greyhound Friends, Cougar did some amazing things. He suddenly began to

we originally thought. By this time we assumed that Cougar could see light and dark. During the day he avoided objects without much problem but at night he could not distinguish enough to avoid a few accidents. We made a few minor changes to our home to try to help him.

We added a spotlight at the bottom of the deck stairs which acted as a guide towards the light to the bottom step. We added night-lights to all rooms in the house to give him a reference point in each room. Even though our yard is fenced in, he only went out with another greyhound; usually Liza or Peato would volunteer. When we wanted to show him something or feed him something we made sure to put it in front of his nose or tap the dish.

About six weeks ago, for several nights, we found Cougar under the deck trying to find his way to the stairs which

would be harder for him to wind up under the deck while looking for the stairs, and we added a wind chime at the bottom of the stairs as a sound guide.

Once again he amazed us. He taught himself to run from side to side in the yard by using the grade in the landscape around the pool as a guide. He knows how to find the deck on calm days by following the grass until he reaches either the patio blocks or the concrete and makes a sharp turn to the bottom of the stairs. He tries to feel for the first step with his paw and if he is a little too far away he lifts his nose until he touches a step and starts up. He uses his nose to feel for each step until he doesn't feel another, then he knows he is at the top and he needs to turn to go in towards the back door. At night, he aims toward our bed until he bumps the foot of the bed and walks along until he can feel his own bed. His sense of hearing has sharpened. He hears everything. He has become the watch dog of the household. Imagine: the blind dog is the watch dog.

Cougar spends as much time outside during the day as possible. We found that by giving the greyhounds their own space to dig (commonly known as the "pit"), that they do not dig in the rest of the yard space. They have their own pool and automatic water dish and us to play "doggie doorman." They spend hours outside watching and listening to the world go by. At night we take the four for a walk around the circle. We have a harness that we put on Cougar so that he cannot slip away and which helps to guide him. Somehow he avoids running into mail boxes. At night he noses his harness if he thinks we forgot to take him on his walk. If that doesn't seem to work he goes downstairs to the door and rattles the doorknob (a trick he learned from Peato).

He recently created a new outside game: tormenting a bird that had nested in our post and rail fence. He tiptoed at the back fence and bit the back of the post until the bird flew out. To his disappointment, a couple weeks later the bird moved out.

Cougar is our baby and a joy to



Eventually, Cougar mastered both the location of the stairs leading to the yard and a remarkable ability to negotiate both going down and climbing up the stairs. Photo courtesy of Annette and Jeff Beach, Marlboro, Mass.

run up the stairs to the back deck and went down the stairs very slowly *on his own*. He began to run full speed without hitting anything and played in the house with toys. Cougar even learned to bark when he wanted to go out. Unfortunately, when he starts to get a little impatient, he pokes us with his nose a couple of times to get our attention, then barks at us.

We took him to our own vet to find out if there was anything we could do to slow down the eye disease. We only found that he had less vision than what

he had already passed. He started walking into furniture and people again and was afraid to go outside. Cougar had lost his remaining sight. It was heart breaking as we watched this over and over again, to see the dog that loved going outside more than anything afraid to go out the door.

We heard that when one loses one of the senses that the others seem to get stronger, so we made a few more adjustments, hoping that Cougar's other senses would get stronger. We blocked off the bottom of the deck so that it

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## Tauren's Unusual Condition

by Lori Lazetera

The puppy arrived from California on July 3, 1994. He was an eight week old black spider whom we thought should eventually look more like the greyhound he was reputed to be. We took him out of his airline crate and allowed him to go to the bathroom. He peed and peed. His urine was very dilute, almost like water. We did not think too much about it as he had been cooped up in an airline crate for five and a half hours. We packed the little darling up and brought him home. We named him Tauren (boy born in May).

Tauren had a lot of problems when he arrived. One of them was our inability to housebreak him. We did all the right things. We set up a crate for him right in our bedroom. His water and food were on a strict schedule. He cried when he had to go out. According to all the books I had read, I should not expect a puppy to have really good bladder control until at least four to five months of age. He never defecated in the house; however, the urine this boy could produce in a one day would have filled a bathtub. Tauren was usually fine from 8:00 a.m. to about 4:00 p.m. He had numerous walks during this period. Four p.m. on were the witching hours for Tauren. At times it felt like we would spend more time outside doing piddle stops then relaxing. He would still have enough urine left over to have two or three accidents before bed time. When Tauren urinated he kept going and going. He stood there and it would come out in drips for about ten minutes. My husband and I could not keep up with it. We got to the point where we kept a



In spite of a troublesome start, Tauren's condition is manageable. He is a very special greyhound with some very special talents not the least of which has been his devotion to Lori's father. Photo courtesy of Lori Lazetera, Danbury, Conn.

bucket and a mop available at all times. Tauren drank water like no other small puppy I had ever seen. He consumed two or three quarts of water in very little time. His urine was still only lightly straw-colored and had no odor to speak of. I whined to all my doggie friends, "I am a failure at housebreaking my pup!"

I could take it no longer. Off to the vet we went. "Lori," my vet said, "It could either be something called polydypsia or a condition called diabetes insipidus. Buster, my greyhound, has diabetes insipidus. He was considered unadoptable and that's why I have him." I said, "Hey wait a minute. Why is he considered unadoptable?" John Robb, my veterinarian, replied, "Buster's con-

dition causes him to drink a lot of water. He is unable to concentrate his urine; thus he urinates almost constantly." I had alarm bells and whistles going off in my head at this point. My vet further explained that polydypsia is a psychological condition where due to stress, etc., the dog will consume large quantities of water hence he or she has to urinate a lot. Diabetes insipidus (DI) is not the same as diabetes mellitus or water diabetes. It is a rare disorder with more than one cause. He then quoted from *The Merck Veterinary Manual*: "A condition due to reduced secretion of anti-diabetic hormone (ADH), or to target cells in the kidney that lack the biochemical machinery necessary to respond to the secretion of normal or elevated circulating levels of hormones."

My veterinarian's dog, Buster, had the nephrogenic form of the disease. Buster's hypothalamus produces ADH but his kidneys do not respond to it. Tauren's case is the reverse. Although his brain does not manufacture the hormone, his kidneys do respond to the synthetic form of the hormone.

Tauren had to have the Water Deprivation Test which would rule out any other possible causes of the polydypsia symptoms. Tauren also had routine urine analysis and blood work in conjunction with the deprivation test. Tauren could drink water prior to the test but during the test (about six hours), no water

Please see next page

**Tauren continued from previous page**

would be permitted. During that time Tauren's urine would be tested at various intervals to see if he had the ability to concentrate it.

Tauren had the test. Six hours later I received a call from the vet. "It appears that Tauren does have diabetes insipidus. He was unable to concentrate his urine, but when we gave him a shot of Pitressin® (ADH in an oil base), he was able to concentrate his urine. All of Tauren's other tests came back within normal ranges. He will have this disorder for the rest of his life. There are two ways we can administer the hormone. The synthetic form of the hormone which Tauren is lacking is DDAVP® or Desmopressin Acetate. He can either get a shot of Pitressin® every other day or so, or we can give him the DDAVP® subconjunctively" said Dr. Robb. "Um, subconjunctively?" I said. "It's easy. You pull down his lower eyelid and introduce drops of the hormone into the subconjunctiva of his eye," Dr Robb explained. "Easy for you," I thought. The eye thing was out for sure and I could not imagine giving Tauren shots for the rest of his life. If he reached the age of fourteen he would look like a pin cushion. I did some research about diabetes insipidus. One book gave me the answer to the administration problem.

DDAVP® could be administered intranasally. Now, this looked like the way to go for Tauren and me.

My next concern was the cost of the hormone. Dr. Robb told me that DDAVP® was not cheap but when I started calling around to different pharmacies I almost passed out. Two and a half ml cost between \$65 and \$80. After doing more research I found a mail order pharmacy where I could get twice the amount for about \$110. When the DDAVP® arrived I was a little befuddled. The hormone was in something called a rhinal tube. People with DI basically inhale the medication with a plastic tube. Well, I didn't think Tauren would snort anything, so it took a little creativity to get the medication out of the bottle and into an eye dropper — my way of administering it into his nose. Another problem we encountered with DI is that the dog needs access to water at all times. If he is deprived he could die of dehydration. A normal illness like diarrhea could kill him.

In order to alert people to his condition, we purchased a medical alert dog tag that was engraved with: "This Dog has diabetes insipidus; must have water." Once we started Tauren on the DDAVP®, he became housebroken quickly.

Tauren was not going to be cheap but the boy has proved his worth one-

hundred fold since the day he arrived. He became my father's courage and inspiration and kept him going during two years of dialysis and a kidney transplant. He became a seizure alert dog for my other greyhound, Sultan, who was diagnosed with idiopathic epilepsy one year ago. Tauren's frantic barking and running back and forth alerts me to Sultan's seizures during the night when I can't hear them. (I am hearing impaired and wear two hearing aids.)

After this experience I came to the conclusion that, if any of my dogs got something, I would use the following ways of dealing with their health issues. I'd suggest you do the same.

■ Learn everything you can about the disorder. Suggest different possibilities and treatments to the veterinarian.

■ Seek creative alternatives. If there had been a holistic way to treat the disease I would have combined that with the traditional allopathic therapy.

■ Take precautions. If your dog has a life-threatening condition, it should always wear a medical alert tag.

■ Don't let the veterinarian give you the diagnosis and then just lie down and accept it.

■ Remember: it's your dog. You have the right to dictate what you want done.



**Cougar continued from page 39**



**Cougar finds the stairs. Photo courtesy of Annette and Jeff Beach, Marlboro, Mass.**

have. He is no different than the other four and because he is so young he has a tendency to play more. He is a very affectionate dog and loves to have someone close to him. He used to love to sleep near Jake and, with Jake gone now, Friar Tuck has become his sleepmate. Cougar has a fantastic appetite. He loves running and playing with the others. His favorite thing to do is run down the hall in the morning, jump on the bed and wake Dad up (although sometimes it is at 2, 3 or 4 a.m.). For the most part, he has learned the floor plan of the house, the layout of the yard, and has mastered all of the stairs.

Cougar still has moments when he takes a corner a little sharply while run-

ning or when another greyhound stops too quickly in front of him, resulting in a bloody nose. But most of his moments are pure joy.

*Cougar is our joy.*



*Jeff and Annette Beach of Marlborough, Mass. also care for their other special needs greyhounds Tuck, Liza, Jake, and Peato. They adopted their greyhounds from Greyhound Friends in Hopkinton, Mass.*

# Mmmm Good!

by Eloise Danniels

Here are some recipes that are a potluck of advice I have picked up through various greyhound adoption groups with whom I have been associated — from Greyhound Pets of America to tiny Fast Friends of New Hampshire — and from dog trainers I have known: most notably, Sue Auger Bickel of Middlesex, New York, a woman who has bred Newfies for years and has fostered and fed the most emaciated greyhounds that tugged at her heart.

These recipes have been Xeroxed, written-on and changed til the originals

were shredded and there is only the vaguest recollection of the cook who might have innovated them. As if that weren't enough, they were given out to half a million viewers on my pet talk show called 'R-Pets' in Rochester, New York about two years ago, so I guess it can properly be said that, ready or not, they are now in the public domain.

In that spirit, I offer them as a trigger for your imaginations. Add things. Subtract things. Use homemade corn bread instead of the mix (*Joy of Cooking* contains an easy and good recipe).



Sometimes a little bit of a special treat helps whet the appetite and may help to keep weight on an old dog or finicky eater. Kate. Photo courtesy of Catherine Crawford, Tallahassee, Fla.

## Fat Balls:

2 C Tomatoes - Puree in a blender  
2 C Green Beans - Puree in a blender  
1 pound of Liver - Puree in a blender and cook:

3 C Cooked Elbow Macaroni  
4 C Cooked Rice  
4 Egg yolks  
1/3 Jar of Honey  
1 C Corn Oil  
1/3 Jar of Wheat Germ  
2 -3 pounds of Raw Hamburger

Mix all of the above ingredients (in a BIG container) and add Chex Cereal or oatmeal to bind together. Make "meatballs" out of this mixture and freeze them. As needed, thaw and microwave the individual meatballs.

1/2 t. Vanilla. Add 2 C Scalded Milk and beat with wire whisk. Pour this mixture into the baking dish on top of the cubed bread. Place baking dish in a pan of water and bake (uncovered) for about 1 hour. Feed dog 1/2 a "pudding" at each meal.

cup.

\*Add an egg.

\*Add garlic.

\*Add some extra oil.

## Liver-flavored Cornbread:

Buy a packet of corn bread mix and substitute pureed beef liver for milk. otherwise, follow packet directions, except that it take less time to bake.

This is highly perishable, so cut into brownie-sized pieces and freeze. It is so rich, only use about one piece per week (cut into pieces that must be kept in the refrigerator).

Variations:

\*Use chicken liver or ground turkey or chicken instead of beef liver.

\*Use up to 1 lb. of liver instead of 2/3

## Greyt Frosty Cubes

These are revolting to our palates, but the doggies love 'em!

Mix a large container of yogurt (the \*real\* kind with live acidophilus cultures and no sugary additives) with carrots or apples that you have ground up in a food processor. The carrots or apples can be raw or cooked, your choice.

Ladle into ice-cube trays and freeze, for instant yummy frosty cubes.

Use your imagination to make other flavors. One of my greyhounds didn't like apples much and actually preferred cabbage!

Fully as disgusting-sounding to us as delicious-sounding to some of them, is the combo of liver lightly-cooked, ground up and mixed with the yogurt, then frozen. Yum, yummmmm.



## Bread Pudding:

Preheat oven to 325 degrees.

Grease a baking dish with LOTS of butter or margarine. Cube 4 slices of white bread and put in baking dish. In a bowl, mix 3 Eggs, 1/2 C Sugar, 1/5 t. salt and

# Jodi's Choice

by Jill Agner

Sometime in February, 1993, I made a decision: I would adopt a greyhound. Having grown up in Florida, I was familiar with dog tracks, schooling events, and yes, I knew what often eventually happened to those beautiful greyhounds.

My grandfather was a vet in Missouri. He bred greyhounds for breeders and trainers in Florida. We enjoyed the ones he gave up for pets. The idea that I could actually adopt one of these gentle giants was indeed very exciting. I sent to Dr. Settle in Sanford, North Carolina for an application to adopt.

The summer of 1993 rolled around. I still had not had an answer from my application to Dr. Settle. Near the end of July I read an article in the Sunday paper, "Adoption As An Option." Pictured were three beautiful greyhounds, their owner, and a lengthy article. I put the article into my scrapbook, and planned to call and inquire during the following week.

That same night I received a telephone call. "You are now the proud owner of a greyhound!" WOW!!

The next day I headed out to select the "new member of the family." Dr. Settle told me that she had expected a large shipment, but it had not arrived,



Jodi and Jill take a walk in the surf. Photo courtest of Jill Agner, Durham, N.C.

However, she did have two females. Work on them had been completed, and they were ready to go.

One of the greys was a dark brindle. She was very friendly and somewhat aggressive. The other grey was a lighter brindle. This dog was shy, a spook.

Making a choice was going to be a hard decision, since I could have only one. I sat down in the pen to observe the two and hope for a sign of some kind to help me decide.

Two years earlier, one of my favorite Pekingese had developed a brain tumor and subsequently died. Mitzi was a unique pet. When we played, she liked to nibble on my rings; no other dog had ever done that. I shall never forget little Mitzi.

Both of the dogs came over to me. The dark one put her nose into my pocketbook; she was beautiful and would adjust well. The spook looked at me; as I extended my hand to her, she put her head down and gently nibbled at my rings! She was communicating on another level! *She had decided!*

In the beginning, getting her used to being loved was not easy. Now, three years later, Jodi is lovable, funny, beautiful, and the gentle giant I knew she would be.

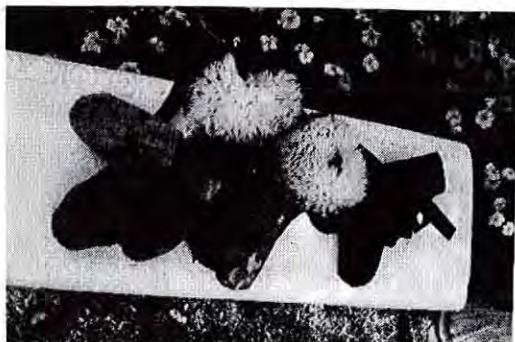
PS: She has never nibbled on my rings since that one time.



*Jill Agner and her Jodi live in Durham, North Carolina*

# Shake, Shake, Shake Your Bootie

by Jack and Amy Corrigan



Did you know that the salt used to keep roads and sidewalks clear in the winter can be harmful to your hound's paws? Ever noticed your hound doing the "cold foot shuffle" when you're walking him in the winter? Maybe you need to whip up a set of these simple paw protectors or hound boots.

## Paw Protectors

These simple-to-make paw protectors are great for:

- Keeping paws dry for those hounds who don't like getting their feet wet in the rain
- Protecting paws when walking on rough or uneven surfaces
- Protecting paws from the heat of pavement
- Protecting paws from salt and other chemicals used to melt ice
- Keeping paws warm when walking in snowy or icy conditions
- Preventing damage from scratching when medical conditions such as skin allergies arise.

Each set of paw protectors takes about 30 minutes to make.

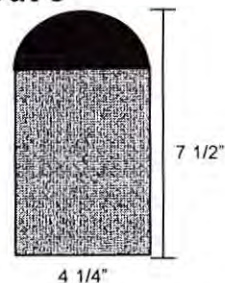
## Materials Needed:

- ¼ yard of strong, non-slip fabric such as cordura nylon, pack cloth, upholstery fabric or suede.
- Four 4-inch lengths of 1-inch sewable Velcro™.

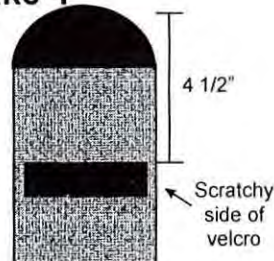
## Instructions

- 1) Cut 8 pieces of fabric in the shape shown below. Each piece should be about 4 1/4 inches wide and 7 1/2 inches tall.

Cut 8

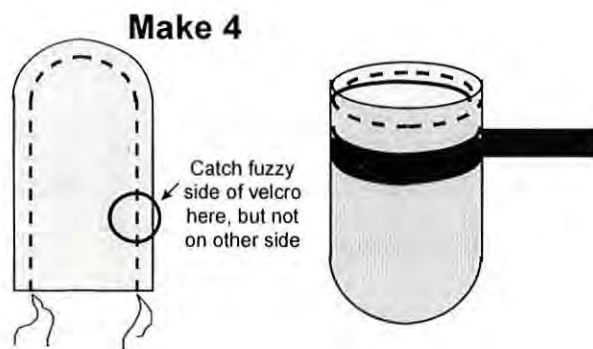


Make 4



- 2) Sew the scratchy side of the Velcro™ to the right side of four of the shapes about 4 1/2 inches from the rounded end. The scratchy side of the Velcro™ should face up.
- 3) Form four sandwiches with right sides together. Each sandwich should contain one piece with Velcro™ and one piece without. In between these two pieces of fabric, insert the fuzzy side of the Velcro™ with the fuzzy side facing away from the scratchy side of the Velcro™.
- 4) Sew around all but the short side of the boot, using a 1/2 seam allowance. Catch one edge of the fuzzy side of the Velcro™ in the seam, but leave the other edge free.





- 5) Turn each assembly right-side out. Fold top edge over twice (once will do for suede) and topstitch to form finished edge on each boot.
- 6) To test the boots, slip them on to your hound's foot with the Velcro™ side facing forward. Wrap the free piece of Velcro™ TIGHTLY around your hound's leg. It should fall above the "wrist or ankle" joint for best results. Now take a test walk. Paw protectors may twist on the foot, but should not fall off.

## Winter Boots

The small paw protectors may fall off in deep snow, never to be found until Spring. They also have a tendency to twist while on the hound's foot. If you find this annoying, try making full hound boots. The ones pictured here have a decorative fur trim to really make a fashion statement. Each set of winter boots takes 30 - 60 minutes to make, depending upon materials and embellishments.

To make the winter boots, follow the paw protector instructions, but make four of the shapes (for the front feet) 12 ½ inches tall rather than 7 ½ inches. For best results, use two strips of velcro; one at 4 ½ inches from the toe to be just above the first joint and one at 7 inches from the toe to be just above the second joint.

The four shapes for boots for the back paws should be 16 ½ inches tall with Velcro™ 4 ½ inches from the toe and 12 inches from the toe.

## Permission to Copy

We encourage you to use these patterns to help your local greyhound adoption group. Donate a few sets of boots to your local group. You'll feel good about yourself and you'll be helping the hounds. Feel free to print, copy and distribute these instructions as you'd like. We'd prefer the courtesy of a credit, but it's not essential.

Copyright 1997, Greyhound Manor Crafts  
 Jack & Amy Corrigan, P.O. Box 206,  
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 (610) 367 - 9551, e-mail: bark@voicenet.com  
 web address: <http://www.voicenet.com/~bark>



## Mission Statement

*Celebrating Greyhounds: The Magazine's* sole purpose is to present information about greyhounds and is therefore designed to appeal to a varied group of greyhound interests. These interests include people who adopted a greyhound of any variety, bought a greyhound, own NGA greyhounds, own AKC greyhounds, or don't own a greyhound but like the breed and enjoy reading about greyhounds. In our view, a greyhound is a greyhound, whether it be a racing or retired racing greyhound, a show greyhound, a coursing greyhound, or came from a shelter. We celebrate them all. This is consistent with The Greyhound Project's Mission Statement as outlined below.

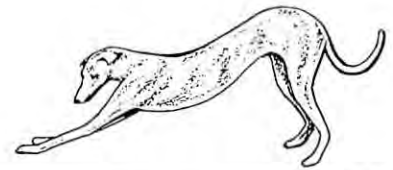
Although there are many controversial issues surrounding greyhound breeding, training, and racing, we do not become involved with those issues in the magazine. This does not mean, however, that as individuals we do not have strong personal opinions with respect to those issues. The Greyhound Project's activities are not the appropriate platforms for the expression of our personal positions on these matters. Other organizations devoted to greyhound welfare specialize in those issues.

Letters in opposition to viewpoints presented in articles will be published provided that they are factual and are respectful of the author and staff of *CG*. Please limit letters to 300 words or less.

*The Greyhound Project, Inc.*, is a volunteer, non-profit organization. The purpose of the organization is to engage in the following activities: to carry out such activities as are reasonably calculated to promote the humane treatment of animal life, including, but not limited to, greyhound dogs whose commercial racing careers have ended, and in that regard to raise funds to provide for the implementation of programs to effectuate the same; to encourage, promote, and support the provision of maximum care and protection of greyhound dogs from their breeding and birth, through their training, racing careers and retirement from racing and any other commercial use; to encourage, promote, and support the provision of healthy and comfortable environments in which such dogs may live out their lives, including their adoption as house pets, and, to engage in any and all other lawful activities to effect the above.

Further, The Greyhound Project, Inc. is dedicated to providing information about all greyhounds and to promoting their adoption as pets via *Speaking of Greyhounds* (the newsletter free to all adoption volunteers), *The Directory of Adoption Resources*, *the Celebrating Greyhounds Calendar*, *Celebrating Greyhounds: The Magazine*, and the *Adopt-a-Greyhound* website at:  
<http://www.adopt-a-greyhound.org>.

# Greyhound Marketplace



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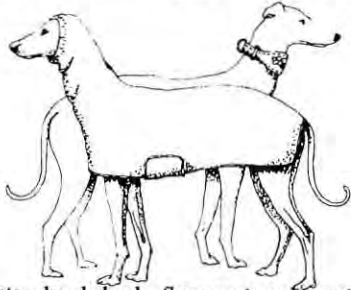
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## **The 1999 Celebrating Greyhounds Calendar**



**Jenny Mae and Lt. Gen. Wade Hampton were stars of the first *Celebrating Greyhounds Calendar*.**

Your greyhounds could be in the 1999 calendar! The Greyhound Project is collecting photos for the last edition of the *Celebrating Greyhounds Calendar* in this century and we are planning on making the final calendar of the 90's a huge tribute to our hounds. In addition to greyhounds at home and with their families, we are also looking for photos of the dogs in the community — at events like the Blessing of the Animals, visiting hospitals, schools and nursing homes, helping with the shopping, camping, lure coursing — the possibilities and opportunities are endless. So get out the camera; go through the boxes of family photos.

Send your photos

and information about your greyhounds to **The Greyhound Project, Inc., 295 Tremont Street, Newton MA 02158.**

The photographs for the 1999 calendar will be selected at the end of April.



**Boomer**

### **An Announcement from Mrs. Bones –**

## **The Third Annual 1998 Greyhound of the Year Contest is Underway!**

Do you have a photo of your gorgeous greyhound wearing a Mrs. Bones collar? If you do, why not enter it? This is your greyhound's chance to be Mrs. Bones' *Greyhound of the Year*. All photos must be amateur photos.



**Sophie**

Mrs. Bones (Janice Parkinson-Tucker) announces that the winner of this year's contest will join previous winners Boomer (1996) and Sophie (1997) to represent the world of retired racers, whose natural beauty is enhanced by a Mrs. Bones collar.

Contestants may submit photos of as many as five living greyhounds (as many as fifteen photographs of five different dogs). \$1.00 must be included for each photo entered. The rescue organization of the winner's choice will receive a check from Mrs. Bones totaling the amount of the entry fees.

The winning greyhound will receive a free collar and Swiss velvet leash set from Mrs. Bones. The "lucky dog" will be featured on Mrs. Bones' web site for a year. The winning owner will receive 100 full-color postcards of the winning photograph.

All contest expenses are underwritten by Mrs. Bones. Contact Mrs. Bones for complete information and for the photo release form.

Photographs will be accepted until January 15, 1998. Mrs. Bones may be reached at 121 Pilgrim Road, South Portland, ME 04106. Tel. (207) 767-1308. Fax (207) 767-1313. E-mail: [mrsbones@nlis.net](mailto:mrsbones@nlis.net). Website: <http://www.nlis.net/~mrsbones>

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