

# Celebrating Greyhounds



Winter 2014 Online Magazine

## Growing up with Greyhounds

*ALSO INSIDE:*

Prison Program

Healing with Reiki

Timid, Shy, or Spook?

# Celebrating Greyhounds

Winter 2014  
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**On the cover:** Eight-year-old Jack Cartwright and Cosmo live in Dallas, Texas, with Jack's parents, Andrew and Hila Cartwright. / Photo by Crackerdog Photography

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# Editorial Comment



*Editor-In-Chief Stacy Pigott, with Greyhound Gypsy and Australian Cattle Dog-mix Jewel.*

A few weeks ago, I got to go to a Greyhound gathering for the first time. It's not that I haven't wanted to go before. I did! I'd dream of being able to go to Solvang or Kanab or Dewey...none of which are close to Fort Worth, Texas. I even registered and had hotel reservations in West Virginia for Greyt Escape - Kennel to Kouches, but had to cancel my plans at the last minute. Sometimes, work just gets in the way of having fun, you know? So when I saw that Remember The Greyhound was happening in San Antonio, a short five-hour drive away, I made plans to go.

Planning for a weekend away, whether for work or pleasure,

always begins with the dogs. While my two Greyhounds would have been welcome at Remember The Greyhound, they would not have enjoyed it. Both are shy; staying in a hotel and being surrounded by strange dogs and people would have caused them more stress than fun. Instead, I made arrangements for them to stay with my friend Linda, who fostered my Gypsy and does Greyhound boarding in her home. My foster had been adopted the weekend before, so it was just me and Jewel, my Australian Cattle Dog-mix, as we hit the road and headed south. (Yes, I showed up at a Greyhound event with a non-Greyhound. Weird, I know. But I

## Celebrating Greyhounds Magazine

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*A Saturday morning stroll along San Antonio's River Walk.*

made sure to ask first, and awarded Jewel honorary Greyhound status for the weekend, based on the number of fosters she has kept in line.)

Arriving on Friday evening, we checked in and made a brief appearance at “Yappy Hour,” where we ran into some North Texas friends and made dinner plans. I’m not sure the Mexican restaurant on the San Antonio River Walk has ever been graced by the presence of so many Greyhounds on their pet-friendly patio, all at the same time! We headed back to the hotel in time to hear animal communicator Val Heart speak. Her presentation was enlightening and empowering, and I was thrilled to win her educational series in the silent auction the next night.

## DISCLAIMER

*Celebrating Greyhounds* Magazine is published quarterly by The Greyhound Project, Inc., a nonprofit Massachusetts corporation.

The magazine’s purpose is to provide information about Greyhounds as a breed. Recognizing that there are differing points of view on issues such as racing, breeding, and adoption policies, to mention a few, the magazine does not advocate a position on these issues. It will publish articles and reader letters regarding these issues if deemed appropriate. Unless otherwise stated, The Greyhound Project, Inc. does not necessarily agree with materials published herein. Ideas and opinions are those of the writers. No authentication or approval is implied by the editors or publishers, who assume no liability for information contained herein. *Celebrating Greyhounds* Magazine reserves the right to refuse publication, to edit or modify any material, and to hold such material for an indeterminate period. If your Greyhound is ill, please see a veterinarian.

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Saturday's activities started with a stroll down the River Walk, led by yours truly and Jewel! Crackerdog Photography's Steve Uyehara joined us and snapped some great pictures as we walked off breakfast. Then, it was on to the seminars. Petra Postma, of Save A Galgo Espanol (SAGE), and Sandra Baas, of BaasGalgo, enlightened us on the plight of the Galgo in Spain. After lunch, Robin Robinett, DVM, educated us on alternative medicine for Greyhounds, and gave a hands-on demonstration of stretches you can do with your dog. Jewel's favorite part was the treats that she got for stretching appropriately!

Davy Harkins, DVM, was the featured dinner speaker, and discussed some of the finer points of Greyhound health. He had never seen, he said, so many Greyhounds in one room with such clean teeth! Dr. Harkins and young Jack Cartwright helped

draw raffle tickets and show off the live auction items while people checked their bids on the silent auction tables. Proceeds from the evening benefitted the Greyhound Angels Network.



*Dr. Robin Robinett demonstrated what happens during a typical chiropractic session for Remember The Greyhound attendees.*

Jewel and I hit the road early Sunday morning, before the blessing of the hounds that officially signaled the end of the event. While we missed a little bit at the beginning and a little bit at the end, what we got to experience in the middle was totally worth it! I learned a lot about Galgos and Greyhounds and had a lot of fun doing it.

My job may not allow me to take enough time off to attend one of the Greyhound gatherings farther away from Texas, but you can bet I'm already making plans for next year's event in San Antonio. Whether you've had Greyhounds for many years, just adopted your first, or just love the breed, Greyhound gatherings have something to offer everyone. Don't miss out on the fun! I'm glad I didn't. I'll always remember, Remember The Greyhound. ■

*Stacy*

# Greyhound Bytes:

*News you can sink your teeth into*

## Firefighters rescue Greyhound in a tight spot

Curiosity may have killed the cat, but it didn't claim the life of a nosey Greyhound who got herself wedged between two walls at the Wimbledon Greyhound Welfare kennels in the UK. Firefighters removed part of a wall to free Madge, and are still scratching their heads over how she got herself into such a tight spot in the first place.

Read more at [Get Surrey](#).

## Famous relish company helps Greyhound charity

A special edition of Sheffield's famous Henderson's Relish is being made to help the city's hounds find loving homes. The Sheffield Retired Greyhounds Trust commissioned the Yorkshire sauce company to produce 1,000 bottles bearing a unique label, which will help raise funds for the dog charity.

Read more at [The Star](#).



*Morgan was adopted by the Trostle family in Oley, Pennsylvania, through Nittany Greyhounds. Morgan thoroughly enjoyed his ride on the carousel at Knoebels amusement park!*

## Dubuque Greyhound track license approved

Iowa state gaming regulators approved a racetrack license November 13 that will allow the Iowa Greyhound Association to conduct pari-mutuel wagering on live dog races at a Dubuque Greyhound track.

The state Racing and Gaming Commission voted 4-0 to approve a license that authorizes the Greyhound association to operate the Dubuque Greyhound Park at Mystique Casino under a lease arrangement beginning next January 1 as long as conditions set by the regulatory panel are met. Read more at the [WCF Courier](#).

## Woman and Greyhound die after being hit by car

Hearts are aching for Emily Driscoll, a young woman who was beautiful, smart, funny and looking forward to a career as a surgical nurse. The 22-year-old Naperville, Illinois, woman was walking her dog Sunday evening when she was hit by a car and killed crossing an intersection. The young woman's beloved dog, a Greyhound rescue named Quincy, died with her.

Read more at the [Naperville Patch](#).



*Four-year-old Greyhound Rani shared the bed with Shahrukh. Adoptor Sadelle Wiltshire, of Pytney, Vermont, said Rani is Shahrukh's second Greyhound, and the feline has recently started roaching, like his dog.*



*Thirteen-year-old Sugar (Kiowa Brownsugar) was adopted at age 8, after 40-plus races and three litters of puppies, by John Gilley and Heidi Peditto of Boardman, Ohio, through Linda Ann's Greyhound Rescue.*

## Heat cancels racing card as Greyhound welfare comes first

With the temperature pressing towards 40 degrees, Greyhound Racing New South Wales stewards decided to call off the 10-race card on November 14 at Wagga TAB in "the best interests of the animals." Highly experienced and long-serving Riverina steward Bill Levy said later the welfare of the Greyhounds was always paramount in the sport.

Read more at [The Daily Advertiser](#).

## Greyhound kills Cockapoo in dog park accident

Taylor Ferguson's Cockapoo was mauled to death inside the Frick Park off-leash dog exercise area, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, but he blames himself as much as the owner of the much bigger Greyhound that attacked his Josie.

Read more at the [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#).

# Greyhound Bytes

## Hobby breeders enjoying racing success

Gerry and Rose Kleeven breed and train just a few Greyhounds at a time out of their Australian home. Gerry Kleven, 72, said, “You breed them and rear them, you’re with them every day, the wife looks after them and you become so attached to them, they’re just like kids type of thing.” So they were understandably thrilled to have Luca Neveelk competing in Australia’s richest race, the Melbourne Cup.

Read more at the [Latrobe Valley Express](#).

## Irish university stops buying Greyhounds for veterinary training

University College Dublin has ended a practice of buying and putting down Greyhounds for use in veterinary training.

Over a six-year period, the university bought a total of 212 dogs.

Read more at [The Journal](#).

## A Greyhound’s legacy results in quieter fireworks

Quieter fireworks were released over Churchdown, England, thanks to a charity which campaigns to take the fear out of bonfire night for pets. Days of persistent loud bangs left dog Leo so petrified, that his owners were forced to take drastic action and have him put down to end his misery.

Since then, Leo’s Legacy has launched to encourage more people to attend organized displays – instead of releasing dozens of rockets from their own back gardens – to prevent a repeat of the panic attack suffered by the Greyhound.

Read more at the [Gloucester Citizen](#).



*Seven-year-old Zin (Real Chickeeboo) was adopted by Laurie Neebling through Greyhound Pets of America – Salt Lake.*

# Greyhound Bytes

## Offenders' art raises \$21,000 for Prison Greyhounds

Nineteen hand-drawn pieces of art work donated by Indiana's Putnamville Correctional Facility offenders to the Pet Sitters International Charity Auction will benefit the Prison Greyhound Program. Pet Sitters International is an educational organization for professional pet sitters which enabled the Greyhound program to benefit from their success.

Read more at the [Banner Graphic](#).

## Greyhound rescues family from house fire

A rescued Greyhound has been hailed a hero and won an award for bravery after saving the lives of his owner and her three children from a house fire. Five-year-old

retired racing dog Uno alerted his owners to a blaze which broke out at their home in the early hours of the morning.

Read more at [itv.com](#).

## Greyhounds die on Irish ferry

Ireland's Department of Agriculture has said it is investigating an incident in which 11 Greyhounds were discovered dead in a van on board the Irish Ferries Oscar Wilde vessel just before it docked in France on October 27.

The Greyhounds were being transported in cages in the van and it is believed they suffocated during the 14-hour journey from Rosslare to Cherbourg.

Read more at [RTE News](#).



*Greyhound Rocket naps with his feline friend, Phoebe. Rocket was adopted through Quad Cities Greyhound Adoption by Stacy Rebal of North Liberty, Iowa.*

# Greyhound Bytes

## Hiking the Inca trail for charity

A Dorset fundraiser took in one of the world's most famous landmarks on his latest charity trek. Gareth Bishop took on the Inca Trail to the world famous ruins of Machu Picchu to raise funds for Greyhound Rescue West of England. Gareth, who climbed Mount Kilimanjaro for the same cause last year, raised 700 pounds (\$1,097 US) in Peru.

Read more at the [Dorset Echo](#) or [Blackmore Vale Magazine](#).

## Greyhound blood donor saves poisoned pet

Philippa and Andrew van Bunnik were ready to say goodbye to their beloved Poodle Charlie after he ate rat poison last week. That is, until another neighborhood dog raced to Charlie's rescue. Charlie received a successful blood transfusion from Silver, one of seven ex-racing Greyhounds on the Crofton Downs Veterinary Clinic's blood donor registry.

Read more at [The Dominion Post](#).

Got a Greyhound-related news story to share?

Send it in!

Email [editor@adopt-a-greyhound.org](mailto:editor@adopt-a-greyhound.org), and be sure to include the link to the news article online.



*Grady thinks Riley makes a great pillow. Both were adopted by Jo Murphy of Chesterfield, Virginia.*

# Your Letters



Dear Editor,

Someone at work asked me why I was going to go through all the pain again when I adopt a new hound. He had just lost his dog and said he can't ever do that again. I told him all the many, many good parts make the bad part at the end a little more acceptable. We all go on this journey knowing we will have to say goodbye some day. But man, all those days before that are so incredible and full of love and joy! I am willing to risk my heart again and again. It is the circle of life.

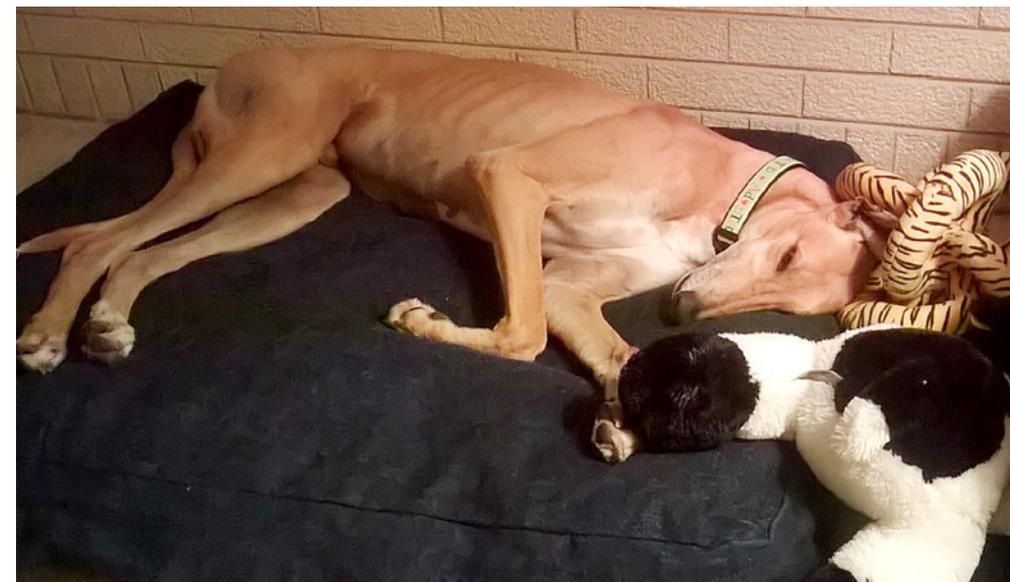
I lost my 13-year-old Greyhound Peace four weeks ago today. Last Saturday, I welcomed a new hound I named Carter into my heart and home. As one journey ends, a new one begins. And life goes on.

I love this magazine; it connects Greyhound lovers all over the world who share a common bond and passion.

*Best Wishes,*

*Jan, Luka, and Carter Brinegar*

*Oak Lawn, Illinois*



*After losing 13-year-old Peace, Jan Brinegar welcomed Carter (pictured) into her home and heart.*



*Luka shares his bed with his new brother, Carter.*

CG  
Letters

# Fantasy Fiction

An ancient race of dog-shifters saves the world from evil.

By Tammy Wallace

Amber Polo

*Recovered*

Blue Merle Publishing (July 7, 2013)

264 pp

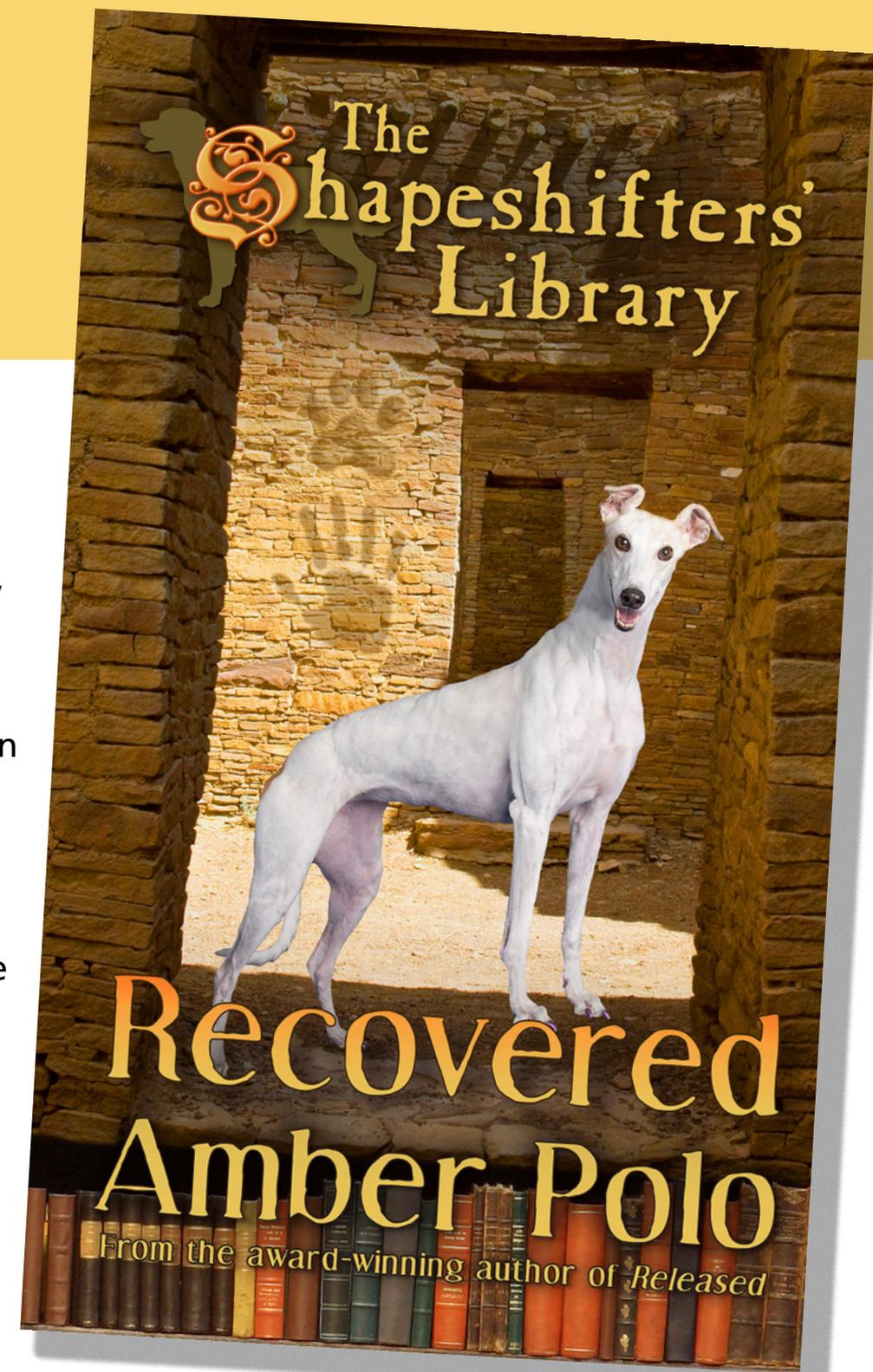
ISBN 978-0985774820

The book synopsis from the [author's website](#) had me intrigued: "A Cross Country Canine Cozy Adventure from Ohio to New Mexico; filled with ancient mounds, dogcatchers, rescue groups, and wolfdog issues. Come along with Bliss, children's librarian and white Greyhound shifter, and reformed werewolf Harry as they search for the most valuable library on the planet, chased by Sybilla and Blaze, werewolves crazed to stop them."

*Recovered* is the third book in the series The

Shapeshifters Library. It details the struggles of an ancient race of dog-shifters to protect the knowledge of the world from evil, book-burning, werewolves. The first book in the series, *Released*, discussed how the public library in Shipfeather burned down. This required the library to be relocated to the Shipfeather Academy, home to an ancient race of dog-shifters. The second book in the series, *Retrieved*, discussed how the librarians and their new shapeshifter friends discover an ancient mound, which could hold the secret of the dog-shifters' history in the New World (America).

*Recovered* is the story of Bliss and Harry's search for the lost library of the Ancients (which could shine a light on the secrets of the ancient dog-shifters). In each of the books, the dog-shifters race against their enemies, the werewolves,



whose sole purpose is to destroy knowledge. In this book, Bliss, a dog-shifter, teams up with Harry, a werewolf/dog-shifter hybrid who is not trusted by his former pack, the werewolves, or the dog-shifters. Together they go through many adventures during their search for the lost library. Bliss, who transforms into a pure white Greyhound, and Harry **travel throughout the Southwestern United States**, searching for the library. Along the way, they are tracked by werewolves, kidnapped by dogcatchers, forced to race, and forced into wolf fights. A romance between Bliss and Harry develops, aided, I am sure, by the fact that Bliss needs Harry's assistance to shift. I won't give away any spoilers; so you will all have to read the book to find out what happens!

I have to admit, I had not read the first two books in the series until after I read the third, *Recovered*. However, I can say that the third book whetted my appetite. For anyone who loves books about shapeshifters, Greyhounds, romance, or history, this is a book that is sure to be enjoyed. While I recommend reading the entire series,

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this book has enough details to be read on its own. There is also the added joy of a pure white Greyhound and a wolf hybrid developing a friendship and, eventually, a romance. ■

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*About Amber Polo: A love of books drew Amber Polo into a career as a librarian. A greater love turned her into a writer. The Shapeshifters' Library series is an urban fantasy filled with books, librarians, and dogs and a library everyone will love. In addition to her two award-winning fantasy and **romance novels**, she self-published *Relaxing the Writer: Guidebook to the Writer's High*, which offers hundreds of tips to help writers and readers relax and is proud of her self-produced "Relaxation One Breath at a Time," a CD that uses her voice to teach relaxation to calm your body and mind and/or help you fall asleep. After living in seven states, Amber happily calls a small town in Arizona home.*

*About the author: Tammy Wallace is an Arizona native with her own shapeshifter pack comprised of two pound kitties and an Irish Wolfhound mix who think they are human, and a Greyhound who thinks her furry siblings are crazy. She has been involved in animal rescue for more than 12 years.*



# A New Race, a New Life

Prison Greyhounds provides foster homes and training for Greyhounds and hope for inmates.

*By Mary Loudon*

**M**any former racing Greyhounds have their lives on hold at the racetrack because adoption groups cannot find enough foster homes. In Indiana, some nonviolent inmates are ready to help bridge that gap. Prison Greyhounds addresses this frustrating shortage of foster homes by utilizing these offenders, and we are having quite an impact.

Prison Greyhounds fosters retired racing Greyhounds inside Putnamville Correctional Facility, a medium-security men's prison in Greencastle, Indiana. A team of two inmate-handlers per dog serves as fosters. The handlers have two months to teach the dogs basic house manners prior to adoption into permanent loving homes.

Former racers are selected for the program by volunteers with Greyhound Pets of America (GPA) Daytona Beach and kennel workers at Daytona Beach Kennel Club. We never



*Inmates at the medium-security Putnamville Correctional Facility spend two months fostering Greyhounds to prepare the dogs for adoption.*



*Weekly dog meetings allow Prison Greyhound volunteers to coach the handlers, and reduces the burden on facility staff.*

select our own dogs, and we never request by color, age, or appearance. The kennel workers know the temperament of the Greyhounds entrusted to their care. They select only confident Greyhounds to go inside the prison.

A correctional facility has a lot of commotion, loud, sudden noises, hard concrete floors, strange smells, and thousands of people in close quarters under stress. In our specific facility, the Greyhounds live in a dormitory with more than

100 men.

One of the handlers must be with a Greyhound at all times. This is one way we ensure the dog is safely supervised. Our biggest ongoing threat is that other offenders can't resist offering their peanut butter sandwiches to these dogs. Everyone wants to be their friend!

The inmates are always under staff supervision and camera surveillance is everywhere. Greyhounds accompany their handlers to classes, chapel, family visitations, or for long walks in the recreation yard. The prison also provides a separate off-leash area where the dogs run together while wearing plastic kennel muzzles. At night, they are safely crated within reach of their handlers' bunks.

Retired Greyhounds are already highly socialized from their training and care at the racetrack; this is why they are great dogs for the prison program. They are gentle, affectionate, and athletic, but not high-energy. The fact that



*Handlers and their Greyhounds enjoy supervised outdoor playtime.*

they are already crate-trained makes them quick to learn that “outside” is where they need to relieve themselves.

Any prison program must adjust according to the specific facility. We do not have the luxury of long-term caregivers, so we simplified

the coaching we provide. Our handlers often transition before receiving their fourth Greyhound. We always maintain two handlers-in-training to accommodate the dogs when a regular handler gets paroled, is sent to another facility, or leaves the program for any reason. The foster Greyhounds adjust well to this. A retired racer has lived in constant transition since training began, and will continue to until adoption.

Our curriculum is from several widely-recognized Greyhound adoption books. We select our prison volunteer team very carefully. This team coaches the handlers each week during dog meetings that reduce staff burden and ensure the welfare of the dogs. We require a weekly dog report from each handler and handler-in-training. Healthy relationships develop between offenders and our volunteer community role models.

At each informal dog meeting, we confirm



*Two handlers are paired with each Greyhound, allowing one of them to be with the dog at all times.*

that the foster dog is adjusting well emotionally and physically. If he or she were not, we would remove the Greyhound. We have four Greyhounds in Putnamville. If one were removed, we'd still have three remaining for the

Greyhound socialization that the dogs need for their own benefit. In our facility, four is the maximum number of dogs we can accommodate in our dog dorm. When the prison is ready, we will expand into another dorm, with four more dogs. A solid part of our partnership agreement is that we will never push to foster more dogs beyond the prison's stated limit or desire.

Superintendent Stan Knight told us, "Four dogs maximizes the benefit to the dorm. Any beyond that just complicates things for our staff and the general population. Someday, we hope to open up a

second dorm with four more Greyhounds, but we cannot promise that yet."

We respect this decision, and are happy to report that we recently received permission to expand our program by an additional four Greyhounds, for a total of eight! A volunteer program that brings dogs inside a prison must always remember that we are guests. We need to make things as easy as possible for the staff.

One benefit of having our prison team volunteers visit weekly is that we handle the constant questions, training, coaching, encouraging, and delivery of the supplies. Some of the prison dog programs we studied closed because the dog group expected too much from the staff. Our facility does not hire extra staff or trainers. It partners with us because we understand the limitations and budget. We also cover every expense for this program. The days of tax money going toward dog food, staff, or program supplies are over. We assume total



*Handlers take part in every aspect of Greyhound care, including bathing the dogs when they arrive from Florida.*

financial responsibility for the Greyhounds before they arrive until their adoptions. Indiana taxpayers contribute nothing.

chooses its Greyhound. The Greyhounds are bathed inside the dorm, hillbilly style — we rig a hose to a faucet in the janitor's room and

Prison Greyhounds is both a prison program and the adoption group. Adopters can only meet the prison dogs when they arrive straight off the haul. We call this "new dog day." If pre-approved, a \$100 deposit will hold your Greyhound until adoption day, two months after his prison fostering.

Within one hour after jumping down off the haul, we whisk the prison fosters off to Putnamville. Each team of two handlers

suds the dog. It is great fun and a true bonding lesson for the handlers. Our volunteers stay with the new arrivals until they are introduced to their handlers, bathed, exercised, fed, treated for parasites, given a new toy and fresh bed, and then settled in for a long nap after a very long journey from Florida.

We have little problem after adoption with the feared separation anxiety. This is one question asked a lot by Greyhound connoisseurs, who are concerned that these dogs are always with handlers for the entire two months they are in training. A lot of this has to do with the fact that these are confident dogs going inside the prison, and almost every dog is adopted before he leaves the prison. Greyhounds transition directly into their forever homes. They are ready. They have learned basic house manners, to climb stairs, walk on slick floors, and to maintain good leash manners.

We reserve our volunteer foster homes in the community for Greyhounds that have retired with racing injuries and cannot be on concrete prison floors 24/7. The injured dogs often wait the longest in the kennels before an adoption group says "We want that dog!" We actively encourage the adoption of these injured Greyhounds. We find them loving, responsible homes by telling their stories.

The prison program has intrinsic benefits to the handlers. These are some of our favorite quotes, taken from the inmate-handlers' weekly dog reports:

"This program motivates me to get better not bitter."

"I really needed a friend and this Greyhound came along."

Another offender, who is not in the dog program, closed his eyes and hugged one of our



*See more photos from Prison Greyhounds' program inside Putnamville Correctional Facility.*

Greyhounds during chapel. He told the handler, "Please bring him every week and sit by me. This is the closest to home that I have felt since I have been in here." He had tears in his eyes.

The staff tells us that from the day the dogs arrive, the noise level in the dorm is noticeably softer. Things are calmer. Offenders laugh and smile more. Teamwork is developed. Inmate-handlers are often featured on our Facebook page. We had underestimated the positive impact that our Facebook site would have on helping to maintain healthy family relations for the offenders. Families, both local and long distance, feel an instant connection and pride upon seeing their incarcerated loved one being a role model to the prison.

We never select our inmate-handlers.

We let the professional staff counselors at the prison select the participants. We give the staff some very basic outlines. Our relationship with the offenders ends at the moment they leave our program. Once they leave, they are in our hearts, but not in our lives. We are not trying to be a post-prison assimilation group. We do not allow identification or communication between offenders and any of our adopters or volunteers, other than during the dog meetings. This provides an extra measure of distance for our peace of mind. Our mission with the handlers is accomplished when they leave our program. This human-Greyhound connection impacts inmates who will someday be released into our community as better citizens and more responsible pet owners.

We see ourselves as small and local by design, with a team that is volunteer-intensive. We practice community collaboration to build our own support network. Teamwork and partnership will always accomplish more. We knew that by ourselves we would always have limitations, and realized a strong desire to help more Greyhounds find their forever homes.

As a successful prison program, we attract a lot of national, and sometimes international, attention. Many of our supporters are too far away to volunteer or adopt. We decided to harness this enthusiasm to help with the expense of the long-distance transportation of retired Greyhounds to various adoption groups in non-racing states. In 2013, with great support from our fans and volunteers, Prison Greyhounds created



a fundraising campaign we call “A Ticket Home.”

A Ticket Home is one way we can contribute to a larger mission beyond Prison Greyhounds. GPA Daytona Beach constantly houses about 110 former racers waiting for adoption, and has a waiting list of 150 more retired Greyhounds ready to get into their adoption kennel. We became aware that GPA Daytona Beach completely funds its own hauls, out of long-standing tradition. Rising expenses can put long-distance hauls at risk. Yet without reliable delivery of Greyhounds to distant states, adoption groups are rendered useless. We are only one group on the haul route that benefits, but our volunteers are very proud of this accomplishment.

*Prison Greyhounds volunteers unveiled their new A Ticket Home program at the Daytona Beach Kennel Club.*

## *A letter from inside the prison:*



*The Greyhounds have had a positive impact on their inmate-handlers.*

*Today I woke up feeling a little down, missing my children and the possibilities of the outside world. As I laid on my bunk visiting my regretful past memories, I began to say a silent prayer. As my eyes became moist with tears I felt something*

*(or someone) breathing on me.*

*When I opened up my eyes there was a beautiful blue-brindle Greyhound actually smiling at me — just inches from my face. It startled me at first, to see him smile, because his canines were showing! However it was not an act of aggression, it was an act of compassion, which in turn made me do something that I rarely do in here, which is to have a good laugh from my soul.*

*I then said to him, “Power Up, does this mean that we are friends?” He actually smiled at me again which set the pace for me to have a tolerable day. In closing, for me, I took Power Up’s smile as a sign that God can use animals, as well as humans, to convey a message of hope. All I had to do is be receptive. Thanks Power Up – Good friends like you are hard to find. ■*

*– Handler Tom*

*About the author: Mary Loudon, president and founder of Prison Greyhounds, resides in Indianapolis and owns a professional dog walking business. She and her husband, Jeff, adopted their first retired racer in 1993. To date, they have adopted 11 Greyhounds, usually having four in the house at one time. Mary’s favorite volunteer role is serving on the Prison Team that coaches inmate-handlers. In 2012, she was awarded the title of Pet Adoption Advocate of the Year by Pet Sitters International for the efforts of Prison Greyhounds’ volunteer teams.*

# Animal Reiki

Reiki harnesses the power of energy to promote self-healing in humans and Greyhounds.

By Suzanne Burke



I became fascinated with Reiki about five years ago while researching quantum physics and energy.

Researching the energy practice known as Reiki, I became increasingly interested in applying it to my Greyhounds. So I enrolled in training near Santa Barbara, California, to study Reiki at a nearby wild horse sanctuary called **Return to Freedom**. It is a magical place in Lompac, California for wild horses that have been rescued from federal lands.

Once there, I attended Reiki Level 1 and 2 certification classes, learning and practicing the energy-based healing modality on both

humans and horses. Soon I earned my certification on both levels. Admittedly, I went into this training as a skeptical experiment, unsure if it was real because I could not actually see the energy. Our instructor told us that from that day forward, our lives would change dramatically as we learned the power of energy and using it to help promote self healing in others. My initial goal in learning this practice was to aid my Greyhounds and



*Reiki can be a wonderful complement to veterinary care.*

those coming off the racetracks – to help ease their pain and stress. What I couldn't know at the time was the amazing path I would travel following that weekend.

I learned that Reiki could help any living organism, be it human, animal, or plant. Consider a blade of grass or any plant that



# Animal Reiki

*Natural healing vibrations are transmitted through the hands of the Reiki practitioner to the body of the recipient.*

grows or blooms. What causes them to grow? The sun and water work to stimulate growth because they both contain energy vibrations. Our bodies and those of animals also contain energy vibrations that keep it running. We can't necessarily see the vibrations, but we can see the energy's effect on them. In an article on a study of Reiki, titled [Reiki Really Works: A Groundbreaking Scientific Study](#),

Reiki is best defined as: "an energy healing treatment that works holistically; on the whole body, mind and spirit. Not a system of religious beliefs, Reiki is simply a relaxing treatment whereas natural healing vibrations are transmitted through the hands of a Reiki

practitioner (acting as a conduit) to the body of the recipient. The purpose of a Reiki treatment is to relieve stress and pain, induce relaxation, release emotional blockages, accelerate natural healing, balance subtle body energies and support other medical modalities including traditional therapies."

Reiki's premise encompasses seven

primary chakras through the body that govern emotion and the various physical planes of the body, much like meridians are to acupuncture. Each chakra in its healthy state is like a pinwheel whose energy rotates consistently either clockwise or counterclockwise. If any or all of the chakras become blocked (and they do) through emotional or physical traumas throughout our lives, a state of disease, or dis-ease begins. In order to promote self-healing, treating the whole body is critical versus just focusing on the area where the pain is located. Treating both is important since the body works as a whole. By identifying and unblocking the affected chakra(s), the energy in those chakras begin to be free-moving again, allowing the release of the diseased state, if it has not progressed too far. With chronic conditions, regular

# Animal Reiki



*Suzanne Burke started as a skeptic and is now a certified Reiki Master Teacher.*

sessions of Reiki are generally recommended. There are plenty of documented cases of chronic conditions completely disappearing or going into remission through continuing Reiki sessions. I want to point out that Reiki is

not a replacement for traditional medical therapy. It is used as a complement to help ease stress in the body, which helps to promote the body's ability to self-heal.

Animals are much more in tune with energy than humans; their responses do not lie. From the moment they meet you, an animal has summed you up because he uses his instincts. For animals, the introduction is energetic. Humans have the same ability to use energy to form an opinion about another human or animal. Unfortunately,

as adults, some of us have dropped this from our everyday repertoire. Young children have a more natural ability to do this, as do animals. Think about the last time you sat in a room

where the air was thick with an uncomfortable feeling due to the "vibes" a person was casting off. Conversely, think about a time where you met someone who had the most incredible happy energy surrounding them. These "vibes" are energy.

Following the first two certification levels, it was recommended that I take a year in an internship to practice Reiki on humans and animals before advancing to the Reiki Master Teacher (RMT) certification. I started my internship journey in November of 2009 providing Reiki pro bono for one year. During that internship year, I learned an incredible amount of information from working with humans and animals. These are a few of my experiences with Reiki and dogs.

One of the most profound Reiki responses I witnessed from a dog was in a doggie day-care facility. After finishing Reiki on a few retired racing Greyhounds in boarding, I

# Animal Reiki



*Chronic conditions may benefit from regular Reiki sessions.*

could not help but notice the old snarling Golden Retriever in a bay right next to the Greyhounds. He appeared vicious, but also sad. The energy of his unhappiness was so strong that I couldn't abandon him. So I knelt down next to the glass partition between

us and asked him if he would like Reiki. About that time, he became completely silent and looked me in the eye as if to say, "Would you?" I did, and as I performed Reiki through the glass, this once angry and snarling dog slid down the glass into a resting position. He looked like he was smiling and thanking me. That is a session I will never forget. I left him sleeping peacefully.

In one case, a rescued Dachshund had a submissive peeing problem. The owner worked with Dachshund rescue and the little female had been returned from adopted homes several times due to this problem. The dog's owner asked if Reiki might help. I said, "Let's try it!" She brought her little Dachshund to her grooming salon where we started Reiki in a quiet room. The dog seemed quite nervous,



*Reiki releases stresses and toxins from the body, and can be quite relaxing.*

but I sat there, casting Reiki energy in the room inviting her to come over if she liked. The timid Dachshund slowly came to me, crawled on my lap and fell fast asleep as I administered Reiki to her body. The owner was so surprised because the little dog was normally very scared of strangers. On our second meeting, the Dachshund exhibited the same behavior with me. The following week

# Animal Reiki



*Animals are much more in tune with energy than people.*

I talked to the owner and she noted that her Dachshund had improved quite a bit with her shyness and submissive peeing. We met on several more occasions, where Reiki was administered to not only the shy female, but also her brothers, who enjoyed it immensely. She continued to improve.

Greyhound folks on Facebook may know Dolce Gambino. He's the animated dark brindle Greyhound owned by Christine and Don Beisert. He is a certified therapy hound, decorated agility competitor, and world traveler. His photographs on Facebook show you the fun and pampered lifestyle he leads. He is one of my clients. Dolce came to me with what veterinarians diagnosed as a pulled muscle in his right groin and back leg. He had visited multiple traditional veterinarians who could offer very little

help outside of physical therapy. As I scanned Dolce's chakras I detected that four out of seven of his chakras were blocked. I showed Dolce's dad how I measured that. I then performed Reiki on Dolce for the next hour, spending extra time on the blocked chakras and his injured leg. Dolce seemed to enjoy the relaxing Reiki session and through his sighs I could see him release the tension in his body. He also fell asleep as most humans do during a session. The deep relaxation of Reiki releases stresses and toxins from the body, allowing the self-healing process to begin. I met with Dolce the next weekend for another session. Following the second session, Dolce's dad told me Dolce was doing remarkably better and was able to return to agility once again. He continues to visit for regular Reiki sessions and continues to be

# Animal Reiki



*By easing stress, Reiki promotes the body's ability to self-heal. It is particularly beneficial for geriatric patients, easing the body and spirit as the end nears.*

active in agility.

When I noticed a small lump on the side of one of my Greyhounds, I began full Reiki sessions on him, also focusing on the location of the lump. Within two weeks, the lump disappeared, and it has never

reappeared over the last five years. Allie, my oldest Greyhound, had a lump appear on the side of her neck. I performed Reiki on her and the affected site. Within a week the lump was gone.

I am not advocating replacing veterinary

care with Reiki. Veterinarians are important to help diagnose a problem and treat it. Reiki treats the whole body holistically and is used as an adjunct or complement to veterinary care. It is particularly useful following trauma, surgery, and for joint and muscular pain cases. Further, it has been used effectively in emotional and relational cases. For example, where a new dog has been introduced into a pack and the pack becomes disrupted, providing Reiki to the entire pack can be an effective means of reducing anxiety and stress for all involved. Reiki cannot hurt. It is non-invasive and primarily serves to reduce stress and relax the body to promote self-healing. Recovery from injuries, for example, have been documented to occur more quickly than if Reiki was not administered.

Reiki is particularly relaxing to patients — human or animal — who are approaching the end of their lives on earth. Reiki eases

# Animal Reiki

the body and spirit of the subject. It is also recommended for family members as a way of dealing with their grief. Providing Reiki following the loss of a loved one is also beneficial as it helps to open up the chakras and promote emotional self-healing.

Many hospital and hospice care institutions use Reiki today as part of their integrative healthcare programs for humans. One such healthcare system is [Mayo Clinic](#). Other well-known healthcare institutions to incorporate Reiki into their integrative healthcare programs are: [Yale New Haven](#), [Memorial Sloan-Kettering](#), [Columbia University Medical](#), [Duke University](#), [Cleveland Clinic](#), [Sharp Memorial](#), [University Medical Center](#) and too many more to be listed here. There are over 800 healthcare institutions across the U.S. that offer Reiki.

If you or your Greyhound have a malady,

either physical or emotional, or you would like to provide this as a course of wellness for your furry companion, consider reaching out to a certified Reiki practitioner. She can work with you and your family members, be they human or animal. Reiki animal practitioners are now found in virtually every state as well as in a number of countries outside of the U.S., particularly Europe and Australia. You just may be surprised by the benefits and who knows, you may be inspired to enroll in Reiki training and get certified yourself! Reiki practitioners can be found in your area by searching online. ■

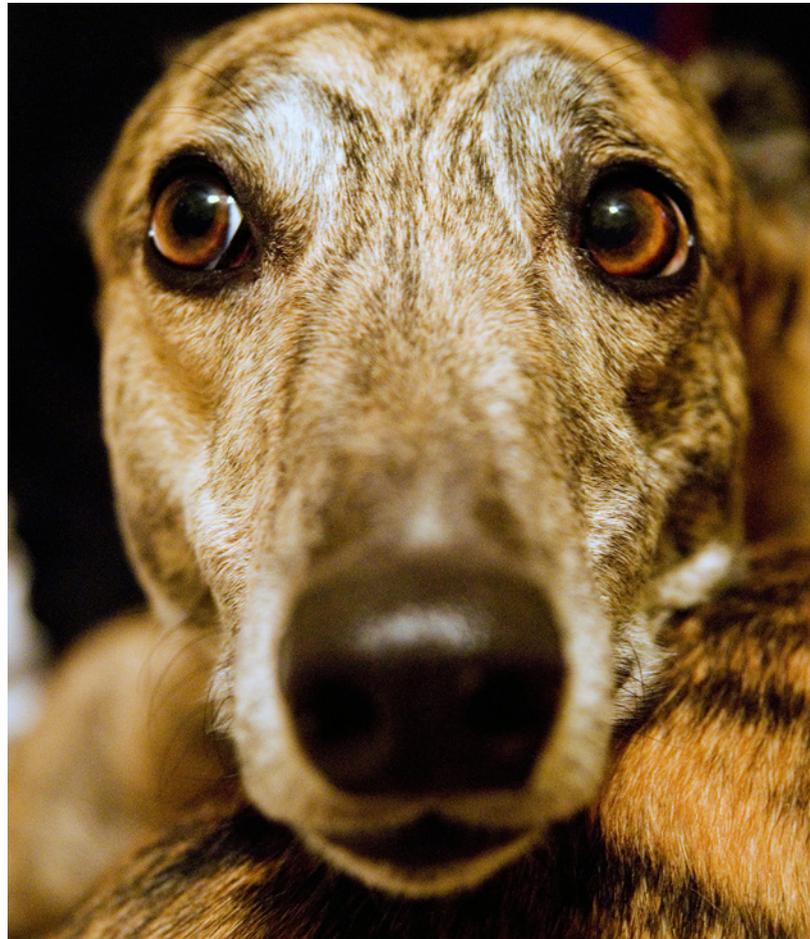
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*About the author: [Suzanne Burke](#) is a certified Reiki Master Teacher (RMT) in Dallas/Fort Worth, Texas, and author of [Logan's Secret](#) and [Logan and the Mystical Collar](#). She lives with her Greyhounds in Dallas, Texas, and volunteers with the [Greyhound Adoption League of Texas \(GALT\)](#).*



# Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Wolf?

Timid, shy, and spooky Greyhounds exhibit unique fear issues that can be helped with understanding and training.

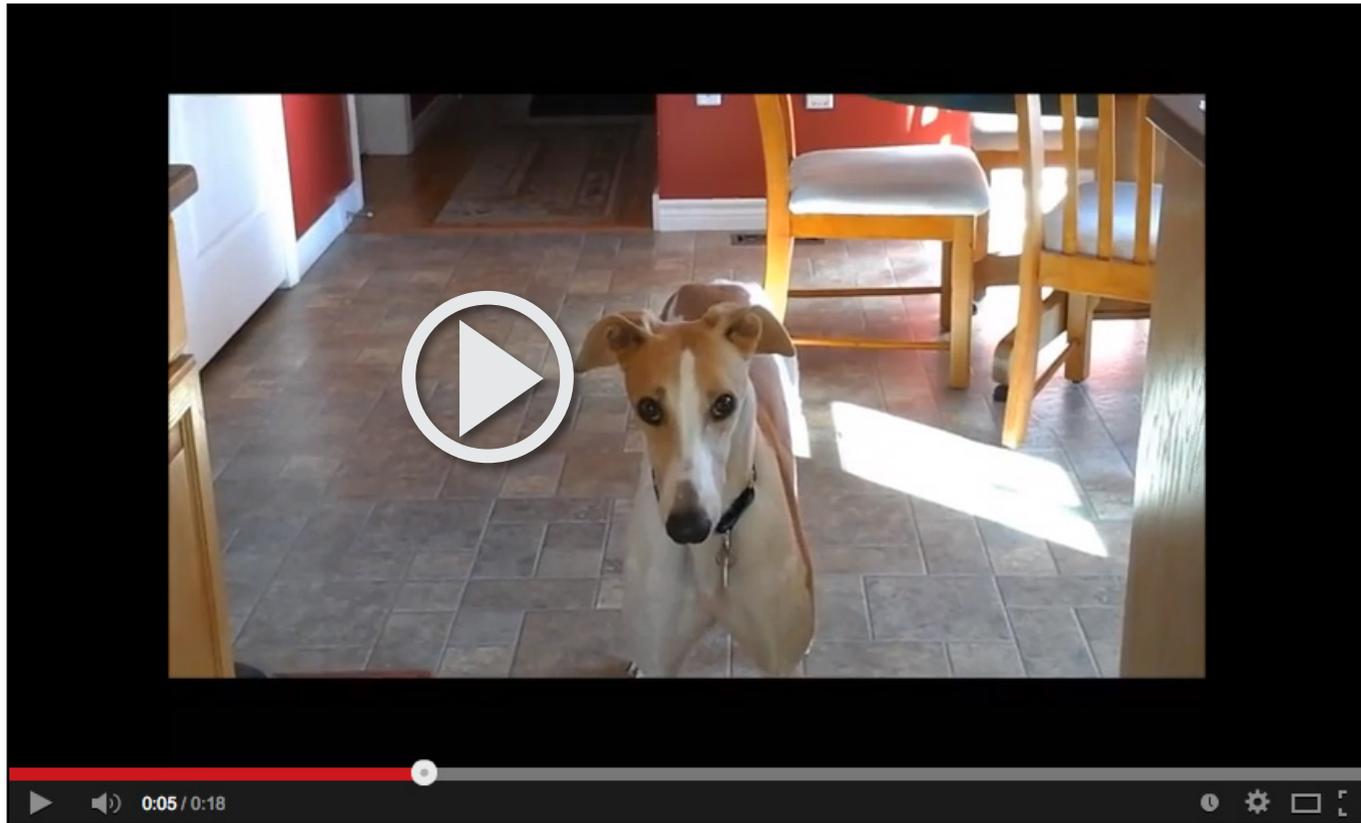


*By Deb Levasseur CTB (Certified Dog Trainer and Behavior Therapist)*

Have you ever heard people use the terms timid, shy, or spooky when referring to their Greyhounds and wonder what that means? These three terms can be confusing as people often erroneously use them interchangeably. In fact, these terms refer to diverse forms and varying degrees of fear issues. Some Greyhounds may display behaviors from all three categories while others may exhibit traits from only one. In order to better understand and recognize these different behaviors, we will examine video footage of each. We will

also discover what can be done to improve the lives of both fearful Greyhounds and their concerned owners.

Let's start by exploring the first category — timid. A timid Greyhound is generally apprehensive and jumpy in new situations. They can be startled by loud noises and take longer to recover than a more self-assured hound. Timid Greyhounds lack confidence and can be slow to warm up to new people. Interaction with strangers can cause them to experience mild to moderate distress. Notice how in the



*Timid Greyhound behavior*

following video the Greyhound approaches the stranger then quickly retreats. Although hesitant at first, it did not take long for him to warm up to the stranger and offer a play bow. Timid Greyhounds learn to trust their new family and can adapt fairly quickly.

Shy Greyhounds are even more

apprehensive than timid hounds. When we think of the term shy in human terms, we picture a person who feels insecure in the company of new people and who blushes easily when attention is drawn to them. Although shy canines equally dislike being the center of attention, they are also

very cautious and distrustful. Shy Greyhounds do not like to meet new people and they do not adapt well to change or new situations. Change can actually cause severe anxiety in a shy Greyhound. While a timid hound may approach a stranger, a shy hound will not approach a new person on her own. We see

in the following video the fawn Greyhound retreating and not at all willing to approach the person with the camera. We see her looking the other way, watching the person with distrust, keeping her ears flat and tail low. The brindle is willing to go right up to the person and say hello, whereas the shy fawn is worried and actively avoiding any interaction.

The rarest of the three types of fearful canines is the spooky Greyhound. This type of hound is extremely skittish and will overreact and panic in certain situations. Spooky Greyhounds can shut down completely when experiencing anxiety. They experience intense fearfulness and exhibit extreme reactions to the unknown. There appears to be a genetic component that influences the actions of spooky hounds and behavior modification may be painfully slow. This type of Greyhound will need lifelong management techniques to keep him safe and happy.



### *Shy Greyhound behavior*

In some cases, proper medication and professional intervention can help a spooky Greyhound live a richer and happier life. It is important to remember that living with large amounts of stress on a daily basis has damaging side effects for our canine friends.

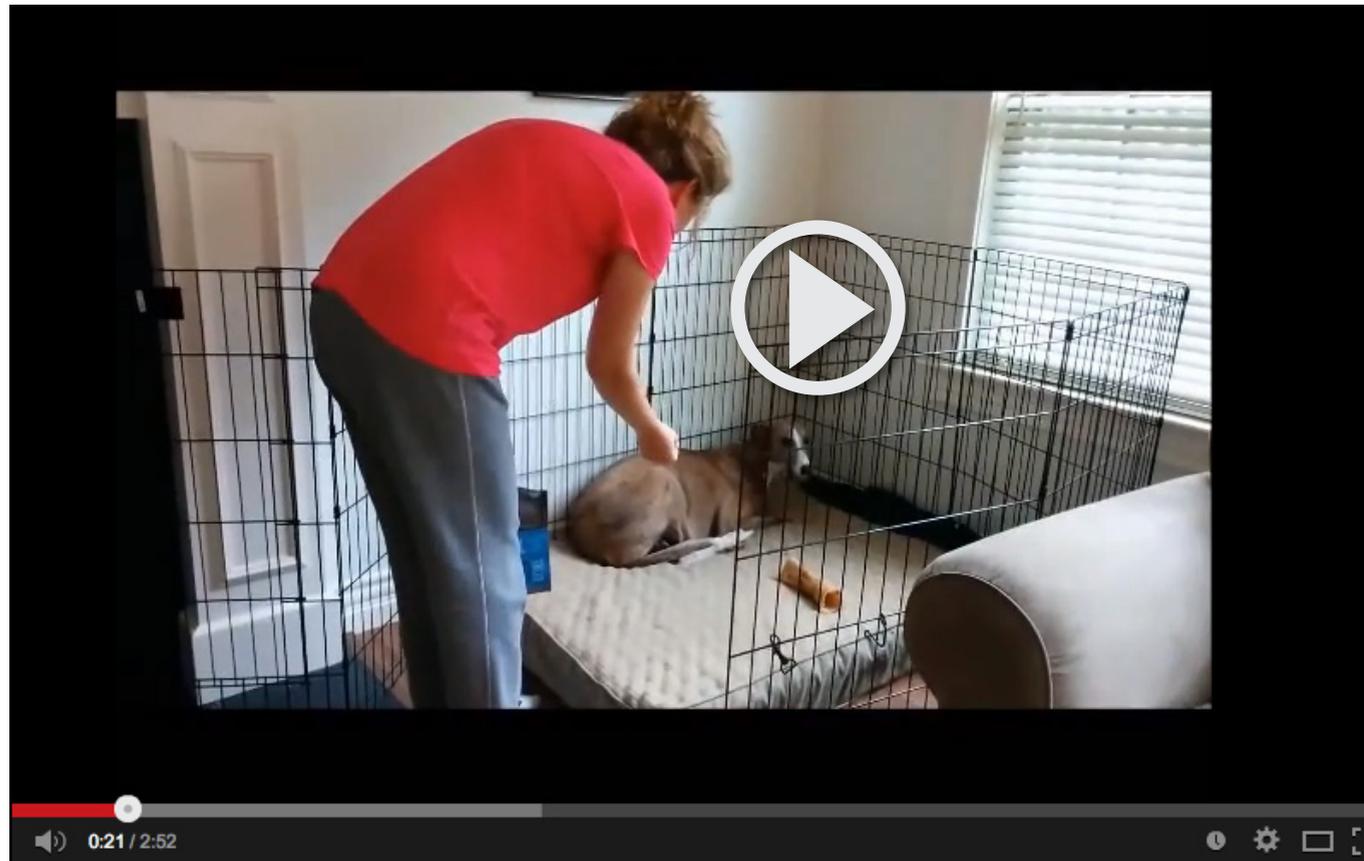
a person with extreme panic attacks or an anxiety disorder requires medication in order to function comfortably in society, so may this type of Greyhound.

If you suspect that your Greyhound is spooky, contact a veterinary behaviorist. Some

If the quality of your Greyhound's life can be improved through medication, then medical treatment should be considered in extreme cases. Medication may help you obtain improved results more rapidly when combined with a well-executed behavior modification program. Just as

specialists provide consultations through email or by telephone. The Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine at Tufts University offers **VETFAX Behavioral Consultation**, a veterinarian-to-veterinarian consulting service. There is also some great reading material in the book *The Well Adjusted Dog* by Dr. Nicolas Dodman.

In the following video footage we see Maggie, a two-year-old retired racing Greyhound who has been in her home for about six months. Her owner is trying to get her to come out of her exercise pen. She spends most of her time in the pen. If there is a stranger in the home she will not venture out for days except to a quickly dash to the door for a bathroom break. You can see her body language is low as she is exhibiting "whale eye" and has a tense body. "Whale eye" is when a dog shows the whites of her



*Spooky Greyhound behavior*

eyes which indicates anxiety. She has shut down and has no intention of getting up, even for her loving owner. If you have a Greyhound with extreme fearfulness, it may be related to hypothyroidism. This condition may cause unexplained fearfulness and aggression. Having a dysfunctional thyroid can

all the triggers that cause him to react and determine his tolerance threshold. This can be a daunting task if your Greyhound has a seemingly endless list of triggers. However, by labeling your hound's triggers, you may notice that they are fairly specific. For example, your Greyhound may react to only tall men, or to

increase the amount of the stress hormone cortisol running through the body. Once thyroid levels are balanced, your hound's behavior may improve dramatically.

If your veterinarian determines that there is no medical reason for your Greyhound's behavior, it is

important to identify

people who step into his personal space, or those who reach over his head. The triggers can be subtle, so try to be specific when identifying them. This will help immensely with your Greyhound's treatment program.

Once you have completed a list of triggers, work on identifying the point just before your hound will react. You want to keep your Greyhound calm at all times. Once your Greyhound reacts, he is over his threshold and the learning opportunity has passed. If that happens, get him out of the situation immediately, and the next time, keep him under his threshold. Each time your hound practices the behavior, it becomes more deeply

rooted. You will need to be able to read your Greyhound's body language well to train your hound without going over his threshold. One other note, most fearful dogs are more afraid of men than women due to the fact men are usually larger, have deeper voices, and move

differently. This does not mean he was ever mistreated by a man – men are just scarier to most fearful dogs.

Besides identifying your Greyhound's trigger, use the following tips to help build a treatment program for him:

- 1. Always keep your Greyhound under his tolerance threshold.** Be observant of your Greyhound's body language. Train in an area where your hound feels safe, and instruct helpers on how to behave around your Greyhound.
- 2. Pair up scary and new situations with amazing food.** Remember to give him small pieces of treats before he reaches his threshold.
- 3. Teach him to hand "target" and the "go find it game" (dropping treats on the ground) and play this when he is facing a scary situation.** Putting his brain into "seeking" mode will take him out of or

prevent him from going into fearful mode.

- 4. Work on a positive leadership program.** Greyhounds feel safe and more confident with a strong and benevolent leader who is obviously in charge.
- 5. Consider adding a second, more confident Greyhound.** This tip will not help every Greyhound and you should test its effectiveness prior to adopting a second hound. Fostering is an excellent opportunity to investigate whether a companion could help your Greyhound.
- 6. Socialize your Greyhound every day in a safe, fun, and positive way.** Short daily walks, car drives, and visits to quiet parks or walking trails can help boost your Greyhound's confidence. Pair up delicious treats with these events to create a positive association. Stuffed Kongs are wonderful for the car rides.
- 7. Use a harness for safety.** Use a safety strap

attached to the martingale and the leash as a backup plan, so if your Greyhound slips out of one there is another in place. Always be sure your martingale is tight enough, so it won't slip over his head and your Greyhound cannot back out of it. Front clipping harnesses are the best and give you more control if your Greyhound pulls.

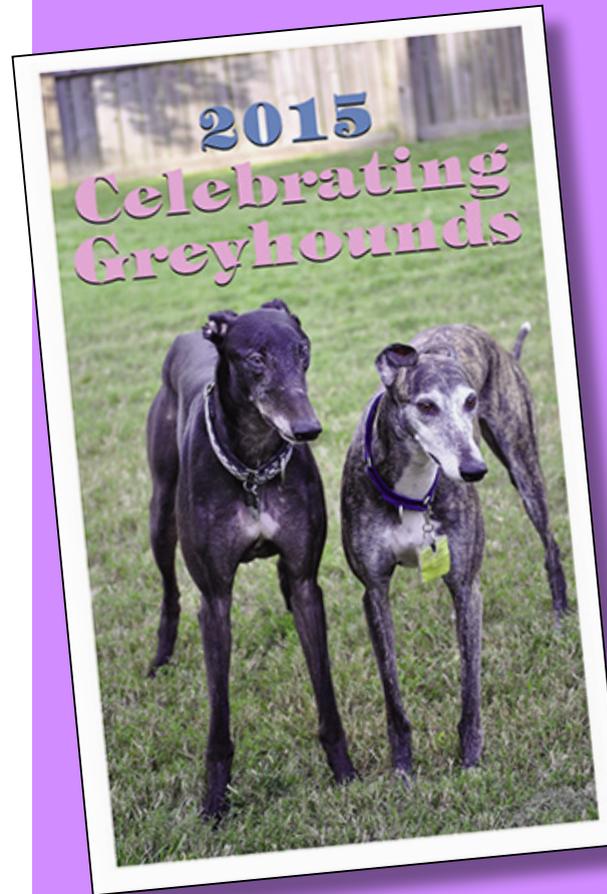
- 8. Avoid "flooding" your Greyhound.** Building a relationship with your Greyhound that is founded on trust is important. You should never do anything that could jeopardize this bond. Simply exposing your Greyhound to its fear will not help him to feel better about it. In fact, it will make matters worse in most cases.
- 9. Accept and love your Greyhound despite his flaws.** No hound is perfect, and it is important to understand that while

most Greyhounds can improve upon their fearfulness, some hounds may never be social butterflies.

We have seen three very different hounds in each video displaying our categories: timid, shy, and spooky. Working with fearful Greyhounds has many challenges, but it is also deeply meaningful and rewarding. Gaining the trust of a fearful Greyhound will not only change his life, but your life as well. Understanding your Greyhound and building a strong bond built on trust is the first step to a beautiful and enriching relationship with man's best friend. ■

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*About the author: **Deb Levasseur CTB** (Certified Dog Trainer and Behavior Therapist) is President and founder of the **Maritime Greyhound Adoption Program**.*



Get ready to ring in the New Year with a **2015 Celebrating Greyhounds Calendar!** Wall and desk calendars are still available for purchase at <http://www.adopt-a-greyhound.org/order.html>

# Greyhound Lost: A Minivan Warning

Greyhound Kazi's journey includes running across multi-lane highways and braving a cold, rainy night.

By Alice Brown



*A helpful feature on this minivan was to blame for the escape of two Greyhounds.*

**A**s I stood in our hotel room gazing into the large, searching eyes of my female Greyhound, Kazi, I felt numb. She rested on a dog bed that my husband and I had brought that day in case we were lucky. You see, we had just spent the last two days searching for her, and it was a search that at times had seemed hopeless. To be in the same room with her right now felt unreal. All of the possible outcomes of the past days swirled through my mind. How this experience ended this way was just short of a miracle. We had her back, unharmed; we stood in that room in a state of blissful shock.

It had been a glorious fall morning the day it began, perfect for an outing. My husband and I had been searching for the ideal dining room set for many months, so we decided to go on a shopping trip. Our Greyhounds begged to come along; they didn't need the table but love a good ride. Jumping into the back of our van without hesitation and curling up on their favorite travel beds, they were ready for adventure.

## A Minivan Warning



*Rusty took advantage of the open car door, but allowed himself to be collared by a concerned passerby.*

We headed out for our day of shopping, traveling south on the eastern shore of Virginia, a beautiful and unspoiled area between the Atlantic Ocean and Chesapeake Bay. We enjoyed

Bay Bridge Tunnel, an expanse of 18 miles of aquamarine water and steel-blue sky. This beauty and tranquility ended abruptly as we crossed the bridge into Virginia Beach, a bustling

traveling this stretch of road, where the fields of soy beans, corn, and cotton were abundant in the fall, where old buildings were untouched and repurposed and where Crepe Myrtle trees lined the rustic highway. It brought peace to our souls and was the reason we had chosen to relocate here.

Soon we came to the Chesapeake

city of wide streets filled with speeding cars — many, many cars. Arriving on the opposite side of the bridge always felt jarring to me. Virginia Beach and the Eastern Shore are polar opposites, and it was always a bit disconcerting to enter the city so quickly after leaving the serenity of the other side of the bay.

We got into the rhythm of the streets with their endless traffic lights and made our way to the store. Our sweet Greyhounds slept the entire trip and only raised their heads when we stopped at a red light or made a turn. We arrived at the furniture store ready to do some heavy shopping, and this is where our story takes a horrifying turn.

We parked, got out of our van, and checked to see that our dogs were settled in the back. All seemed well, so we moved into the store in anticipation of ferreting out something perfect for our home. After finding what we thought would work for us, and while discussing the

## A Minivan Warning



*Kazi bolted from the open vehicle and was missing for 25 hours.*

details with the salesperson, an announcement came over the loudspeaker. It seemed that something had happened regarding our van.

When I looked out of the front window of the store my heart sank. My husband, who had run

out before me, was already speaking to a person who had witnessed the incident. People hovering around the van spoke in low tones as I ran to see what had happened. The back of the van was open, the mouth of a giant cave with no animals sheltered inside. Our dogs were gone. My husband was talking to a bystander, and Rusty, our male Greyhound, was being held by a stranger. I approached the person restraining my dog, thanked him and asked what had happened.

For no apparent reason, the hatch on the back of the van had opened its great metal jaws. Confused and seeing no one, the dogs jumped out. Rusty, thinking a treat was in the offing, approached a stranger who grabbed his collar. As this person went to grab Kazi, she bolted. But where had she gone?

Greyhounds are very fast and, if they are the least bit skittish like Kazi, they are almost impossible to catch. My husband and I have owned Greyhounds for almost 25 years, but we have never lost a dog like this. Oh sure, now and again, one had gotten out of the backyard, but was always quickly recovered. This was terrifying. Here we were on one of the busiest streets in Virginia Beach, and she had already crossed it.

What to do first? Although numbed by fear, we wasted no time. My husband jumped into the car to scour the nearby streets, a stranger volunteering to go with him. I took Rusty and started out on foot, questioning people as I walked. Some people had seen her and all were sympathetic. Then a thought: we had worked with a Greyhound group from Virginia Beach for a few years. I was sure they would help.

Using my cellphone, I called the leader of our

## A Minivan Warning



*Kazi safely crossed two major roads and traveled a great distance in a short time before being captured in an industrial park.*

group. She, in turn, called others and before we knew it, we had a group of Greyhound owners and their dogs looking for our runaway. It is often said that emergencies bring out the best

the journey home. How hard it was. It had turned cold and rainy, and all I could think of was poor Kazi out in that horrible weather; it chilled me to the bone.

and worst in people. I only saw the best. Many people offered their help. What these good people didn't know was how important their simple acts of kindness were to us. They cared enough to help us look for our lost pet. And so we looked. We searched that entire day and into the night when it was too dark to search anymore. Finally, giving up for the evening, we were forced to make

That night, we slept very little. By early the next morning, we were back on the road heading south again across the bay. This time, we brought extra clothing so we could stay overnight. The weather was dreadful, still rainy and cold, but the cold was nothing compared to the frigid chill around our hearts at the loss of our dog.

Upon our arrival, we had flyers made and started posting them. Occasionally, we received calls from people who had heard of our plight and were willing to pass out flyers or to help in any way they could. Sometimes, it was just simple information sharing that helped to shape the rest of our day.

Helpless is the word that best describes our feelings as we trudged through the maze of that gloomy day. People called with sightings of what they thought could be our girl. We tried to follow up by posting flyers everywhere.

The weather worsened, the rain poured, and the sky darkened. By 4:30 p.m., we decided to stop and regroup for the next day. I looked at my husband as we sat in our car, both drenched from the rain, and for the first time said, "I don't think we're going to find her." With that thought, we headed for our hotel but on the way stopped at an emergency animal hospital to post our last flyer of the day.

Miracles happen so rarely that we tend not to believe them when they do. As we pulled into a parking space, my husband's phone rang. He wasn't quick enough to get it, but a message was left, and as he listened, he started motioning me with his hand. He hung up, looked at me and exploded, "They've found her!"

The unbelievable had happened. He called the number left on the phone, spoke to our savior, and received directions. As we hurried to pick up our little fugitive, we were in shock. Our emotions had just catapulted from despair to elation.

When we reached our destination, we were amazed at the distance our dog had covered in her 25-hour journey. She not only crossed one main road of nine lanes, but also another of 11. The miracle was not only had we found her, but that she was still alive and unharmed. After wandering into an industrial park where her rescuers had been working late, she approached

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***So we decided to solve our immediate problem by using the remoteless valet key when the dogs are in the car with us.***

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their door; they opened it and she walked right in. Reading her tag collar and a quick call was all that was needed to reconnect us.

You may be thinking, What a happy ending, but this could have ended very badly. I am writing this to inform and to warn others. My husband and I have a van that is comfortable

and useful, especially carrying two large-breed dogs. However, one of the special features of our car was the cause of this misadventure. At first, an automatically opening rear hatch appealed to us. If your arms were full, you could just press a button on the remote and the hatch would open. We, however, did not realize the distance the signal of that remote travels. When we were in the furniture store, my husband put the remote/car key into his back pocket and sat down. That simple action pressed the button for the rear hatch. Even if the doors are locked, one push of that button will open the hatch.

After this occurred, we asked our car dealer to disable this feature. Disabling it, however, would also disable other features of the vehicle that were needed. So we decided to solve our immediate problem by using the remoteless valet key when the dogs are in the car with us. You may wish to follow this suggestion if your dogs travel in the back of your van. After

## A Minivan Warning



*Rusty and Kazi were reunited for a happy ending.*

locking the vehicle, try to open the rear hatch with the remote using only one click. If it does open, be aware and act accordingly. Checking this could save you unwanted heartache.

Car manufacturers should rethink and recall vehicles with this poorly designed feature. I hope this is something that will be changed in the future design of minivans. We were just fortunate our story ended happily and well and that Kazi is safe in her bed. ■

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*About the author: Alice Brown is a retired educator who adopted her first Greyhound in 1991. In 1993, she began working with Greyhound Friends of NJ, Inc. as a volunteer organizing meet and greets and educating the public about the breed. She now lives on the Eastern Shore of Virginia and works with Old Dominion Greyhound Adoption, participating in town events with her group of volunteers and organizing meet and greets on the Shore. She is in the process of establishing a blog called Greyhound Roo, its purpose being a continuation and expansion of Greyhound education.*

# Many Happy Returns

An elderly Greyhound is returned and finds a forever home.

By Barbara Williams

The word came from the head of the **Mid-South Greyhound Adoption Option (MSGAO)** that we needed to post a special-needs Greyhound among the available Greyhounds listed under our group on **Greyhound-Data**. An elderly male, 12 going on 13, was returned when his similarly elderly owner became seriously ill and could no longer care for him.

I've been writing whimsical descriptions of available Greyhounds for the MSGAO website since 2009, with 438 currently under my belt. I say whimsical since I usually have no information to go on other than their names, racing records, and pedigrees. You can't predict personality nor do we try to on the website. As any adopter

knows, it can take up to six months for the adopted Greyhound's personality to shine through. I usually focus on whatever attracts my attention most. Usually it's the name that provides the most material. The names some of the owners give their racing Greyhounds can be quite interesting.

The descriptions sometimes include impassioned pleas for rehoming returns; there have been a mere five in my tenure. In most cases, the returns were prompted by an unfortunate change in a family's circumstances and ability to keep their pet. A few have occurred because the adopter was shallower, to



*Dodge on the car ride to his forever home with Dave and Barb Williams.*

be kind, than first perceived. "Did you see the price of a dental?" In all cases, it was best for those dogs to come back to the program so a more appropriate family could be found.

When the return of these Greyhounds is communicated to me, my first thoughts always go to the dogs. How traumatic for a Greyhound, especially if he had been a longtime family member, to be forced to leave the people he knows and loves and come back to the kennel.



*Dodge (top right) joined Lance (front) and Poppy (left) at the Williams residence.*

Then the Greyhound has to face acclimating to a new family and surroundings. Since Greyhounds are creatures of habits and schedules, the change has to be most upsetting.

So, when it is time to post a return, I always make sure we communicate that it was through no fault of the Greyhound. MSGAO also waives the adoption fee to speed the returned hound's journey back into a home. I go for impassioned

when expressing the situations these Greyhounds face. I like to believe my pleas are effective since each dog has been rehomed fairly swiftly.

Since I have not become totally jaded about the world, even though I was a journalist for a good portion of my career and cynical is my natural bent, I am not immune to my own pleas. Several months ago, a 10-year-old was returned due to her owner's reluctance to do the dental

work she needed. Apparently dental care was absent through her entire time with the family. She came back, needing 19 extractions. MSGAO stepped up and took care of her. The loss of teeth does not affect her ability to scarf down food in that inimitable Greyhound fashion.

My husband and I had to go to the kennel shortly after I posted this sweet girl's availability. Our intent was to drop off donations received at our monthly meet and greet. On the way over, we discussed the possibility of adding Summer to our family, which numbered two Greyhounds, both the same age as her.

Just as we broached the subject with Vicki Cohen, the program director, a youngish man (well, younger than us), came into the kennel. His face showed signs of pain and concern. His one Grey, he said, would be passing soon and his other Greyhound was the type who would absolutely need another companion. I don't know whether he had perused our website before making the trip to West Memphis,

but his first statement, after explaining his circumstances, was to say he was looking for an older Greyhound.

Our somewhat impulsive idea took a backseat immediately to this adopter's real need. A day later, Summer was safely ensconced in her new home. His other Greyhound passed within days. It was a dream adoption all around.

My husband and I were thinking we had dodged a bullet, so to speak. We have often bantered about the idea of a third Greyhound — especially while we were in London for our 25th wedding anniversary and having a drink at a pub named "The Three Greyhounds;" an omen, we declared. But we generally came to our senses about not disturbing the status quo, which was working pretty darn good in our eyes.

But this last plea did it to me. The email from Vicki simply stated the circumstances of Dodge's return. It was verified by the veterinarian that he was in great shape for his age. She said what we needed to communicate was that Dodge just needed a soft place to stay until he



*Dave and Barb considered adopting Summer, who quickly found a great home of her own.*

came to the end of his days.

I posted this information on Greyhound-Data and then on the MSGAO website, under a "special-needs Greyhound" section. A link was shared on our Friends of Mid-South Greyhound Adoption Facebook page, a large and lively community of more than 700 members. Surely someone out there had room "in their homes and their hearts" for this poor boy. My plea prompted an examination of my own heart. Was it big enough to provide this boy that soft place to stay until the end drew nigh? I went out to the screened porch, where my husband

was relaxing after that day's meet and greet. We were planning to leave in about 90 minutes for a nice steak at a local restaurant.

I told him about Dodge's plight, then asked him if it was time for us to take on that third Greyhound we always talked ourselves out of? We are not wealthy, but neither are we poor. We had always tried to be generous to the adoption program with both time and money. But were we truly generous enough to take on this new responsibility?

Dave did not hesitate with an affirmative. He was no dog lover when we got involved in Greyhounds, but has since become a complete convert to the cause and the breed.

The kennel was scheduled to close in half an hour and I did not want Vicki to work late, but we were prepared to jump in the SUV and head across the Mississippi to West Memphis. Vicki was somewhat taken aback when I called to tell her we were coming for Dodge but agreed that we could take him. "Tonight or tomorrow," she asked. "Tonight, so we have more time for



*While he wasn't a Greyhound person when they got married, Dave followed his wife's lead and now loves their Greyhound pack, including Dodge.*

observation," we replied. We hopped in the SUV and hit the road. I had to admit it was great fun texting my son to inform the instigator of our Greyhound journey that we were on the way to pick up a third dog.

Traffic was with us and we got to the kennel speedily. Out in the holding pen was a lone red

Greyhound, ears erect. "Do you think that's him?" I quietly asked Dave. As we approached, the very thin hound came to the fence and gave us a beseeching look. It had to be Dodge.

Indeed it was. He was brought to us immediately and Vicki gave us the rundown of the available information about Dodge. He had been a return previously, we were informed, before the woman who had become ill adopted him.

Minutes later he was in the back of our SUV and heading to his new and final home. Dinner that night for us ended up being hot dogs and macaroni and cheese rather than a nice steak. But we didn't begrudge the change in dinner plans. We had a night of entertainment ahead, acquainting Dodge with his new brothers, Lance and Poppy, as well as our house. Dodge showed spirit that belied his age, wanting to go on a walk with his new brothers. He even tried to tackle the steps when it was time to retire for the night. Previously he had lived in a trailer, so steps were still new to him at age 12. He made it halfway

up before getting his backside boosted up the rest of the way. He also needs to be fattened up a bit, and he came to the right place for that. We have always had liberal policies toward snacks, for ourselves and our Greyhounds.

We don't seek "ataboys" or gratitude for what we are doing. Someone always has to step up, and this was our turn. Dodge's situation touched our hearts, plain and simple. Now that we have him, we are finding he is the sweetest and most loving boy. We are happy to have him with us and hope the feeling is mutual.

We don't know how long Dodge will be with us, but we have pledged to make it pleasant and loving to the best of our abilities. No, we didn't dodge the bullet this time. The bullet named Dodge hit us square in the heart. ■

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*About the author: Barb Williams is a CG Magazine copyeditor who lives with her husband, David, and the three Greyhounds named above in Memphis, Tennessee.*

# Barbara's whimsical descriptions

## **Claymore** (Kelsos Claymore)

He has nay Scots blood in his veins, but Claymore defeated more dogs (on the track that is) than we can count. He cut like his namesake broadsword through his competition, earning high ratings along the way. This is one case where blood tells, with his parentage including the likes of Dodgem By Design (cute as well as fast) and farther back, Flying Penske. Adopt Claymore and you get more than a pet. You get a piece of Greyhound royalty!

## **Obama** (Magic Obama)

Despite his name, Obama assures us he is not a political animal. He doesn't care what side of the fence your political preferences lie on. All he cares is that you have a fence so he can display his running skills in the back yard. Obama raced – and won – at the highest level at Southland and in Florida. Take home a real winner with Obama!

## **Mcdreamy** (RS Libbys Dream)

Tall, dark brindle and handsome? Mcdreamy may be the Greyhound version of the Grey's Anatomy's Patrick Dempsey, who played Dr. Derek Christopher Shepherd, also referred to as McDreamy. The four-legged Mcdreamy had a much steadier career than his fictional namesake! He's ready for a long-term, monogamous relationship with an adoptive family!

## **Train** (Vogo Coal Train)

This big Train from West Memphis is fully coaled and ready to chug, chug into your home! "I think I can be adopted right away," says Train. He went around the track (not the railroad type) 45 times but now he wants to make tracks to a home station. Could it be yours?

## **Batman** (Mega Batman)

Holy dog bed! Deep within the adoption cave, er, kennel, Batman watches the sky intently, awaiting the signal that tells him he is urgently needed. He is ready and eager to fight the good fight against the loneliness experienced by those who haven't adopted a Greyhound yet. Help him in his quest. Adopt Batman!

## **Scooby** (Dakotas Scooby)

Scooby, where are you? At the kennel of course, waiting to be adopted. Time to crank up the Mystery Machine and get over to the MSGAO kennel to meet this fine fellow. Rather than chasing ghosts and ghouls, this Scooby chased a stuffed bone named Rusty around the track more than 100 times. He may have never actually caught it, but he outpaced many a competitor during his career. Now he would like to join a family who knows the meaning of the word Scooby snack. That's a fact!

# Are They GOOD with Kids?

By Mary Renck Jalongo



*Finding a balance between the child's safety and doing right by the Greyhound needs to govern decisions about placing retired racers in families with young children.*

There are several steps adoption groups can take to ensure the successful placement of retired racers in families with young children.

A common question at meet and greets has to do with the success of retired racers as companion animals in families with children. As with so many other things, the answer depends — not just on the retired racer, but also on the child and the family. In answer to the question, “Are Greyhounds good with young children?” On its website, [Recycled Racers of Colorado](#) states they are, “better than most pure breeds. Greyhounds are generally gentle and patient dogs, but they do not want to be harassed or harmed, by accident or on purpose, by a child or anyone.”

Policies published on the websites of



*Calm and easy-going Greyhounds are generally a good match for families with children.*

adoption groups vary. For example, Golden State Greyhound Adoption in California, “generally does not adopt out Greyhounds to families with children under 5 years old. Special exceptions may be made.” Arizona Greyhound Rescue (AGR) explains kids and Greyhounds by saying, “They are better than most breeds, but not as tolerant as some. If a child becomes overbearing, they will usually walk away rather than snap or growl. However, every dog has its limits. Because Greyhounds are gentle by nature, most are fine with children 8 years or older who have been taught a respect for animals. Most adoption groups are hesitant to place any breed of dog in a family with toddlers unless there are specific assurances that strict parental supervision will be provided over both the child and the dog.”

Finding a balance between the two goals — assuring the child’s safety and doing right

by the dog — needs to govern decisions about placing retired racers in families with young children.

## Dog Bites and Children

Current statistics on dog bites in young children include:

- **The Center for Disease Control (CDC)** notes approximately 440,000 children in the United States need medical attention for dog bites each year.
- **The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA)** reports that 61 percent of dog bites occur at home or in a familiar place.
- **The CDC** says that, statistically speaking, boys between the ages of 5 and 9 are the most likely to be bitten.
- **The AMVA** states that 60 percent of reported dog bite incidents involve children.
- Due to their smaller stature and strength, young children often are bitten on the head,



*A child who is taught how to safely interact with Greyhounds can form wonderful relationships, as evidenced by 11-year-old Kaitlyn Werner's interaction with Deyner and Kyvin. / Photo by Todd Werner*

face, or neck. Adults tend to be bitten on their hands, arms, or legs. The [Dog Bite Law website](#) reports that 71 percent of dog bites sustained by children under the age of 10 are to the face.

- The AVMA Task Force on Canine Aggression and Human-Canine Interactions reported in 2001 that dog bites rank second, after bicycle accidents, as the reason for seeking treatment in hospital emergency rooms.

As these facts and figures indicate, dog bites not only occur most frequently among young children, but also are more likely to result in disfigurement and accompanying long-term emotional trauma.

## Preventing Dog Bites

### 1. Be a Matchmaker

A careful match between Greyhound and family is the most important part of the process. Retired racers that were raised by a “mom-and-pop” kennel may have been socialized to

children while they were still puppies. Perhaps the children were involved playing games of chase with the pups or participating in their care. If so, those happy memories may be helpful in making the transition to a home with children. For many ex-racers, socialization with children has been minimal or nonexistent. Try to find out as much as you can about the dog's history with children before and during foster placement.

On the other side of the equation, the adoptive family in question needs to view the dog as much more than a gift, an impulse buy, or a plaything for a child; otherwise, they cannot be expected to make the commitment necessary to successfully integrate a retired racer into a family.

### 2. Conduct a Home Visit

In a survey of 193 new owners of retired racers through the Greyhound Adoption Program (GAP), researchers found that nearly 30 percent of new adopters telephoned to get



*Boys between the ages of 5 and 9 are the most likely to sustain a dog bite, although you wouldn't guess it by 8-year-old Jake Ring's loving relationship with Phoebe. / Photo by Kelly Ring Photography*

advice from the adoption group during the first month. The best predictor of which dogs would “bounce back” was an owner's decision to

consult with a veterinarian about a behavioral concern during the first month.

The main recommendation from this research was for adoption groups to conduct in-home visits, particularly for families with young children. It may not be enough to see young children acting on their best behavior, the adoption representative needs to stay long enough for the child to relax and show her or his everyday behavior. Consider requesting that the family participate in a meet and greet, because this too will give some indication of how the child is likely to interact with Greyhounds.

### **3. Assess Dog Temperament**

Adopters with young children need to look beyond the superficial appeal of a particular Greyhound — color, markings, attractiveness, and so forth. Temperament has to be the priority. Retired racers that are particularly intense, easily startled, and reactive to new situations are not a good match for families with very young children. If the Greyhound in

question guards resources or has sleep startle issues, this is a red flag for placement in a family. Young children cannot be relied upon to leave the dog's food or toys alone, or refrain from crawling up on a dog's bed to see what it is like.

The most common situation in which a bite occurs is when a young child gets too familiar, too fast, with a dog (e.g., approaching it quickly, hugging it, petting it vigorously, reaching inside a fenced-in area or car). Particularly if the family, neighbors, and friends have other dogs the child plays with, the child's style of interaction can be alarming to the newly adopted Greyhound. Calm, easygoing, happy-go-lucky types of dogs — the ones that professional trainers refer to as “bomb proof” — generally have the best temperament for a family that includes young children.

### **4. Set the Stage**

Young children's behavior is, in the words of Canadian emergency physicians Dr. Mia Lang and Dr. Terry Klassen, “unintentionally



*Some Greyhounds were raised with children as puppies on the farm, making it easier for them to transition to a home with children upon retirement.*

provocative” of aggression from dogs.

Generally speaking, dogs don’t like surprises, and young children are full of them. Some toddlers will pull the dog’s tail or ears, stick

a finger in the dog’s eye, stomp on the dog’s foot, or stare at the dog. Even children who are more respectful will run, scream, make sudden movements, and behave in unpredictable ways.

Anthrozoologist John Bradshaw, in his bestselling book *Dog Sense*, says that children are an entirely different category of being from a dog’s perspective. Children need to be taught the appropriate behavior — quiet, slow, and gentle — when approaching a dog. If the child is an out-of-control toddler, there is potential for disaster with a dog of just about any temperament or breed. These families need to hear, in a diplomatic way, that it would be better for the family and the dog if they wait until the child is better able to understand and comply with the rules as well as participate in caring for the dog.

### **5. Emphasize Supervision and Education**

Make sure adopters do not have the mistaken notion that a dog will teach a child

to be responsible. Teaching responsibility to children is the job of the parents, not a dog. Be certain that families are realistic about the fact that interactions between their child and the dog have to be supervised, particularly during the first month in the home.

Without any intention of sounding sexist, research suggests that, generally speaking, responsibility for a dog’s care, training, and supervision with children falls to the mother. Whatever the family’s particular situation, the adults needs to realize that adding a dog can bring joy, yes, but it also involves more work, considerable inconvenience, added expense, and a huge investment of time to be a responsible dog owner.

Families not only need to be vigilant about potentially hazardous situations and intervene before a bite occurs, they also need to teach their own young children, as well as other children who visit the family, basic dog safety. The following rules were adapted for young

children/retired racers from the [American Veterinary Medical Association](#), the [American Kennel Club](#), and the [National Association for Humane and Environmental Education](#).

1. Always ask the owner if it is okay before you touch a strange dog.
2. To make friends, let a dog sniff the back of your hand first, then pet it gently, but not on the face or on top of the head. Pet its chest or shoulder instead.
3. Don't be rough with dogs. You don't like it when somebody pats you hard on top of your head. Dogs don't like it either.
4. When you meet a dog, wait for the owner to introduce you. Find out about the dog so that you can do things that the dog likes. That way, it will learn to like you.
5. Don't bother dogs while they are eating, they might think you are trying to steal their food.
6. If you give a dog a treat, put it in the palm of your hand. If you hold it in your

fingers, the dog might grab at the food and accidentally bite you.

7. Don't hug or squeeze or kiss a dog. It might get scared and bite your face.
8. Never reach inside a fence or car or crate to pet a dog, even a dog you know. Don't get on the dog's bed either. Dogs say, "It's mine!" by growling, barking, and biting.
9. If a dog is sleeping or looks like it is tired, leave it alone. A dog that is scared may jump or bite.
10. Never tease dogs or play "keep away" with their food or toys. They won't want to be your friend if you are mean to them.
11. Don't play rough games like pulling and chasing. Dogs can get excited and snap at you or accidentally knock you down.
12. If the dog runs up to you, jumps on you or tries to chase you, stand still and be quiet. Don't scream and run because the dog will think it is a game and chase you even more.
13. If a dog knocks you down, be quiet, curl up



*A child's sudden movements and unpredictable behavior can be a recipe for disaster with any dog.  
/ Photo by Stacy Pigott*

into a ball, and cover your face and neck.  
14. If a dog is lost, sick, or hurt, get an adult to help. Dogs that are afraid sometimes bite because they are scared.

### **6. Remind Adults to be Role Models**

Encourage adults to show, by their own consistent example, how to interact safely with their new Greyhound. Given that many Greyhounds have sleep startle or even sleep with eyes open, emphasize to families it is difficult to tell when retired racers are just resting versus sleeping. During the home visit, demonstrate to families how to approach the dog cautiously and say its name before petting. Encourage families to explain safety concepts in ways that relate the experiences of a young child. For example:

“How do you feel when someone jumps out and yells ‘BOO!’ at you? What about if somebody gives you a big bear hug and squeezes really hard? What if someone squishes you by sitting too close on the car seat? What about if someone pulls your hair, pinches you or takes

your toy and won’t give it back? Dogs don’t like any of those things either. You should not hug, squeeze, kiss, and squish dogs. You and you should never pull on their fur, tails, or ears, be rough with them, or tease them.”

### **7. Teach Safety Rules**

Instruct families in appropriate behavior to avoid overwhelming the Greyhound. Introductions between a child and the dog should be conducted by a trusted adult, one child at a time. Suggest that families ban rough and tumble play, even when there are other dogs in the home that enjoy this. Give them tips on double and triple locking gates and doors during the home visit. Also, emphasize



*Children who get too familiar, too fast, with a new Greyhound risk getting bitten in return. Learning how to safely interact with a Greyhound can result in many benefits for children, as evidenced by the bond Sophia and Tommy Ostrander share with Go Blue. / Photo by Alissa Saylor Photography*

that children — even older children — cannot be trusted to walk a powerful, athletic dog. If the child wants to participate in walking the dog,



*Successfully adopting Greyhounds into good homes with children helps educate the next generation of dog owners. / Photo by Todd Werner*

suggest that family to get a web leash with two handles, one down low for the child to use and one up top for the adult. Also give the

dog a place to get away from it all. For most Greyhounds, that would be a crate or a soft bed. All of this may seem like a lot of trouble, but taking a few minutes now can prevent a disaster later on.

### **8. Recommend and Distribute Resources**

Two books helpful books on dog adoption are Brian Kilcommons and Sarah Wilson's *Childproofing Your Dog and Living with Kids and Dogs ... Without Losing Your Mind* by Colleen Pelar. Suggest to prospective adoptive families that they prepare for the arrival of the new Greyhound, not just by a visit to the store for supplies, but by teaching their child to learn more about being a kind and responsible dog owner. There are many excellent, free resources for children (see sidebar) that get them involved in learning about dogs, observing the dog's behavioral cues, and interpreting the dog's behavior accurately. Introducing these materials when the child is begging to get a dog accomplishes

two things: first, it distracts the child from constant pestering while the family waits for the right dog; and second, it supplies valuable information at a time when the child is highly motivated to learn.

Adoption groups can access valuable information specific to Greyhounds and children posted on the websites of other organizations that work with retired racers. The sidebar includes downloadable resources, such as a brochure, FAQs, lists of "do's and don'ts," and articles that offer good advice on the placement of retired racers in families with young children. Consider printing some of these materials and making them available at meet and greets so that families with young children are better informed before they initiate an adoption application.

## **Conclusion**

When you think about it, it is truly amazing how resilient and adaptable most retired racers



*A Greyhound can be a wonderful friend for a child who is well-behaved and gentle around animals.*

are in adjusting to families, given their previous lifestyle in kennels and at the track. At the same time, families with young children who decide to take these animals into their homes also need to make significant adjustments to their routines and behavior.

Perhaps the best answer to the common question of, “Are they good with small children?” is, “Yes, this particular Greyhound has been in a foster home with young children without incident. He appears to be tolerant of children who are respectful, well-behaved, have been taught to be gentle with animals, and who are supervised by the adults.” As the site [Running with the Big Dogs](#) states, when a placement fails, it is a lose/lose/lose — for the agency, for the family and child, and for the dog: “Everyone involved in Greyhound adoption goes through horrible turmoil because of retired racers that are bounced. They second guess their placement strategies and policies, they question if they should have or could have seen something that might have prevented each unsuccessful adoption. They lose sleep and shed tears and wonder why they keep doing adoptions.”

Placing a retired racer in a family with young children has an even higher potential

for failure and bounce back. Accomplishing a successful adoption requires much more from all of the adults involved because they are not only finding the dog a good home, they are educating the next generation of dog owners. ■

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*About the author: Mary Renck Jalongo, Ph.D., has adopted three Greyhounds from Monica’s Heart Greyhound adoption in Altoona, Pennsylvania. She volunteers to support many different projects, including a new service dog training program at State Correctional Facility Pine Grove. Mary is a professor at Indiana University of Pennsylvania; her most recent book is Teaching Compassion: Humane Education in Early Childhood. She recently collaborated on a study to compare children’s skill in reading aloud under two conditions: (1) with a peer and (2) with an adult volunteer/therapy dog. The research found that elementary school children performed significantly better when reading aloud with the dog and handler. The article has been accepted for publication in Society & Animals.*

# Free Online Resources for Dog Bite Prevention Suitable for Children



*Young children should to be taught not to bother a Greyhound that is resting or sleeping, to decrease the chance of an accidental bite due to sleep startle.*

## American Kennel Club (AKC)

This site has a special “Kids’ Corner” that includes information about responsible dog ownership, a free newsletter, reproducible activity sheets, and drawing contests for children.

**Canis Major** This site includes a dog owner’s guide and various informative articles for parents, such as “Kids and Dogs: A Common Sense Approach,” by Vicki DeGruy.

## Doggone Crazy!

This site contains safety tips that are suitable for children in the primary grades and their parents and families; click on the “Bite Prevention” bone. Children can take a “Dog Body Language Quiz,” illustrated with photographs of dogs. They also can review a list called “Teresa’s Bad Rules,” so named because children don’t always like to follow them when playing with dogs!

## Doggone Safe

Click on “Dog Bite Prevention” to get free resources for parents and children. One of the links, “Be a Dog Detective,” teaches children to read canine behavior and interpret it appropriately. At this site, you can download

two “Learn to Speak Dog” checklists — one for children, one for adults — that use photographs to teach how to read dog body language.

## Love Your Dog

This site includes a list of seven basic rules called “Keeping Safe: Don’t Bother Dogs,” that uses photographs to illustrate how to interact safely with dogs. The materials are suitable for preschool through third grade. It also prepares families for the additional expense involved in getting a dog.

## National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (NCIPC)

Facts and figures about dog bites and ways to prevent them are featured at this Centers for Disease Control-sponsored site. A four-minute podcast, “**So Your Child Wants a Dog,**” offers sound advice.

## Website Resources for Adoption Groups on Greyhounds and Children

### Fast Friends Greyhound Rescue, Inc.

A very helpful, professionally prepared brochure for families on ways to build behaviorally healthy relationships between children and Greyhounds. Consider duplicating it and distributing it at meet and greets.

### Elite Greyhound Adoptions

This south Florida group has a five-minute video called "Greyhounds for Families with Kids!" that is about the positive characteristics of Greyhounds. You may want to temper it a bit with "10 Reasons Not to Adopt a Greyhound" from [Running with the Big Dogs](#).

### Golden State Greyhounds

Offers a list of "dos and don'ts" called "Greyhounds with Children and Other Pets."

### Kindred Spirits Greyhound Adoption

Advice on successfully integrating the retired racer into a family with children that is suitable for sharing with prospective adopters.

### National Greyhound Adoption Program NGAP

The article "Small Child, Add a Greyhound," offers wisdom about placing Greyhounds in families based on more than 20 years of experience.

[Southeastern Greyhound Club, Chris Garret](#) An article with sound advice on retired racers and children being part of the same family.

### Virginia Greyhound Adoption

Laura Goodearl's tips, "Living with Greyhounds and Small Children," are posted here.



# Who's The Boss?

When it comes to Greyhound training and behavior, do you really need to be the pack leader?

By: Deb Levasseur CTB



Whenever I hear two or more people discussing their dog's behavior, the term "alpha" is most likely going to be used, or at the very least, the term "dominance." It seems people are still buying into the old "alpha theory" that was scientifically debunked a long time ago.

Believing in the alpha theory in 2014 is sort of like still believing that animals have no emotions. We often blame a Greyhound's behavioral problems on the person not being the "alpha" or "pack leader." You might have been told your hound soiled his crate to show you who is boss, he growled at the child because the child wasn't dominant enough, he ate his poop because he knows you don't like it, he jumps on you to show you he is boss, or any number of similar explanations.

Who even decided that dogs want to be the

bosses in the first place? It's all ridiculous reasoning when you think about it. And what some so-called trainers are telling people to do to fix the problem is even more ridiculous and, in some cases, downright dangerous and inhumane.

Dominance is not a description of the character of a Greyhound or a person. It is a description of a specific relationship. No one can or wants to be dominant all the time. Dominance roles are fluid and depend on competition. Greyhounds simply don't compete for things they don't care about. They are not competing with us when they get ahead of us on walks, for example. If this were truly dominance, the dog would growl and warn you to stay back when you caught up to him. But dogs don't do this. True dominance aggression is rare in dogs and should only be diagnosed by a certified professional.

People have equated control to dominance. Having control over our Greyhounds is not being dominant. Having control is what most of us want and need, but the problem is how we try to achieve it. The reason that people hold on to the dominance theory is because it is easier for most people to understand and implement. Simply being the pack leader means we don't have to learn how dogs think and learn, or what they need in order to live a good, quality life.

Instead of a pack leader, think of yourself as part parent and part best friend to your hound. Set fair guidelines, and teach and guide your Greyhound to follow them instead of using discipline only. Play with them and enjoy them. Learn how they communicate and listen to them.

We should all strive remove the term "alpha" from our vocabulary when we are referring to dogs. Instead, find the accurate terms and use

them. Greyhounds can exhibit controlling behavior at times, for example, or they can compete for a scarce resource. This may also help you discover the real issues you are having with your hound, and bring even more joy into the relationship!

Wildlife biologist Dr. David Mech researched wolves for more than 40 years, and does not even use the term "alpha" when describing wolf behavior. Should we really be using it for dog behavior? Check out this [short video](#) of Dr. Mech explaining it in his own words. ■

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*About the author: [Deb Levasseur CTB](#) (Certified Dog Trainer and Behavior Therapist) is President and founder of the [Maritime Greyhound Adoption Program](#).*



# There's No Crying on Christmas Eve

By B. Gordon DeKing

It was a cold and snowy Christmas Eve and Santa was on his way with his toy-filled sleigh. As he was crossing over the Midwest of the United States, he began to hear someone crying. It came from a small town in Illinois. He thought to himself, "No one should be crying on Christmas Eve!" With a flash of his sleigh and eight tiny reindeer they followed the sound to a shelter kennel. As he approached the kennel, the crying became louder and sadder. When he entered the kennel, he could see a small, fawn-colored, female Greyhound in the very last run by the exit door.

In his soft and calm voice, Santa asked, "What's all the crying about little one? What's your name?" With a soft and sad voice, the

Greyhound replied, "V-V-Vortex. Vortex is my name. Who, who are you?" she said softly.

"Me?" Santa responded with a ho-ho-ho laugh. "Some call me Father Christmas, others call me Kris Kringle, but most call me Santa Claus. And you, little one, can just call me Santa! Every Christmas Eve I bring joy to everyone all over the world."

"How do you do that?" said the little fawn.

"I bring presents to anyone who has been good all year long," replied Santa. "Why are you crying little one? This is a happy time of the year. A time for joy and giving," said Santa.

"Well, I am all alone. No one wants me! All the other Greyhounds have been adopted or are in homes for the holidays, but not me.



They say I'm too wild and erratic, like my name, to be adopted," she said sadly.

"Well," said Santa, "You won't be alone this Christmas. You can come and ride with me as I spread joy to the world. Would you like that?"

"Oooh, yes, Mr. Santa. I would like that!" Vortex replied.

So off they flew into the night spreading love and joy to the world. As Santa was completing his final deliveries and the morning

sun was breaking through, he turned to Vortex and said, "What are we going to do with you little one?" Then all of a sudden, with a big, happy smile on his face Santa says, "I have a great idea what to do with you. Come ride with me back to the Midwest!"

"Are we going back to the kennel?" Vortex asked with a sad face.

"No my little one. No more kennel for you," replied Santa.

And away they flew back to the Midwest. Then with a loud laugh Santa said, "We are here. See that nice little ranch house down there? The one with the white fence in the backyard? That is going to be your new home."

With swiftness, they landed the sleigh in the front yard of the neat little house. "Now come with me and be very quiet. We don't want to wake anyone," Santa said softly with his finger to his nose. In a flash they were standing before a fireplace with a small, but beautiful,

Christmas tree next to it with its lights all aglow.

"Who lives here?" asked Vortex.

"A nice older couple who lost their 13-year-old Greyhound, Joe, last year. I feel that you can fill the lonely hole in their hearts from Joe's loss. They will have the love and patience to work with you to make you a happy and loveable dog that I know you are. With time, you will see what I mean, little one," Santa said.

With that, Santa placed a blanket under the tree for Vortex to lie on, but not before placing a big red bow on top of her head with a note saying, "Merry Christmas, from Santa."

With a wink of an eye, he was off in his sleigh, calling out to this eight tiny reindeer, "Fly, fly away into the morning sky." And as he did you could hear him say, "Merry Christmas to all and don't forget, there's no crying on Christmas Eve!"





*Pictured on top is brood Bristol (almost 13 years old) and on the bottom is her actual baby Bentley (8 years old). Both were adopted by Bonny and Mark Doyle of Duluth, Minnesota, who said after years of being separated, it didn't take long for their two Greyhounds to make up for the time apart.*

# Twenty Notes about Greyhounds

*By Alberto Alvaro Ríos*

1. Greyhounds are *gray*. Even in spelling nobody can catch them.
2. Gray is the traditional color of dreams: Greyhounds are dream dogs.
3. Images in dreams are said to be fleeting: Greyhounds are fast dogs, in front of our eyes and behind them.
4. Greyhounds chase the rabbit, but the rabbit does not run from them—the rabbit itself chases after something we cannot see, but which makes it go faster than the dogs. It chases after the rabbit's rabbit, which has no name.
5. A Greyhound's hearty lope is faster than a magician's shady shuffle. One cheats you, the other cheats Death.
6. *A grey missed*: this is not always the opening to an English murder mystery.
7. *A gray mist*: the watered-down paddock, in the morning, fog and dogs.
8. Grace hound.
9. Gray sound.
10. Playhound.
11. A Grey's anatomy is to have bones made of run.
12. Adopting Greyhounds: a Greyhound found. So many get lost, in so many ways. A Greyhound found is a Greyfound.
13. Greyhound: 186,000/mph (miles per heartbeat).
14. The heart of a Greyhound travels faster than

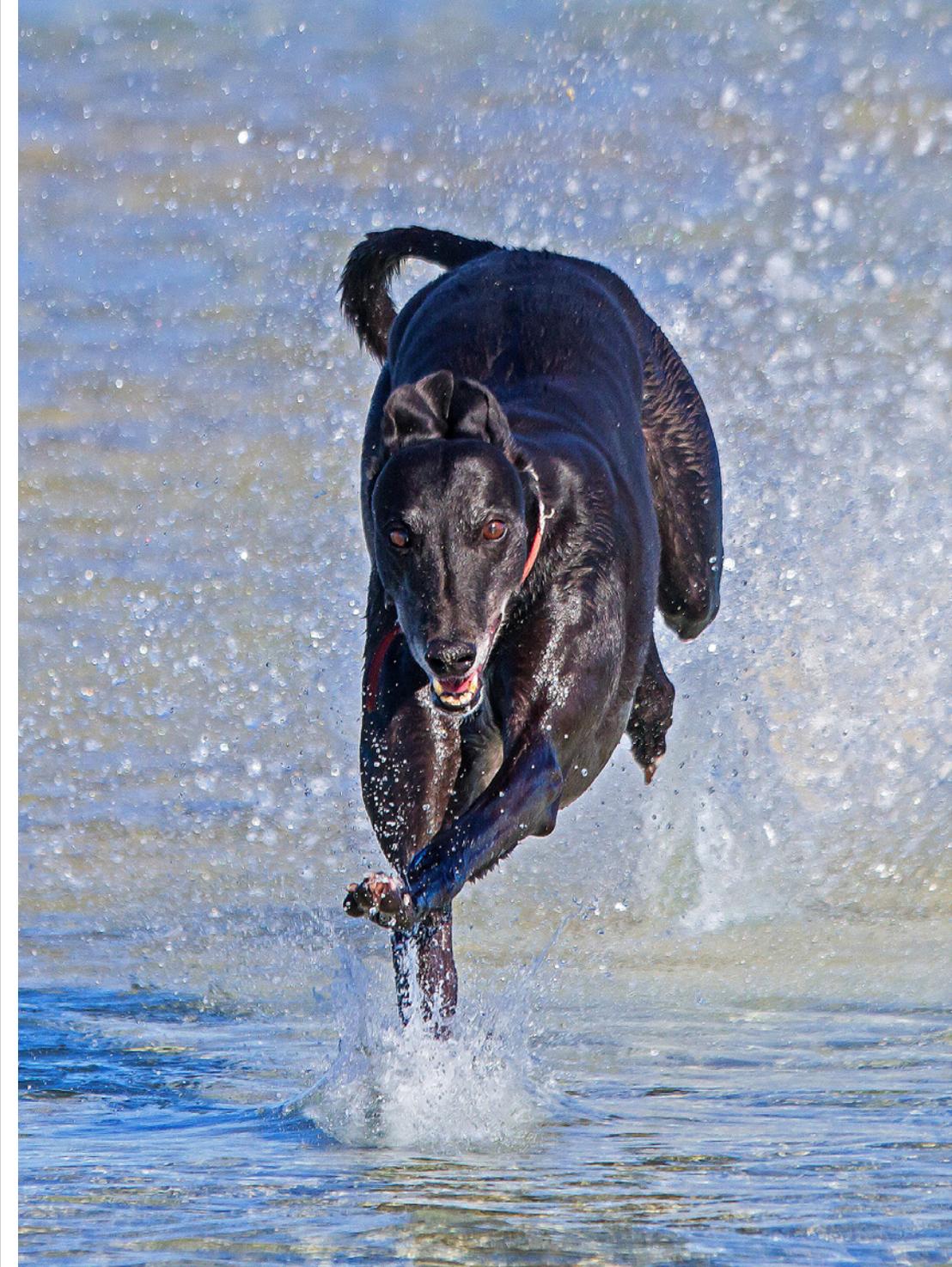
love. Look at one, and it's too late for you.

15. A Greyhound does not weigh ten pounds—it weighs ten centuries.
16. A Greyhound is the tip of a mighty iceberg, one animal standing on the backs of so very many. And when it barks, be thankful that it is kind enough to temper the sound of a hundred centuries of muscle and chase.
17. In the old days, the white hounds and the black hounds ruled. But the quickest found each other, and that shared heartbeat made both the color and soul of what would come next.
18. Grey Expectations.
19. A Greyhound does not see a rabbit and then chase it. Instead, it feels desire within its reach.

20. The rate at which a Greyhound moves forward is in direct proportion to its sense, for a few moments, of escape. ■

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*About the author: **Alberto Alvaro Ríos**, born in Nogales, Arizona, is the author of ten books of poetry, three collections of short stories, and a memoir about growing up on the border called *Capirotada*. National Book Award finalist and recipient of the Western Literature Association Distinguished Achievement Award, Ríos has an extensive record of public art and outreach service, and has taught at Arizona State University for over 30 years. In 2013, he was named the **inaugural state poet laureate of Arizona**. In 2014, he was elected a **Chancellor of the Academy of American Poets**.*



*Lucy the Greyhound was adopted by Lawrence Hillary and is pictured in Shark Bay, Western Australia.*

# In Memoriam

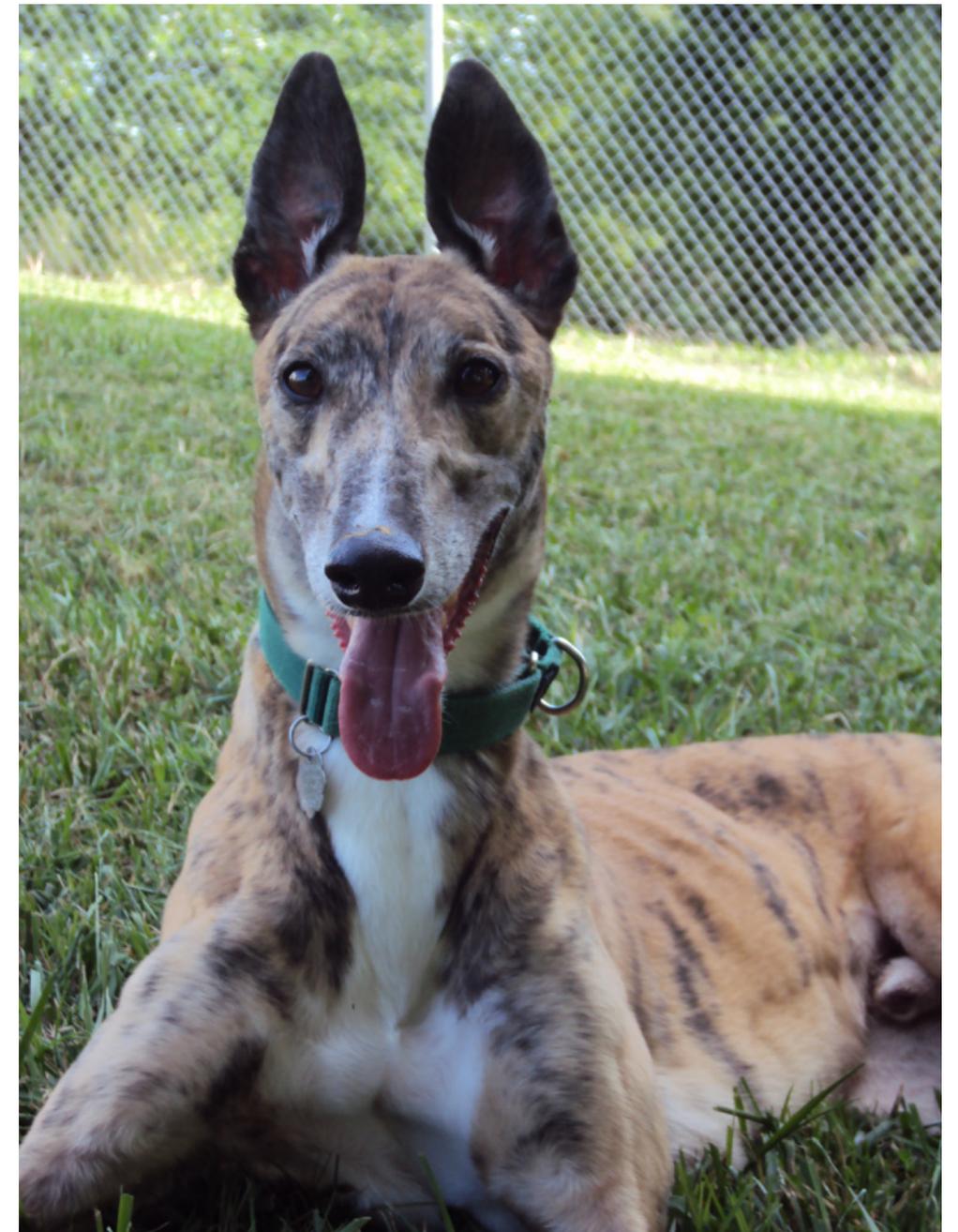
## Peace (Greys Pitchblack), 2001 - 2014

Janice Brinegar's beloved girl Peace was sent to the Rainbow Bridge on Aug. 29 after a short battle with bone cancer. Peace was featured in the Winter 2010 issue of *Celebrating Greyhounds* in the article "The Accidental Foster."

A retired brood who ran 177 races and had two litters of puppies, Peace (Grey's Pitchblack) retired in January 2010. She embraced life to the fullest, and loved being a meet-and-greet hound for Regap of Illinois.

Peace never met a person, dog, or cookie she didn't like. Sweet and loving, she greeted every morning chattering and asking for a hug.

Jan, of Oaklawn, Illinois, writes, "She will remain in our hearts forever. Run free sweet girl –your Momma loves you so."



*Horton (UCME Hears A Who) was adopted by Greyhound Pets of America – Tri State by Ryan Eichmiller and Lauren Perigo, who love being first-time Greyhound owners.*

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**11th Annual Solvang Greyhound Festival  
Solvang, California**

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Full registration (all three days) is \$60 per adult and \$17.50 per child. Friday only or Saturday only mini registrations are \$35 each.

[www.solvanggreyhoundfest.org](http://www.solvanggreyhoundfest.org)

Teri Rogo

**Sunday, February 22, 2015**

**Winter Gathering**

GPA Nashville

1– 4 p.m.

Middle Tennessee Livestock Center

Murfreesboro, Tennessee

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Admission is \$5 per person and \$2 per dog

615-269-4088

[www.gpanashville.org](http://www.gpanashville.org)

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**Thursday, April 23 – Sunday, April 26, 2015**

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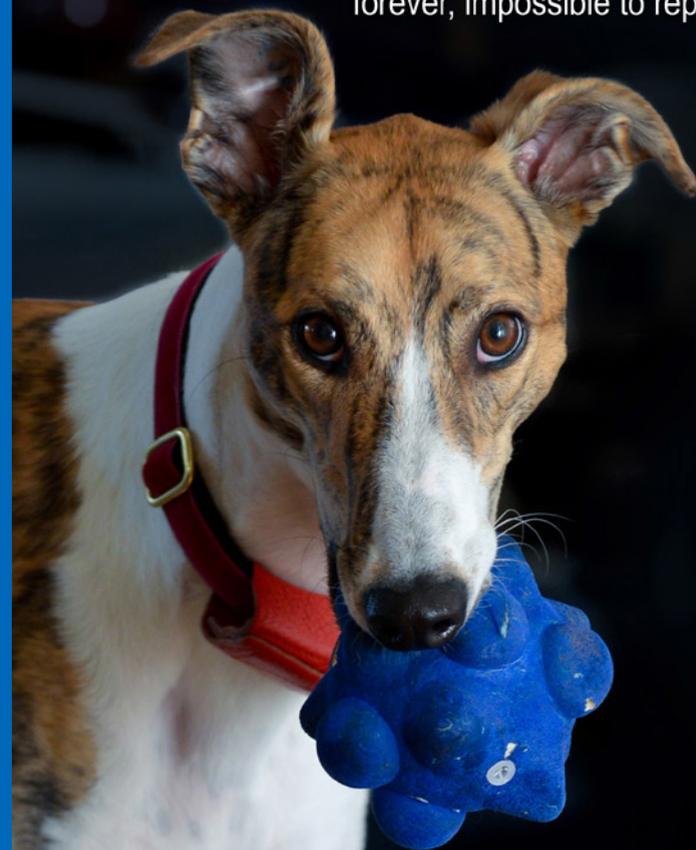
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 — Karl Lagerfeld



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