

cg magazine

celebrating greyhounds

Winter 2012

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ALSO INSIDE:

Teaching Children to be
Kind to Animals

The Annual Exam

Adopting Again:
Opening Your Home and
Heart After Loss



Smiley, adopted by Pete and Beth Wade of Hambden, Ohio.

Front Cover Credit:

Kim Williams adopted Tucker from GPA/Northern Virginia in June 2005, and took this photo of him in her backyard on his 11th birthday.

Back Cover Credit:

Brenna, adopted and photographed by Diane Krall of Sheffield Village, Ohio.

cgmagazine

The Magazine for Greyhound Adopters,
Owners, and Friends
Vol. 17; No. 4 Winter 2012

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Scan and subscribe now!

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By Cindy Hanson

It wasn't long after Pearl's passing that I began to think about getting another Greyhound.

At first, I tried to convince myself that this was an opportunity to downsize. Three dogs is more work and expense than two; no doubt about it. I told myself that after caring for Pearl during months of decline, I needed to focus on my boys. At ages 4 and 7, Jerry and Jethro were strong and vigorous and would enjoy a summer filled with activities. We would go on long walks, explore new parks and trails, attend some Greyhound events, and spend evenings hanging out on the couch. I looked forward to bonding with my guys.

Jerry and Jethro let me know right away, though, that they had different plans. A summer of recordbreaking heat meant that when I opened the back door to let them out, they often declined the invitation. When we did venture out, Jethro demonstrated a newfound ability to flop like a pro soccer player. "He's just resting," I chirped, as morning lake walkers stepped onto the bike trail to avoid the 80 lb brindle splayed diagonally across the walking path. *Yeah, right.*

We drove from Minnesota to Tennessee to attend Mountain Hounds, the annual Greyhound event sponsored by Greyhound Friends of North Carolina. (Next year? Go.) I carefully muzzled the boys in the car, but that didn't stop the snarking. Hundreds of miles of snarking. How is it that three Greyhounds fit comfortably in the back of my Honda Element, but two Greyhounds did not?

The last straw was Jerry and Jethro rejecting my invitations to snuggle. I do think they gave it their best shot. I'd invite one or the other of them to sit with me on the couch or the bed. They would jump up, but never relax. After a few minutes, whoever was with me would emit a gruff bark and hop down to reclaim a still-warm dog bed.

Don't get me wrong. I love my boys to pieces. But they don't cuddle. So I turned to the resource for those with unmet needs: the Internet. Surely one of the local Greyhound adoption groups might have a snugly girl with a few miles on her, and maybe some experience keeping unruly boys in line.

In June, I found her on GPA/Minnesota's website: JC's Siryn, a black, retired broodie with a graying muzzle. When the adoption coordinator brought her over for the home visit, Jerry stuck his (muzzled) nose in her face. She growled and snapped right back at him.

Good girl, I told her. I adopted her on her 7th birthday.

Siryn has been a wonderful addition to my household. Jethro and Jerry toss toys and play-bow with her. They're nicer to each other now, too. Best of all was her reaction when she walked in to my bedroom that first night and I patted the edge of my mattress. She launched herself like the top crate dog she undoubtedly was, sailing over me with at least a foot to spare. It was like looking at an airplane's belly from the end of Airport Road, back when they still let people park there. She landed on the far side of the bed already curled up, like a doughnut.

Oof, she said.

She's been there every night since.



Celebrating Greyhounds Magazine

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More Tips for Road Trips

“Sylvie and Paula’s Road Trip” (Summer 2012 CG) caused me to reflect on traveling with your Greyhound. It can be difficult traveling solo with an animal requiring sacrifice of time and effort of the driver as well as a huge routine change for the dog, which will create stress for him or her. If you are visiting places that do not permit pets, you need to board them there, temporarily in your absence. Oftentimes, it may be better to leave them at home with a friend, relative, or a sitter that will at least keep the dogs’ routine constant and happy. Sometimes this is unavoidable and we must bring them with us, so here are a few things that we should be mindful of. The first priority is the dog’s safety: Keep them cool/warm, shaded, hydrated, with plenty of room to stretch out in the car, as well as properly secured so they can’t run away. When the car door opens, that dog is ready to come out and explore new territory, so be prepared with your leash. Be considerate of other travelers that follow you who may be allergic to pet dander, so please don’t let the dog get up on the bed or furniture. Never leave the dog alone when you leave the room, or tie the dog to fixed objects. Barking dogs are always a nuisance to other travelers, and when dogs are separated from us in a strange environment they can damage motel property; something they normally would never do at home. Show respect to the motel room and staff for the privilege of having a place for you and your pet to spend the night which hopefully will permit pet fees to remain low for future pet travelers.

Cliff Leegard
Wonder Lake, Ill.

Regarding the article “Watch Out for that Cactus! Greyhounds Travel to Big Bend National Park” (Summer 2012 CG): It is important to plot your trip so that you stop at Greyhound-friendly hotels and restaurants, but it is a good idea to consider health care as well. Several years ago when we took three Greyhounds from Erie, Pa. to Utah and back, my husband plotted Greyhound-knowledgeable veterinarians and emergency clinics along the way as well. It is much easier to have the information at hand than to find a clinic when you have an emergency.

Peggy Jordano
Erie, Pa.



Freeda, adopted by Laura and John Donegan of Clinton Corners, N.Y.

Remembering Pearl

As always, I so look forward to receiving CG Magazine. The wonderful, informative, and educational articles provide fodder for Greyhound thought! I read your recent editorial (Editorial Comments, Summer 2012 CG) and just wanted to thank you for sharing your heartfelt experience with readers. I cried, and I’m sure many Greyhound owners did the same. The magazine touches so many lives; keep up the fantastic work.

Josette M. Farah
Via E-Mail

Blood Donors as Heroes

I wrote to the American Humane Association a few months ago regarding their Hero Dog Awards. They were soliciting nominations. Although I did not nominate my Greyhound Gail, one of many Greyhound blood donors, I asked them to consider recognizing Greyhound blood donors, as a group, as Hero Dogs. I told them about my Gail who, with the assistance of Hollydogs Greyhound Adoption, was removed from her service as a blood donor. She was kept as a donor into her senior years, which is unusual. Crippled at age 2 by a racing fracture, she was given to a veterinary hospital. She was a blood donor for six more years, retiring at the age of 8. I took Gail into my home. She was a happy girl with an enchanting personality. Unfortunately, she died of bone cancer within eight months. We

loved her for those eight months and kept her very happy. A review of her medical records makes clear that she saved many lives over the years by donating blood. Many nameless and faceless Greyhounds around the country, in veterinary hospitals and clinics, continue to save the lives of family pets, service dogs, and dogs everywhere by donating blood. I asked the American Humane Association to please recognize these dogs officially as heroes. Maybe with the assistance of CG readers, this can be done. Send your e-mail on behalf of Greyhound blood donors as heroes to email@americanhumane.org.

Norma Talarico
Via E-Mail

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

We regret that we cannot publish every letter and photo.

Greyhound Project News



Reese, adopted by Will Shumaker of Tampa, Fla.

WINNERS OF *CELEBRATING GREYHOUNDS* MAGAZINE WRITING CONTEST ANNOUNCED

Over the summer, CG's first annual Writing Contest was announced on its Facebook site. The topic, "Adopting Again," was described as follows: *After you say goodbye to your beloved Greyhound, how do you open your home and heart to another? It can be the easiest and the hardest decision in the world, at the same time. Have you faced this situation? How did you come to the decision to adopt again?*

We received 43 entries. Essays were judged on a blind basis by a panel of five reviewers from CG's editorial staff: Copy Editors Lindsay Hocker, Alice O'Hearn, and Barb Williams; Dana Provost, Features Editor; and Cindy Hanson, Editor-in-Chief. In early October, entrants were notified of their status, and ten finalists were identified.

The results of the contest are as follows:

First Place: "Me and You and a Dog Named Boo (and a Dog Named Liberty)," Russ Roozeboom

Second Place: "Losing My Greyhounds and a Lifestyle," Diane Krall

Third Place: "Long Live the King and Queen," Pat Cattolico

Honorable Mention:

"One is the Loneliest Number," Leslie Glynn

"Hailey's Wish," Diane Jelcic

"In the Moment — Loving and Losing Senior Greyhounds," Jen Komatsu

"Saying Yes Again," Pat McIlveen

"When Elvis Left the Building: Adopting Olivia," Eileen Mitchell

"How Do You Know?" Jan Radke

"Hearts to Heal," Linda Tesar

The first, second, and third place entries and four essays in the Honorable Mention category appear in this issue of CG. We invite you to enjoy the additional three Honorable Mention essays on our Facebook site (www.facebook.com/cgmagazine).

We were thrilled with the response to our writing contest and we will definitely be doing this again in 2013.

SUBSCRIBE OR RENEW . . . AND GIVE A FREE GIFT OF CG TO A FRIEND

Do you know someone who should be reading *Celebrating Greyhounds Magazine*? How about a new adopter, your veterinarian, or your best friend with Greyhounds?

Through December 31, 2012, when you pay for a new or renewed subscription to *CG Magazine*, you can give a free, 2-issue "mini-subscription" to a friend!

Pay for a subscription online at www.adopt-a-greyhound.org/cgmagazine/ subscribe or by mail using the special subscription card in the Fall or Winter 2012 issue, and tell us who should get the two free issues. We'll start their mini-subscription with the very next issue of CG!

Here are the details:

1. Only Eligible Recipients may receive the free, 2-issue mini-subscription. Eligible Recipients are those who have not had a current subscription to *CG Magazine* at any time in 2012. In addition, the mini-subscription may not be used to extend a new or existing subscription.
2. If you designate a gift recipient who is not Eligible, we will contact you and give you the opportunity to name an Eligible Recipient. If you fail to do so before this offer expires, your right to give the free mini-subscription will expire unused.
3. The gift recipient's 2-issue mini-subscription will begin with the first issue published AFTER the paid subscription/renewal and designation of a gift recipient is received by CG.
4. This free, 2-issue mini-subscription gift offer expires December 31, 2012.
5. After the recipient has received their

two free issues, we will contact them and offer the opportunity to become a subscriber.

We love CG. We know you do, too! We also know it's hard for some people to subscribe to a magazine they may have never seen before. We're tired of being a well-kept secret . . . if you know someone who needs to read *Celebrating Greyhounds Magazine*, give them a free, 2-issue mini-subscription. We'll do the rest!

OOPS!

We inadvertently omitted the publisher's information from Henry Townsend's review of Lawrence Anholt's *The Magical Garden of Claude Monet*, which appeared in the Fall 2012 issue. We apologize for the oversight. The information appears below:

The Magical Garden of Claude Monet
Written and illustrated by Lawrence Anholt
Barrons Educational Series, Inc. (2003)
ISBN 9780764138553
\$8.99

FREE ISSUE OF CELEBRATING GREYHOUNDS MAGAZINE TO ADOPTERS OF SENIORS, SPECIAL NEEDS GREYHOUNDS

Do you know someone who has adopted a special needs Greyhound? If so, tell this Greyhound lover that he or she is eligible to receive one free issue of *Celebrating Greyhounds Magazine*. All the adopter needs to do is send a note to the Editor at editor@adopt-a-greyhound.org or *CG Magazine*, PO Box 120048, Saint Paul, MN 55112. The note must include a description of the dog's special need, the name of the adoption group or other source of the dog, and the adopter's name and mailing address. (The special needs Greyhound is either at least 7 years old at the time of adoption or one of any age who has a special medical problem at the time of adoption.) There is no time limit on this special offer.



Rosie, adopted by Rachel and Timothy Hopple of Tiffin, Ohio.

PASSINGS NOTED

Robert E. “Bob” Fast, long-term board member of The Greyhound Project (publisher of *CG Magazine*), died on October 20. An outstanding trial lawyer until his retirement, Bob will be remembered by his law partners for pragmatic and successful representation of his clients in complex litigation. His family and everyone else who knew him cherished him as a trusted friend, mentor and advisor whose intelligence, compassion and generosity were matched with a puckish spirit and prankster ways. Bob loved animals and had dogs throughout his life. After learning of the plight of racing Greyhounds, he began adopting and fostering the welfare of these animals. Bob was a co-founder and past president of The Greyhound Project, whose mission is to support and promote the adoption of retired racing Greyhounds. He is survived by his wife Lisa, his sister Ermalee Foster, sons James Fast and Robert Fast, and grandsons Harry Fast and Tom Fast. A remembrance was held on Saturday, October 27. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Morris Animal Foundation (www.morrisanimalfoundation.org) or The Greyhound Project (www.adopt-a-greyhound.org).

Barbara Wicklund, founder of Greyhound Friends of New Jersey (GFNJ), passed away on August 22 at the age of 81 following a long illness. An experienced breeder and exhibitor of champion Basset Hounds, Irish Wolfhounds and Petit Basset Griffon Vendeen (PBGV) dogs, Barbara adopted her first retired racing Greyhound in 1987. As a volunteer for Greyhound Friends in Hopkinton, Mass., Barbara was responsible for introducing retired Greyhounds to the New Jersey, eastern Pennsylvania, Delaware and metropolitan New York areas. As she placed more and more Greyhounds in the region, GFNJ was incorporated as a separate entity, and Barbara remained president of GFNJ until her retirement in 2006.

During her long tenure she began a number of GFNJ rescue initiatives, including their innovative Prison Foster Program, which provides rehabilitative benefits for incarcerated youth at the Mountain View Correctional Facility in Annandale, N.J. as well as needed socialization and obedience training for rescued dogs. GFNJ remains New Jersey’s oldest and largest greyhound adoption organization, placing about 300 ex-racers each year.

A journalist for 35 years, Barbara worked as a reporter for several daily newspapers in New Jersey and as editor/publisher/owner of a weekly newspaper in South Plainfield for 10 years along with her husband. She is survived by her husband, Al, who was her partner in life and in rescue.

VISIT CELEBRATING GREYHOUNDS MAGAZINE ON FACEBOOK!

Celebrating Greyhounds Magazine now has over 3,400 Facebook fans from at least 20 countries. The purpose of the site is to connect Greyhound-admiring subscribers (and non-subscribers) to each other and with some of our content, including magazine covers. Fans have been sharing their thoughts on the magazine and photos of their Greyhounds. Some of the comments we receive on the site will be selected for publication in *CG*. To join or check it out, go to www.facebook.com/cgmagazine. To those who have joined — please invite others, and keep the feedback and fan pictures coming!

MOVING? NEED TO RENEW?

Don’t miss a single issue of *Celebrating Greyhounds Magazine*! Please send your renewals and address changes well in advance to *CG Magazine*, PO Box 5239, Framingham, MA 01701. Address changes may also be sent to Betsy, our subscriptions manager, at subscriptions@adopt-a-greyhound.org. Subscriptions may be renewed online at www.adopt-a-greyhound.org/cgmagazine.



Neyla, adopted by Jen Boyd-Morin of Laurel, Md.



Chief Havoc, Top Pop

By Laurel E. Drew

Chief Havoc, inducted into the Greyhound Hall of Fame in 1974, never set paw in the United States. Australian born and bred, he sired dogs — particularly one — that would affect NGA bloodlines for many generations thereafter.

The Chief was whelped in September 1944 out of Trion x Thelma's Mate. His pedigree traces back to top English racing and coursing blood. Purchased at the tender age of 5 weeks by Jack Millerd, the Chief became part of the Millerd household. Raised in their backyard, he had free run of the house. He was affectionately called "Patches" by the Millerd family because of his markings.

Chief was a record smasher on the track, showing both speed and the ability to go the distance. He sired 453 litters, and his offspring were often noted for their stamina. Chief Havoc's son, Rocker Mac, produced more winners on the track than any other dog for many years. A fast, leggy brindle, Rocker Mac had that endurance for which Chief Havoc was noted. He was the first of Chief Havoc's sons to enter the Greyhound Hall of Fame in 1971.

Another son of the Chief, Rocket Fire, was so strongly influenced by that distance gene that almost anything he produced was a 'router' or else a hound with a very fast sprint finish. Rocket Jet's grandson, Rocking Ship, was inducted into the Greyhound Hall of Fame in 1980 ("Rocking Ship," Spring 2003 CG).

With the success of Rocker Mac's offspring, more of Chief Havoc's pups were imported and had very successful careers as sires, although not to the extent of Rocker Mac's pups. Two brothers — Chief Pam and Count Havoc — produced nicely, although their daughters produced better than their sons. Another son, Bill The Boozer, was imported but died early in his stud career after producing a number of excellent runners out of just a few litters. Other sons of the Chief to be imported were Chief Putty, whose granddaughter was the great Miss Whirl, inducted into the Hall of Fame in 1982; Kara Jet; and Gogodalla. All were to produce winners. Chief Havoc blood is scattered through nearly every pedigree of an NGA dog.

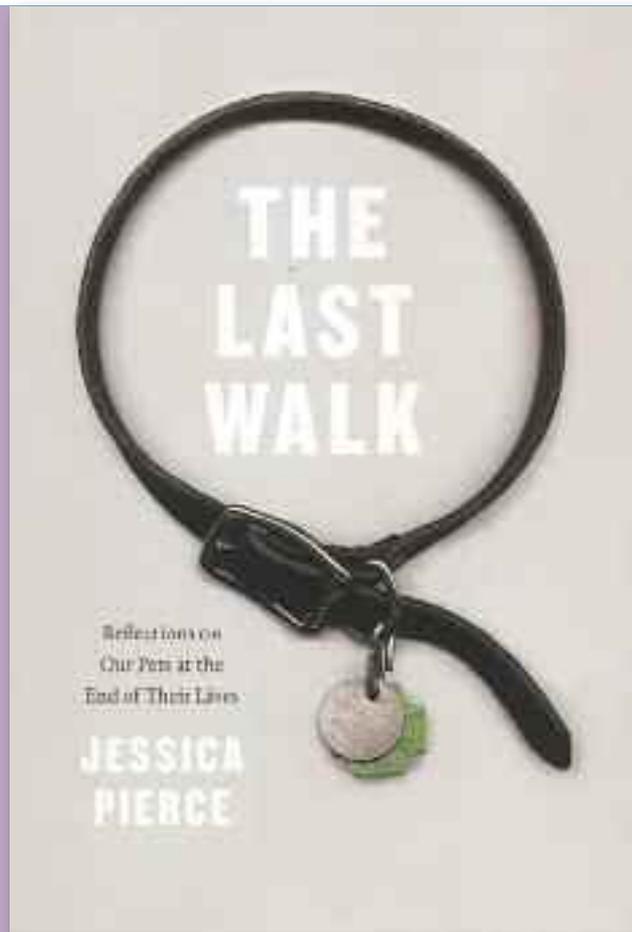
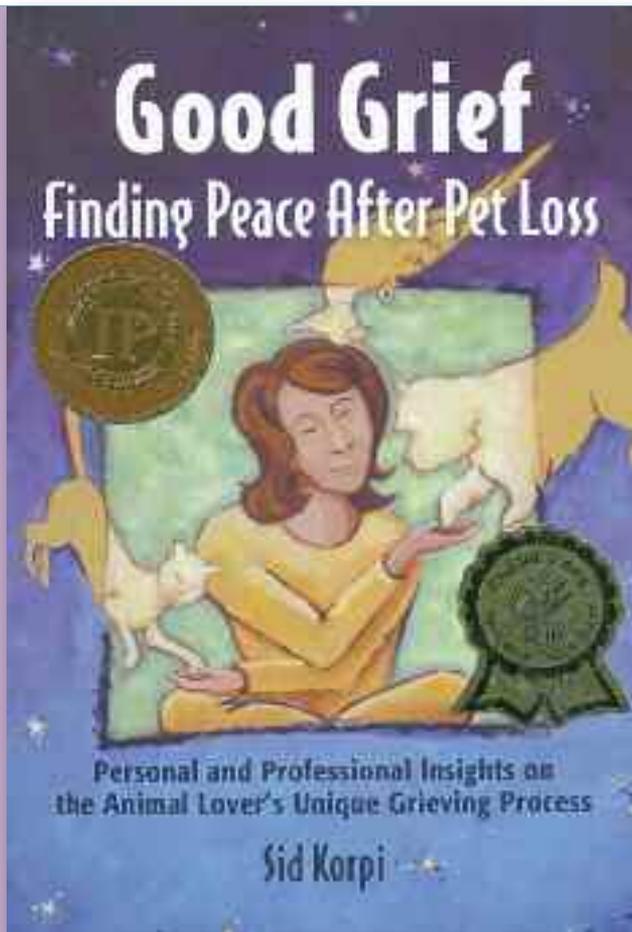
All of the successes of Chief Havoc's sons are obscured by the success of his best daughter, Gorgeous Babe. Her sons included Tell You Why, inducted into the Hall of Fame in 1978 ("The Wrestler's Greyhounds," Fall 2006 CG). Even in Australia one of the all time great dams was Elsie Moss, another bitch from the Chief Havoc line.

Chief Havoc produced a truly international bloodline with offspring exported to the United States, England, Ireland, and back. He is one of the best of all the Greyhounds from Down Under.

"Patches" passed away in his sleep at 13 years of age. He was buried beneath a tree at the Greyhound racetrack in Gunnedah, New South Wales. A lifesize statue of Chief Havoc at the entrance greets track patrons to this day. ■

Laurel E. Drew is a CG regular contributor.

Grateful thanks to Neil Brown of the Australian Greyhound Racing Association for the photo of Chief Havoc.



On Losing a Pet

By Cindy Hanson

Good Grief: Finding Peace After Pet Loss — Personal and Professional Insights on the Animal Lover's Unique Grieving Process

By Sid Korpi

Minneapolis: Healy House Books (2009)

ISBN 978-1-61539-981-9

\$21.95

The Last Walk: Reflections on Our Pets at the End of Their Lives

By Jessica Pierce

Chicago: University of Chicago Press (2012)

ISBN 978-0-226-66846-8

\$26.00

After Pearl died in the spring, two books about pet loss landed on my desk. I'll be honest; I did not look forward to reading either of them. Do I feel like I already know what I need to know about pet loss? Not by a long shot. But after saying goodbye to five Greyhounds in the last six years — after nursing each through months of decline — I know this much: Pet Loss Sucks. And although I can't avoid pet loss — because I love these dogs and keep adopting them — I'd like to spend as little time there as possible. I am grateful that I can now look back at my time with Pearl and recall her years as a fierce, feisty retired broodie, rather than focusing on the last few weeks when I was carrying her up and down the stairs, changing my sheets every morning because she was incontinent, and searching the pet food store shelves for anything that would pique her interest. Why would I willingly go back there now?

In *Good Grief*, animal chaplain Sid Korpi introduces her topic by describing the grieving process and pointing out that advance preparation for the inevitable can spare us from having to make difficult decisions when we are perhaps least capable of doing so. She presents a list of questions (e.g., “What do you believe your companion animal values most about life?” “Do you believe you should do everything within your (or your veterinarian’s) power to preserve your pet’s life as long as possible?” “If you don’t believe in prolonging your pet’s life as long as possible, what physical, behavioral, or other conditions would cause you either not to initiate or to terminate treatment?”) that enable us to outline an Advance Health Directive for our pets. She explores the mix of emotions — guilt, anger, relief, sadness, loneliness — that accompany pet loss. She gently points out that people around us may be unthinking or insensitive in part because society undervalues the human-companion animal relationship but also because few people have much experience or aptitude at dealing with grief, either their own or that of others. While this opening chapter can be difficult for readers close to pet loss, Korpi’s compassionate voice and incorporation of numerous “submitted stories” help us feel that we’re not alone.

The next two chapters of *Good Grief* focus on the afterlife of our pets. Where do our pets go when they die? How do various world religions answer this question? Korpi shares a number of experiences — her own as well as those of others — of receiving communication from persons or animals who have passed on. As a reader, I’m not sure what significance I attach to these experiences. Personally, I’m not convinced that there is an afterlife. (When my time comes, if I find out there is one, it will be a delightful surprise — like the prize in a box of Cracker Jack. For now, I try to focus on enjoying the peanuts and caramel corn.) Nevertheless, I have to admit that the stories in *Good Grief* are both compelling and comforting.

The section of Korpi’s book that I found most valuable is the chapter on Memorializing Methods, in which she offers over sixty suggestions for honoring your pet’s memory. (This is followed by an additional

hundred pages of submitted stories, including many additional ideas.) For me, celebrating the life of my departed dog and remembering him or her in a way that is present and meaningful to me is a critical part of the healing process. I liked quite a few of the activities on the list, and they prompted me to think of some others that I might try in the future.

Although I found *Good Grief* to be tough reading at times — due to my recent loss — I found it to be tremendously comforting. It described feelings that were familiar to me and shared the stories of many pet owners like me, which let me know that what I recently experienced was important and valuable.

The *Last Walk* covered some familiar ground, too, though from an entirely different perspective. Bioethicist Jessica Pierce has produced a book that is part personal story, part philosophical discussion. The *Last Walk* alternates chapters on pet aging, pain, hospice, and euthanasia with excerpts from a diary that she kept during the last year of the life of her almost-14-year-old Vizsla, Ody. So, for example, the chapter on Aging discusses the effects of old age on a dog’s body (graying muzzle, bone and joint problems, muscular atrophy, vision changes, hearing loss) and brain (loss of neural circuits and brain plasticity, cognitive dysfunction syndrome) and options for addressing them (medication, adaptation). Pierce then explores the impact of these changes and options on the caregivers. Are we doing too much or too little? Are we investing our dogs with human emotions that they do not have? The answers to these questions have a direct bearing on end-of-life decisions. The chapter is followed by an excerpt from her diary during the time when Ody begins to have difficulty walking and maintaining control of his bowels. As Pierce points out, she feels bad for Ody when she finds him lying in his own feces, struggling to get up. But while we know she feels bad, does Ody feel bad? “If we alone feel the sting of humiliation,” she writes, “should this so strongly influence our decision making about when to euthanize?”

Subsequent chapters on pain management and euthanasia follow a similar format: Discussion of scientific and veterinary research, illustrated by the author’s personal

experience with Ody. The chapter on animal hospice focuses on palliative rather than curative care, aimed at both relieving pain and discomfort and maximizing pleasure for the pet. Pierce discusses the difficult decisions pet owners must make, including measurement of suffering, determination of quality of life, and assessing the emotional and financial resources available to provide palliative care to a dying animal. Throughout these discussions, Pierce reminds us that our decisions are determined by the human values we attach to concepts such as aging, infirmity, dignity, and quality of life, and she encourages us to consider that these concepts may have different (or no) meaning to our pets.

Pierce writes:

“There are things we have learned from our care of humans that might inform how we approach end of life with our animals. Research has found that it is people who are thriving who most strongly advocate for the legal option of assisted death; once a person becomes seriously ill, their perspective often changes, and they put up with far more than they would have predicted. Yet with our animals, we assume that their level of tolerance for pain and suffering is much smaller than ours and that death will be a welcome relief. We think about their dying in the same way a healthy able-bodied person thinks about her own assisted death, not like a dying person, whose perspective on the process is certainly going to be different and, of course, in many ways more authentic. And we don’t, of course, think about it like a dying animal — whose mysteries we can never fully unravel.”

The *Last Walk* is a rigorous analysis of its subject. Although it takes a compassionate view of pets and their owners, I would not say I found comfort in it the same way I did in reading *Good Grief*. And the excerpts from Pierce’s diary of Ody’s last few months are familiar in a way that I found more dispiriting than consoling. But Pierce asks tough, compelling questions. I can’t honestly say that I enjoyed reading her book, but I know that her questions will stay with me and inform my decisions for the next of my dogs who approaches end of life. ■

Cindy Hanson is CG Editor-in-Chief.



Karoo, adopted by Robin Willoughby and Kathy Lazenby of Brighton, Mich.

The Annual Wellness Exam

By Jim Bader, DVM, CVCP

The wellness exam used to be tied to yearly vaccinations. Over time, the interval between vaccinations (and exams) has lengthened. Because of this extra time between visits, exams are often not performed on a routine basis. Small changes perhaps unnoticed by the Greyhound owner can morph into large changes that a veterinarian can identify. This is why an examination every 12 to 18 months is very important for a Greyhound's health.

The wellness exam may begin with a weigh-in. Weight loss may indicate an underlying disease process that needs further investigation, unless, of course, it was intended by the owner.

Weight gain is usually not associated with disease with the Greyhound. Instead it usually is a disease of the owner called "cup-itis": The Greyhound owner provides the dog too many cups of food. Weight gain is detrimental; increased weight can lead to higher incidences of arthritis and muscle strains. The treatment for cup-itis is counseling the owner about how much food and treats to provide every day.

Next, the veterinarian obtains a history, with questions about the amount of water and food consumed as well as stool and urination habits. The answers may lead to the need for additional testing.

The veterinarian may observe the Greyhound walking into the exam room. He or she may notice a subtle limp before the owner does. The dog is also observed for any swellings or lumps. These may grow slowly and may escape the Greyhound owner's notice.

The physical exam should start with the tip of the Greyhound's nose and extend to the tip of the tail. First, the muzzle and nose are examined for symmetry and drainage. The teeth and gums are checked for tartar, inflammation, cracks, or chips. The tonsils are examined if possible, along with the lymph nodes just behind the jaw. The eyes are checked for any obvious lesions, such as early Pannus, a chronic inflammation of the cornea. The ears are examined for wax, infection, and mites.

Next the neck is palpated for any swelling or pain. The heart is listened to for any murmurs and the pulses in the hind legs are checked while listening to the heart, to assure proper blood flow. If the pulses are decreased, this may indicate a small clot in the blood vessel going to the back legs. Conversely, if the pulses are increased, this may indicate hypertension (high blood pressure). The lungs are listened to for normal sounds. Any wheezes, whines, or coughing may indicate a lung condition that requires further investigation.

The abdomen is palpated next. This can be difficult in a Greyhound due to the deep chest and (ideally) skinny body. The deep chest can hide a growth easily; if there is any doubt, further investigation is necessary. The anal area is checked for any swelling or masses, and sometimes the prostate is also checked. The legs should be palpated for any swellings or painful areas. Finally, the skin should be examined for any inflammation, flaking, hair loss (alopecia), and masses.

Any abnormal findings are communicated to the Greyhound owner. If there are no abnormal findings, great! Even so, there may be some tests the owner wants performed to have a baseline value for future reference. If these additional tests indicate any abnormal findings or concerns, those definitely need to be investigated further. The plan should be common ground between the owner and the veterinarian. Determining in what order any abnormalities are checked, the cost of any further diagnostics and how soon any test results will be returned are discussed and agreed upon.

Once a plan is in place, the testing and treatment begin. The concerns indicating fur-

ther diagnostics include, but are not limited to: change in weight (except with cup-itis), increased or decreased water intake, decreased or increased food consumption, change in bowel habits, change in behavior, abnormal heart or lung sounds, any limping, and any lumps.

Any lumps should be first aspirated with a needle. This procedure is termed a fine-needle aspirate (FNA). A small needle is inserted into the mass, whose contents are drawn into the needle, then squirted out onto a microscope slide. The slide is either sent to a pathologist for interpretation or is checked in the veterinarian's office. The slide is stained and then examined under a microscope. If the lesion is benign, the owner may have the option of removing the mass at some point in time or just ignoring it. If the mass appears cancerous, then further tests may be ordered, such as blood work and radiographs. Each lump should be aspirated. Just because one is benign does not mean the next one will be benign, as well.

If the veterinarian discovers a heart murmur, changes in lung sounds, or changes in the pulses of the hind legs, then a radiograph of the chest and blood-pressure measurements may be in order. This will give the vet-

erinarian an idea about the size of the heart, any changes in blood vessels, any changes in the architecture of the lungs, and if there is evidence of lung cancer. The blood-pressure readings would indicate whether the Greyhound is hypertensive. This is important in dogs because if hypertension is allowed to persist, it may lead to kidney disease or vascular accident (stroke) issues.

Any changes in bowel habits should indicate further diagnostics. The diagnostics are a radiograph and perhaps ultrasound. The radiograph may disclose any abnormalities, such as an enlarged organ or a mass. The ultrasound assists in better visualizing the organs in the abdomen. Small, discrete lesions not visible on the radiograph may be found with ultrasound. The ultrasound may also allow the veterinarian to perform an FNA on a lesion not visible externally.

Any changes in water or food consumption are usually checked with blood work. This is the time to ensure your veterinarian is familiar with Greyhound blood work abnormalities, which are normal for the breed, but not for other dogs. There are three common Greyhound abnormalities, although others do exist.

Greyhounds usually have elevated hema-



Breeze, adopted by Myriam Parent and Edouard Cantin of Quebec, QC.

tocrits. This is the percentage of blood composed of red blood cells. Most other breeds have a hematocrit of 45. Greyhounds usually have hematocrits of 55 to 65. In fact, if a Greyhound has a normal dog hematocrit of 45, it usually means the Greyhound is anemic and needs further diagnostic tests.

Greyhounds have normal elevated creatinine, which is a measure of kidney function. In most dogs, elevated creatinine means the kidneys are not working well. Most dogs have a creatinine of 1 to 1.5. Most Greyhounds have a value of 2.5 to 3. This value is normal for a Greyhound and does not indicate kidney disease, unless other kidney function values are also abnormal.

Finally, most laboratory tests for thyroid function are inaccurate in Greyhounds. Certain tests do not indicate the correct thyroid level in the breed. The test indicates the Greyhound is low thyroid, but in fact the level is normal. It is the test that is incorrect. Using thyroid replacement supplements on a normal Greyhound would be detrimental to its dog's health.

If the Greyhound is limping, then radiographs are in order. The dog may have just a strain or muscle pull, but because of the high incidence of bone cancer (osteosarcoma) in the breed, a radiograph is always indicated. The radiograph may rule out any disease. Sometimes the changes on the radiograph may be subtle, and a re-check radiograph in two weeks is indicated. Finding a lesion promptly is imperative to early diagnosis and treatment.

The yearly exam can be as simple or as extensive as the Greyhound owner dictates. It could include just an examination. It could include an examination and lab work. Radiographs, blood pressure assessment, and ultrasound may be added. The owner and veterinarian need to reach an agreement as to how extensive the testing will be. However, if the dog has a lump or is limping, an FNA or radiograph is needed. These tests are not optional; they are mandatory to assure the Greyhound's longevity. That is the entire goal of a yearly exam: Keeping the Greyhound healthy for as long as possible. ■

Dr. Jim Bader is a CG regular contributor.



Nick, adopted by Debbie Gilpin of Scranton, Pa.



Jennifer, adopted by Pat and Jaimie Grill of W. Norriton, Pa.

Me and You and a Dog Named Boo (and a Dog Named Liberty)



Story and Photos by Russ Roozeboom

Libby was adopted by the Roozebooms on the 4th of July.

Russ Roozeboom's story won First Place in Celebrating Greyhounds Magazine's Writing Contest.

Arjo's Bluebird, who we called Boo, was our first Greyhound. We had a truly fantastic decade with her. During that time, she brought laughter, companionship, and love beyond measure to our house. The evening we said goodbye to Boo for the last time, rain fell from blue-gray clouds that looked just like her soft, rabbit-like fur. I sat in my garage with the door open, trying not to sob and stepping outside occasionally to rinse the tears off my face. Never again, I thought, do I want to feel this way.

Over time, as shock wore off and grief set in, we went about the business of cleaning up and/or storing dog-related items. Tears usually accompanied these proceedings — but we found that more and more often they were tears of joy as we remembered Boo and reminisced about the many happy times we had with her. Boo had a penchant for being contrary in a way that was more endearing than infuriating, a fact not lost on me as I twisted and shook her urn in a desperate attempt to get the bag with her ashes to fit inside. My wife and I had to laugh through our tears at how true to Boo's character the situation was.

My wife and I continued to make a gradual transition from bitter lamentation to joyful celebration with regard to memories of Boo. This transition also allowed us to notice that while we missed our dog, we also missed the positive things that accompany dog ownership — going outside, taking walks, going to parks, interacting socially in said parks during said walks — and not to mention having a live-in example of what unconditional love looks like. We missed having some sort of warm-blooded something waiting for us at home, and we even missed having a whining, insistent reason to get up in the morning. (Part of me might have even missed picking up poop with a plastic bag, but that part of me was very small and soft-spoken.)

After some discussion, we decided that adopting another Greyhound belonged firmly in the “good idea” column. We knew that plenty of Greyhounds needed our help, but it had become abundantly clear that we needed a Greyhound to help us. While I still never wanted to feel like I did when Boo left, I wanted to feel like I did when we had a dog even more.



Boo was the Roozebooms' beloved first Greyhound.

Before long, my wife and I were browsing online listings of available Greyhounds. We were informed, experienced adopters now, so (we thought) we knew what we were looking for. We assembled a short list of dogs and arranged to meet a few candidates in an outdoor setting with lots of other Greyhounds so we could make an accurate assessment of personality, social behaviors, etc. — because we were smart.

The day finally came during the hottest Fourth of July weekend ever. We met up with the pack shortly after they walked in a parade and shortly before they melted completely (or so it seemed). The dogs were not so much exhibiting personalities and interacting so much as they were scattered about like limp, exhausted rags.

We realized we were idiots.

Still, we were there to eat Popsicles and pick out a Greyhound, and we were all out of Popsicles. We spent as much time as we could with a couple favorites, had a quick two-person huddle, and made a (er, um) decision. A few hours later, we were the proud new owners of JK's Li'l Chicken. We promptly re-christened her Libby, short for Liberty, which is short for Adopted on the Fourth of July.

It turns out that there are striking similarities — and even more striking differences — between Boo and Libby. Similarities: Typical Greyhound bursts of energy followed by long periods of little to no movement, and fascination with all creatures small and furry.

Differences: Libby is a very dainty, splashless drinker; Boo was a sprinkler at the water bowl. Boo was prone to playing “Bitey Face” when poked or prodded in a way not to her liking; I’ve carried Libby down our staircase twice with no noticeable change in her demeanor, even when I took the corner wide and smacked her butt into the door jamb. Boo was an overgrown bunny; Libby is a small horse. Both could often be described as alternately social and aloof; Boo because she was such a diva, Libby because she is such a doofus.

It also turns out that despite (or, perhaps more accurately, because of) these

similarities and differences, adopting again has been the best way to learn to love again. Libby has been a great teacher. There may be other dogs, but there will never be another Boo — or another Libby. And that’s the way (I think) it should be. I’m not sure how many dogs I’ll have the privilege of knowing, but I’m convinced that knowing each one will be worthwhile, even if it means losing him or her at some point. The complete anguish of loss is hard to take, but the complete joy of having a dog easily outweighs any sorrow. Adopting again not only helps a Greyhound live a better life, it helps us live life better. ■

Russ lives with his wife and Greyhound in Grand Rapids, Michigan. He also lives with the disconcerting fact that his mood can be affected by the quality of his dog's bowel movements.

Opening Doors

They greet me at the door,

hopping, wagging, bright eyes smiling,
jealous their brother went for a ride without them.

My heart aches too much to embrace them,

I am oblivious to their love,
my tears freshly fallen on the path home from the
Rainbow Bridge.

Three dogs follow me through the routine of my day,

a shadow from the fourth dog doesn't fade
even when I put away the extra bowl, the extra leash.

I await my acceptance of loss, my acknowledgement that
this home is totally empty,

without that fourth dog and its fourth bowl
His shadow now glows and opens my heart.

They greet me at the door,

hopping, wagging, bright eyes smiling,
excited to welcome home the new dog.

And so am I.

—Ducky McComas



Diane and Larry adopted Brenna after losing their first Greyhounds, Jordan and Frannie.

Losing My Greyhounds . . . and a Lifestyle

By Diane Krall

Diane Krall's story won Second Place in Celebrating Greyhounds Magazine's Writing Contest.

Jordan was my first Greyhound and my soul mate. At nearly 14 years old, she had fallen victim to an aging body. From agile to lame, literally before my eyes, she died four days later. At the same time, Frannie, my 10-year-old tripod, was fighting osteosarcoma. The battle was lost when her back legs failed five months to the day after we lost Jordan.

My husband, Larry, and I were crushed. Our defense mechanisms kicked into high gear. Beds, bowls, and toys were stored away; food was donated to a shelter. Emotionally bankrupt, our grief made the idea of adopting again unthinkable. Why risk loving so deeply just to lose too quickly?

Looking at the car, I thought I should remove the travel pillow from the back of the hatchback and the Greyhound decal from the back window. Looking in the mirror, I realized I should probably stop wearing my Greyhound necklace and ring. When I removed the ring from my finger, I saw that it left an indentation in the shape of a running Greyhound. *Just like the one on my heart*, I thought, as I put it back in place. Looking around the house, there were Greyhound statues, pictures, and magazines — items accumulated over 12 years of owning and loving Greyhounds. It seemed pointless to keep them; they were cruel reminders of what was. They should go. *I'll have to do that soon*, I

thought. *But not today.* Meanwhile, I decided that I should just quit *looking*. These represented a bond not only to my Greyhounds, but to the community as well. At my core I wasn't yet ready to relinquish any part of it.

I've always felt that adopting a Greyhound was akin to joining a club that falls somewhere between a cult and the Boy Scouts. When we adopt a Greyhound, we adopt a way of life. We are zealots who spread the word; not inside airports wearing robes, but inside pet stores dressed in Greyhound sweatshirts. Earning our own kind of merit badges, we volunteer in different ways.

Decals and collectibles are the means by which we recognize one another in a crowd of non-members. I admit that I have had to fight the urge to make a U-turn in traffic and follow a car with a Greyhound decal, just to say, "Hey! Me, too!"

We are kindred spirits with thousands of friends whom we will never actually meet, yet know very well. We speak in code: *roaching*, *roo*, *greyt*, *gotcha day*, and *chipping*. Non-members look at us strangely when we call our dogs needle-noses, or say they have helicopter tails, baboon butts, or RTS (relaxed tongue syndrome) when sound asleep. When non-members chip, they are either playing golf or grinding a tree stump. But we know better.

In great numbers, like a motorcycle gang, we roll into resort towns to take them over for long weekends. Instead of leather and chains, we come with Greyhound-embellished shirts and hats, and armed with poop bags. Only members can hear the siren song of vendors when we gather.

We are a support group. Whether the question is health, training, or just wanting to share silly stories about our Greyhounds, someone always seems to be there for us. We possess a wealth of experience and we gladly share it. Members know they are not alone.

How could I possibly want to give up any of this? Reluctance to being hurt again was depriving me of the companionship of the breed that I have come to love, as well as the company of this unique group of enthusiasts. I missed my dogs, and I missed being part of the bigger Greyhound experience. Chipping (or perhaps pre-chipping, since I was currently without a Greyhound) seemed inevitable.

One of those from the Greyhound community, whose dog also fought bone cancer, was my rock. When I put out a call for help, many answered; but Anita kept in touch and supported me through the hard times by sharing my ups and downs. When I mentioned I was thinking about adopting again, Anita went dog shopping.

Among photos Anita e-mailed to me of fosters available from a group with which she was familiar, one stood out. There was something special in the bio of a black Greyhound named Dolly Sods — the owners hoped to stay in touch with her new family. I've always wanted to correspond with my dogs' racing owners. A bonus!

Anita remarked how black Greyhounds look gorgeous in anything they wear, and I began to imagine the possibilities of how she could color coordinate with my couch. Her soft, brown eyes told me she was a mender of broken hearts.

Happily, we dared to risk future heartache in order to share the love of another Greyhound today. Her retirement name is Brenna, Celtic in origin, meaning raven.

Anita was right; she is stunning in her purple collar, resting on my couch.

The running Greyhound-shaped indentation under my ring is no longer a concern; the one on my heart is healing. My Greyhound tchotchkes remain relevant, on display in the house. Brenna will roll into the resort town with us, riding in the car that never had the travel pillow in the hatchback or the decal on the back window removed. Her racing owner told me she sings. Maybe she'll roo with the group on the beach.

Happy endings aren't really endings; they're simply a pause in an ongoing story. A fresh chapter is being written about the love of a new Greyhound and a revitalized appreciation for the camaraderie, way of life, and just plain fun of the Greyhound cult. Adopting again has been nothing but rewarding. I have tender memories of Jordan and Frannie, new adventures to be had with Brenna and, equally important: My membership has been extended. ■

Diane Krall lives in Sheffield Village, Ohio with husband Larry and their Greyhound, Brenna (PC's Dolly Sods).



Stella and Stanley, adopted by Kristen and Gyeong Park of Spotsylvania, Pa.



Taco Elvis taught Pat Cattolico that adopting again is succession planning, not replacement.

Long Live the King and Queen

By Pat Cattolico

Pat Cattolico's story won Third Place in Celebrating Greyhounds Magazine's Writing Contest.

When I had to say goodbye to Sunshine, my first dog, it wasn't a matter of *if* I would adopt again, but *when*. This is in part because our second Greyhound, Taco Elvis, whom we adopted not long after bringing Sunshine home, had also lost his good friend and he was missing her as much as we were.

But my heart ached. How could anyone replace Sunshine? She was so smart, so full of personality. She was a hero. She protected me when a stranger behaving oddly approached us during a walk one night. She alerted me that workers had left the gate open and Taco was about to leave the yard to wander the neighborhood. There could never be another Sunshine.

I thought long and hard about adopting another Greyhound. Even though no one could take Sunshine's place, I knew my life was so much fuller with dogs than without them. I realized that if I wanted to share my life with Greyhounds, I had to accept that I would likely outlive them. To top it off: My heart was drawn to seniors. I was set-



Jim seems to have settled comfortably into the Cattolico home.

ting myself up for repeated, painful loss.

I found the solution to my dilemma in the history books: “The King is dead! Long live the King!” “The King is dead” announces that the monarch has died. “Long live the King!” recognizes that the heir to the throne immediately succeeds to the throne upon the death of the reigning monarch. It doesn’t matter how beloved was the king or queen; the monarchy must go on. Someone must occupy the throne in order for the rest of life to go on. Good kings are remembered forever.

I realized it isn’t a matter of replacing one Greyhound friend with another, but rather it is a matter of succession. I may be a citizen in the democracy of the United States of America, but my house is ruled by a monarchy. The queen sits on the Sunshine Memorial Throne, while the king’s throne is named in memory of Taco Elvis. This philosophy helps me immensely.

Every Greyhound is an individual. The paths of our lives intersect for a brief moment in the big scheme of the universe. What are we to learn from one another? What will we give to one another? What joys are we meant to share?

Sunshine’s heir was the darling brindle,

Pepper BB. A senior who lost her owners to terminal illnesses, she was much more princess than queen, but she reigned supreme with her quiet, dignified ways. Tall, handsome, brindle boy Barklee was Taco’s heir. His reign began at ten years of age and lasted only two short years, but we had what felt like a lifetime of love together. He gave me the gift of his trust, which he did not grant easily. And he taught me about the privilege of earning that trust.

With the loss of these kings and queens, I learned a life lesson: Mourning has no time constraints. I still experience grief over Sunshine, Taco, Pepper, and Barklee. In that grief, I’ve found comfort in the confirmation that my adoption philosophy is right for me. If I know that sooner or later I will adopt again and that my grief will never completely go away, why should I make my next Greyhound wait in a kennel or foster home or at the track or farm with no ticket into an adoption group until I reach some indefinable level of recovery from grief?

Julia the Joy Ambassador succeeded Pepper. Never have I met such a joyful being. She was happy to wake up and live each day, despite multiple eye diseases that eventually left her blind. Gordo succeeded Barklee. Big

and black, slightly goofy, terribly smart, he was such a good and patient friend to Julia as she lost her eyesight. He protected her and showed her the way.

Then came Annie, a 12-year-old graying brindle with a sweet personality and a history of seizures. I knew her through my volunteering at the Hern Greyt Works Kennel in Woodinville, Washington. She was considered unadoptable. She came home with me because my husband instinctively knew that our environment would be perfect for her. In the 2 and-a-half years we were graced with her presence, she had not one seizure. Instead, she had a rebirth — a second puppyhood. She gave me the gift of a real pack. For the first time, there were three Greyhound faces with wagging tails and silly smiles to greet me when I came home. Three bellies to rub, and three sets of paws running up and down the hall in a stuffie frenzy. The three were great friends. Annie’s throne has no heir apparent; her position is held for a special case like hers. When that Greyhound needs me, I will be here.

I said goodbye to Annie eight months ago, and to Julia six weeks ago. Gordo tumbled fast soon after. Just two weeks ago, I said goodbye to him.

In a few days, I’ll meet with my adoption representative to bring home the new King and Queen. Jane has some special needs and has been waiting for her family at the Hern Greyt Works for almost two years. She’s made good friends with Jim, who will come home with her. They remind me of the special friendship among Julia, Gordo, and Annie. Soon, we’ll have new stories, new adventures, new laughs, and new tears. An open heart can ease a broken heart. Long Live the King and Queen! ■

Pat Cattolico works hard for the kibble as a writer and project manager. She’s a long time volunteer at Greyhound Pets Inc. Hern Greyt Works Kennel in Woodinville, Wash. She’s a loyal subject of Queen Crackerjac Jane and King James Tiberius “Jim” and shares their adventures online at www.crackerjacjane.com.



Eileen Mitchell adopted her little tiger, Olivia, after saying goodbye to Greyhounds Elvis and Lucy.

When Elvis Left the Building: Adopting Olivia

Story and photo by Eileen Mitchell

Eileen Mitchell's story received Honorable Mention in Celebrating Greyhounds Magazine's Writing Contest.

Pity the pup to follow Elvis. Like dating a widower who was once married to America's sweetheart, I suspected my late Greyhound would be a very tough act to follow.

Elvis was an exceptional dog. Of course we all say that about our beloved hounds and of course we're all right, except my boy really did stand out from the crowd.

When I adopted Elvis in 2002, the 3-year-old fawn inspired me to express my love in the way I know best: writing. Ultimately, my collection of essays turned into a monthly column with the *San Francisco Chronicle* titled *Dog's Life*.

And so it was that for nine years I wrote about my favorite subject, the hound I called "my lifetime dog." Not only was it a sheer indulgence to chronicle life with my beautiful boy, but through Elvis I was also able to raise Greyhound awareness. Golden State Greyhound Adoption experienced an increase in inquiries and adoptions

every time an Elvis essay ran, and walking him in public, oh my! It was like strolling alongside the real King, with people flocking to meet and pet the popular ex-racer. Everyone knew him. Everyone loved him.

When my mom died unexpectedly, there was no question that I would adopt her sweet dog, Lucy, a spunky white Greyhound. Unfortunately, our time together was all too brief when Lucy died from an undiagnosed liver disease. I was overcome with grief. Not only had I loved the little dog, but losing her was like losing a piece of my mother all over again.

Elvis was lonely, too. That's why, four months after Lucy died, I decided to adopt another Greyhound. I was giddy with delight on the cold November Saturday that I met Olivia, a spunky 3-year-old red brindle with tiger-like stripes. Even better, the rescue group had made the effort to find a dog related to my sweet Lucy. The two were cousins! I knew this fact didn't amount to a hill of beans, but it comforted me nonetheless to think that a bit of Lucy's genes would live on in my home.

But just 72 hours after bringing Olivia home, my delight turned to despair when I learned that Elvis, my canine soul mate, had terminal cancer. Just four months after losing Lucy, I now faced the devastating loss of my beloved boy.

Subsequently, my desperate efforts to save Elvis coincided with my efforts to bond with my new dog. Throughout this stressful period, was Olivia sensing my sadness? My fear and anxiety? Of course she was. But in hindsight, I was too consumed with Elvis' cancer to realize that Olivia was a victim of collateral damage.

When my gentle boy finally lost his battle, I found myself alone with a dog my friends had nicknamed The Little Tiger because of her color and striking stripes. I had some serious concerns about this little tiger. I wondered: Could I ever love Olivia as much as I'd loved her cousin? Or even a fraction as much as I'd loved my special boy, Elvis?

After all, Olivia was a dog who stiffened when I tried to hug her. More than once she bared her teeth when I ventured near her pillow or toy. A couple times she actually snapped at my face when I got too close,

practically shaving the peach fuzz off my cheek. When she started lunging at dogs during walks, I called Stu Homer, founder of Golden State Greyhound Adoption.

"What the heck?" I asked in disbelief. "Did you give me Cujo?" Stu and I arranged to meet so he could evaluate Olivia and we hung up, but minutes later, he called back. "Do you want to return her?" he asked. "Of course not," I replied. But to be honest, I hadn't considered that option. Hmm.

Sure enough, the next day when Stu evaluated Olivia, the word "bad girl" was belted repeatedly. Not toward the dog, mind you, but me.

"There's nothing wrong with this dog," Stu barked in his heavy Brooklyn accent. "She's not a bad dog, you're a bad owner! She doesn't need training, YOU need training."

Ouch.

For starters, I was holding her leash wrong and introducing her to other dogs incorrectly. He also told me about "resource-guarding," where dogs will growl and snap while guarding what they consider to be a valuable resource, like a toy or pillow. All of this was news to me. I hesitate to boast that Elvis was perfect, except that well, Elvis was perfect.

And so, on walks I followed Stu's instructions and discovered Olivia behaving like a candidate for the Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show. Really? Okay, so maybe it had been me.

I worked with her in other ways, too. When she was lying on her pillow, I'd casually stroll by and toss a treat. I had learned that this would help Olivia associate my nearness as a good thing. The resource-guarding stopped almost immediately. I devoted weekends to my girl, doing things like hiking

around local reservoirs and trails. We sat outside at coffee shops and people-watched while I stroked her ears and rubbed her back. I scheduled play dates with other Greyhound guardians to help socialize Olivia. I spent every minute I could getting to know my little tiger.

Slowly, the shy, stiff, wary dog I brought home six months before began to fade and in her place I discovered a playful, sweet and affectionate dog. Olivia started greeting me at the door each night when I returned from work. She began following me around the house and planting her body at my feet wherever I landed, content to be at my side. She started using her needle nose to poke me for hugs and kisses and trying to crawl onto my lap to snuggle against my chest just as Elvis did.

One Sunday morning I was remembering my boy and started tearing up. Olivia, sensing my sadness, strolled to my overstuffed chair. She looked at me with a cocked head, confused at my obvious distress, and then my spirited little tiger did something she'd never done before: She gently laid her head on my lap, like Elvis used to do, so I could bury my face in her soft neck and sob. I inhaled her unique sweetness, grateful for her canine compassion.

And with a rush of love and a spark in my heart, I realized this was how Elvis and I once started many years ago. ■

Freelance writer Eileen Mitchell lives in Northern California with her little tiger, Olivia, and writes the popular Pet Tales column for the San Francisco Chronicle. When she isn't writing about pets, she's blogging about everything else at eileenmitchell.blogspot.com.



Sabrina (Tyville Madison), adopted by Bill and Terri Royea of Waskesiu Lake, Saskatchewan.



Jim and Vinnie relax by the fire. When Jim succumbed to cancer, his family wasn't sure about adopting another Greyhound.

Saying Yes Again

By Pat McIlveen

Pat's story received Honorable Mention in Celebrating Greyhounds Magazine's Writing Contest.

The day Jim came home with us remains very clear in my mind. We were so enamored of Emma, our first Greyhound, that we wanted a companion for her as well as another hound for us. Emma had enchanted my husband, Rick, the moment we met her and even though she and I have a wonderful relationship, she remains Daddy's girl.

We had adopted Emma from Maine Greyhound Placement Service (MGPS) and were very grateful for their expertise, so once again we made our way to the kennel in Augusta. Louise Sawyer, kennel manager and veterinary technician, was there to find a good second match for us. When she walked through the door with Jim, I was almost speechless. He took my breath away. It may have been his blue brindle coat, or his shy, sweet demeanor. Maybe it was the tentative way he lifted one front paw; or maybe it was his ears, which he seemed to be wearing backwards. There was a feeling of kinship — Jim was the hound for me. Rick agreed, and Jim became part of our family.

And what a fine family it was. Our children were grown and the Greyhounds became our kids. Emma and Jim



The new Greyhound, Jester, does meet-and-greets with Emma. *Veronica Munsey*

were a happy pair — wherever Emma was, Jim was not far away. They ate together, played together and slept together. Emma, our naughty diva, remained Rick's girl and Jim, our shy gentleman, was unabashedly a Mama's boy. How we all loved our walks, car rides, and evening cuddles. We also worked with MGPS doing meet-and-greets, and both our dogs were wonderful ambassadors for retired Greyhounds. Our lives were full.

Within another year, we had added Vinnie to our pack. He fit in perfectly — a goofy, 80-pound lap dog. Three Greyhounds worked well for us, so Rick and I agreed that we would strive to keep that number. There would always be dogs needing homes, right? So that was our plan. We loved our hounds.

Our lives were full — Until. Until Jim stopped eating. Until we were told that he had gastrointestinal lymphoma. Until we learned that Jim's time was limited, even with treatment. We tried two rounds of chemotherapy, but it was clear that Jim was

uncomfortable and too sick to continue.

We let him go.

Let him go? What a trite phrase for such a gut-wrenching decision. Jim was gone and nothing would bring him back. There were no more comb-over ears. There was no more joyful stuffy flinging, no more snuggling. No more Jim.

Our full lives were not so full anymore. The conviction that we had made the right decision for Jim could not fill the empty space in our hearts. Both Rick and I were devastated. Emma and Vinnie were grieving as well. It was heartbreaking to watch them search for Jim. We wondered if we should adopt right away to help them adjust to the loss. But we hesitated, neither of us ready.

The days following Jim's death became weeks. Emma and Vinnie stopped looking for him each morning. But I didn't. Rick thought we should consider adopting again. I couldn't. Rick gently reminded me that three dogs worked well for us. I said no, not yet. My heart

was too heavy. He also reminded me that there were many hounds waiting for homes. Again, I said no. Then he told me whenever I was ready, he would call the kennel.

Sometimes I would go to the MGPS website and look at the available hounds. Occasionally, I would even tell Rick about some of them. He'd always ask if he should call for an appointment — I'd say no. Why could I not move forward? Perhaps it was a question of loyalty? No, I knew, of course, that we could never replace Jim. But I did feel that a new hound meant eventually facing another loss, something I could not even begin to contemplate. I guess I just didn't believe there was room in my heart for another Greyhound.

As time went by, Rick and I spoke more often about adding another hound to our home. Once in a while I would agree, imagining the pleasure of adopting again, but quickly I would change my mind. It seemed as though agreeing to a new Greyhound

would in some way negate the time I'd spent with Jim, compromise the love I had for him, and in some way, might take away my memories of him. It begged the question of my commitment to him. It was the final acknowledgment that he was gone and, of course, there was that fear of eventual loss.

This vacillating continued for more than a year, until finally I said yes and meant it. We made our adoption appointment. On the way to the kennel my chest felt tight, and I was still questioning if it were the right time for us. It occurred to me then that maybe there is no "right time."

Once in the kennel, I breathed more easily. Once inside, hearing and seeing the hounds, the day ceased to be about fear. Had I been worried that when I looked at other hounds, all I would see was Jim? Maybe. Of

course he wasn't there — he was safely tucked in my heart, where he will always stay. But there were other Greyhounds, many of them, waiting for homes. There were large ones, small ones, noisy ones, and quiet ones; black, black-brindle, fawn, and white. What a beautiful sight. That day of fear blossomed into a day of hope, for a hound and for me. It was about new beginnings. It was about faith, about how life goes on, and how we must grab every possible opportunity to enrich our lives. Depriving ourselves of the experience of adopting again suddenly seemed foolish. Jim was physically gone, but Jester was there. Jester — quiet, anxious Jester — was there cowering in his crate, waiting for a new life. He found one. Jester came home with us that day, and it has been wonderful watching him gain confidence and learn to trust.

Once again we have a pack of three. Not the same pack, but a new, different combination that fills our lives with happiness.

It took more than a year for us to adopt after losing Jim. Rick was ready earlier than I. In hindsight, I think I could have — perhaps should have — tried sooner. I have learned that our hearts have an unlimited capacity for love and there is always room for one more hound. There is no right time, no wrong time. We have to open our hearts when we are able and embrace the joy that comes when we say yes, it's time — again. ■

Pat and Rick McIlveen live in Lewiston, Maine. They happily share their lives with Greyhounds Emma, Vinnie and Jester, as well as with Oliver, their mini Dachshund.



Dakota (Dakota Kid), adopted by Heather Bell and Robin Janis of Lethbridge, Alberta. *Heather Bell*



Tanner and Crisco were like bookends.

In the Moment — Loving and Losing Senior Greyhounds

Story and photos by Jen Komatsu

Jen's story received Honorable Mention in Celebrating Greyhounds Magazine's Writing Contest.

I lost Tanner to osteosarcoma in February 2009. Not only was he the first hound I'd ever lost, but he was my sun and moon and stars. A gentle boy with an expressive face and a love of Thai food, he came to us at nine years old and immediately became part of the family. We had six Greyhounds then, and Tanner was a mirror image of my heart boy, Crisco. Together they were like bookends, and they went with me everywhere.

When Tanner died, I was lost. I replayed in my head every part of his various diagnoses and treatments, trying to force a different outcome. Repeatedly I asked myself what I might have done to save him, or at least to spare him some pain. But the reality was that he was 13, and he had osteosarcoma.

I looked at Crisco, half a bookend pair now, and couldn't fathom going for our car rides with him alone, or attending meet-and-greets or other Greyhound events. The empty space Tanner left would be unbearable. My other hounds had never been much for ambassador work. So there was only one thing to do. Adopt again.

I found Sly, a sweet-faced ten-year-old brindle boy, on Michigan REGAP's website. After adopting Tanner at age nine, senior adoption was the obvious choice for me. And in fact, Sly was perfect. He wagged his whole butt along with his tail. His goofy sideways run brought him in from the yard like a run-away freight train. You could not fail to smile when Sly was with you. Choosy Crisco accepted him immediately, and they became my new meet-and-greet pair.

The pain of losing Tanner did not go away. Even three years later, I miss my boy with my whole body and soul. There are still moments of asking why, desperate prayers to please let me have him for one more day. But Sly made it possible to move on. Sly was a lifetime of joy bundled into a wiggly brindle package. Sly saved me, like each one after him has saved me.

Six months after we brought Sly home, I received the heartbreaking news of spinal cancer for Crisco. He had been my best friend for seven years and I had nightmares about losing him. The day after diagnosis, I was sitting in my pajamas with Crisco when Sly started his wobble-dance to go potty. I expected him to come barreling back in a moment later with his crazy gait, but he had collapsed. I yelled his name and ran to him; he couldn't breathe. I dragged my beautiful gasping boy across the acre yard and drove blindly to the vet, crying his name. But he never came back to me. Pulmonary embolism, they said. There was nothing you could have done, they said. This day stands as the worst of my life.

One week later, Crisco died. The day before he left me, we drove to Iowa and adopted nine-year-old Apollo from Heartland Greyhound Adoption. This time, I was not looking for a going-out partner for my heart boy, but I still wanted him to approve. Gentle, reserved, delicate Apollo conjured memories of my beloved Tanner, and so the circle goes around. When we arrived home from the trip, I sat up into the night with Crisco. We spoke to one another; he told me he was done. I let him go the next morning.

If I'm being honest, I'll admit that I was not at all okay after that. The shock of Sly, combined with the ache of expecting Crisco

in every daily routine, put me in bed for days. I loved Apollo, but I had only the bare minimum to give. Slowly, I began to think about adoption work again and decided Apollo would need a going-out partner too. My friends at Rescued Racers sent me Whitey, a tiny, perky 11-year-old.

The day I met Whitey, I knew two things: One, that he had a lot of personality, and two, that something was wrong with him. Two weeks later, my fears were confirmed by x-rays: osteosarcoma of the proximal humerus. I barely knew this boy and had an awful decision to make. But he showed me beyond doubt that he was not done living, so we had his leg amputated.

Whitey saved me by needing me. He wanted to fight the cancer, and he needed me to fight it too. How could I lie in bed feeling sorry for myself when Whitey — and others — needed me? He woke me up and shook me, and together we fought hard. My small white dog was the bravest soul I've ever known. He never lost his spunk, not through surgery or chemo. He fought like hell to live and enjoy life, and dug his one-armed holes in the backyard until the week he died. After six months, the cancer was everywhere, and one day he lost the sparkle in his eye. But when he left, I think we both knew that we had done our best. And after losing Sly the way I did, I needed to know that.



After Tanner passed away, Jen brought home Sly. Here, he snuggles with Crisco.



One day before Crisco's passing, Jen adopted 9-year-old Apollo.



Within weeks of his adoption, Whitey was diagnosed with osteosarcoma.

During Whitey's chemo, Apollo got his diagnosis. We took this gentle boy's leg too, and they fought on together. Apollo left us three months after Whitey. We lost three other beloved babies and longtime family members that year; at times I felt as though I was drowning.

So why do I keep on adopting the old ones, knowing all too well how it goes? The truth is, I need them. I need them to keep me awake and afloat. I need them to help me see each moment clearly. With a senior dog, I know our time is limited and therefore precious. With Sly, I hadn't learned this lesson well enough yet, and I expected him to be there forever. I am grateful for every day I had with that dog, but my only wish is that I had paid closer attention. To adopt a senior is to know that each day is a gift. Every kiss, every expectant tail wag, every joyous welcome home, toy toss, or snuggle is noteworthy, because there are no guarantees of more. You pay attention.

Seniors may not give you quantity of time, but the quality is immeasurable. I can't afford to wave him aside when he wants my attention: I give it gladly and freely. He has lost everything, but still gives me the amazing gift of trust. I can't sink into my own sadness: I owe it to him to be worthy of his love. If he needs me, then there is a reason to wake up every day.

Since the tripod hounds left us, several other senior boys have come home to me. I don't know what I would do without them. Each day I feel lucky they are with me. The pain of losing them is heavy, crushing, and raw every time, but I have nothing but gratitude. They give me so much, whether they are with me a few months or a few years. It is always, always worth it. ■

Jen Komatsu lives in Inver Grove Heights, Minn. She is mom to nine Greyhounds, two Staghounds, and one random Border Collie, and she has also adopted four human children from China. She is the founder and director of Minnesota Greyhound Rescue.



After saying goodbye to Bailey, Jan Radke adopted Brooke, another shy, red girl. *Brie Hillier*

How Do You Know?

By Jan Radke

Jan's story received Honorable Mention in Celebrating Greyhounds Magazine's Writing Contest.

How did you know it was time to adopt again? Many people asked me this question, and quite frankly, I did not always have an answer.

My first Greyhound, Bailey, was an extremely shy red Greyhound. She came into my life when I needed her most. Together, we learned a lot about our quirky behaviors and our fears. We formed an intense bond.

I gained a lot of knowledge about Greyhounds over the years while participating on various Greyhound forums. One day while casually perusing a forum, a picture caught my attention. A beautiful, red, female Greyhound named Glo traveled on a haul from Florida to Philadelphia, Pa. I was curious and inquired about her, even though I had no intention of adopting her. I attributed my warm, fuzzy feelings to my soft spot for red Greyhounds, especially shy ones. Still, I wondered why I was so drawn to her.

During this time, I also learned about cancer in Greyhounds. I never even considered that one of our Greyhounds would be diagnosed with this insidious disease. Nonetheless, we vowed that when any of our Greyhounds died, we would honor their memory by adopting another Greyhound who needed a home.

On December 16, 2009, our veterinarian called with horrendous news. Bailey had terminal cancer. Invasive surgical procedures would not cure her or even make her more comfortable. Although my husband and Bailey were ready for the inevitable, I was unable to let her go. I clung to the hope that her condition would stabilize and she

would stay with me a little longer.

At the same time, I loved her too much to let her suffer. Bailey left this world the following day with her head cradled in my arm as I softly stroked her, whispering how much I loved her and how she would never be afraid again. She slipped away peacefully in my arms, with my husband standing by.

Adopting Bailey was undeniably one of the happiest moments in my life. Losing Bailey was undeniably one of the worst moments of my life. I was inconsolable and grieved for her far more than I had for friends and relatives, including my parents.

When the phone rang a few days later, I almost did not answer it. It was a Greyhound owner in Philadelphia. During our conversation she mentioned that a Greyhound farm about 8 hours away from us was closing. Coincidentally, this person was in the same picture with Glo, the timid red Greyhound that I had spotted on the online forum about six weeks earlier.

My feelings were so raw that adoption was the furthest thing from my mind. Nevertheless, when I learned Glo was still available for adoption, my heart fluttered ever so slightly, and the heaviness seemed to lighten. A diversion was exactly what I needed. If this was a sign, I was paying attention.

We contacted Glo's adoption group and set the wheels in motion for a long road trip to the U.S. The director of the adoption group arranged for us to meet about forty Greyhounds in West Virginia, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. I didn't feel a connection with any of them, which was discouraging and sad. Perhaps the right one was not out there. Or maybe it was too soon. Ben, our male Greyhound, was intimidated by all of the dogs and way out of his comfort zone. Although my husband felt some attachment to one sweet, outgoing female Greyhound, I convinced him to drive to Philadelphia. Although I thought I had mentioned to him the picture of Glo, apparently I had not. In my grief, I really was not sure of anything. I just knew I had to meet Glo or I would always wonder if she was "the one."

When her foster dad brought a fearful but beautiful Glo into the room, my heart suddenly felt lighter. Later, he told me he knew she was the one when my eyes, filled with

sorrow, lit up. I knew instantly that she was the one; actually I knew it in my heart all along. The date was Sunday, December 27, 2009, just ten days after saying goodbye to Bailey.

My journey to Glo was filled with a lot of "what-ifs." What if I had not seen her picture? What if I had not answered the phone? What if I had not convinced my husband to drive to Philadelphia? What if the family who initially wanted to adopt her had not chosen a male instead? What if she did not get along with Ben? What if the blizzard we encountered on the way home had occurred a day earlier? What if, for a very brief moment, I had not followed my heart?

We loaded Ben and Glo, now renamed Brooke, into the car. She spread out and promptly fell asleep, leaving Ben to squeeze into the remaining space. Thankfully, both

seemed very contented with each other; no growling or barking ensued during the entire trip home. To this day, Brooke still takes up most of the room in the car and leaves Ben a tiny space.

My greatest lesson, and one that I have been fortunate to pass on to others, is that it is possible to love deeply again even while grieving deeply. Although we knew we could never replace Bailey, our hearts needed another Greyhound to love. Brooke was an addition to the family, a new companion for Ben, my heart healer and grief counselor extraordinaire, a reason to smile and a reason to love again.

So how did I know it was time to adopt again? My heart told me. ■

Jan Radke resides happily with husband Dave and Greyhounds Ben and Brooke in Waterloo, Ontario.



Jasmine, adopted by Vince and Becky Pavic of Johnstown, Pa.



Pilly Putty can make your hound's medications more palatable, and it is far less pricey than similar products available at your local pet supply store.

I've become addicted to Greenies® Pill Pockets®. Well, make that addicted to the wonderful medication delivery method that they provide. Pill Pockets are a delicious treat that stays completely wrapped around the secret (and sometimes icky-tasting) pill inside, enticing our Greyhounds to gulp it down. Unfortunately, with the ongoing daily medication and supplement dispensation required for my three Greyhounds, keeping up this habit over the long term has become a pricey proposition.

I decided to take a run at concocting a homemade equivalent of the Pill Pocket. Our hounds love it. It took a few tries to determine the optimal combination of ingredients. Fortunately, the hounds have been nothing but happy to participate in my tasty little kitchen experiment. I hope your hounds — and your wallet — will be equally pleased.

Pilly Putty Ingredients:

4 T. and 2 t. flour
2 level T. molasses
3/4 t. oil

Measure the flour into a medium bowl and make a well in the middle. Pour the molasses and oil into the well. Using a fork, combine the ingredients until the flour is incorporated into the molasses.

Make Your Own Pilly Putty

By Lisa Quast

To keep the mixture from sticking to your hands, apply a few drops of oil to your hands. (You may wish to put rubber gloves on first, then oil the gloves.) Thoroughly mix the putty by hand until it is smooth and consistent, making sure to incorporate any flour remaining in the bowl. The mixture should have a putty-like consistency without being dry or crumbly. If it seems too dry, add more oil, one drop at a time.

Store unused Pilly Putty in a zip-top sandwich bag. Use a drop of oil to coat the inside of the bag to prevent sticking.

Pilly Putty might seem very pliable on the first day, but it will continue to firm up as it sits. For best results, use your Pilly Putty within one week.

Pilly Putty can be frozen for up to two months. Remove from the freezer and thaw 24 hours before use.

Do not refrigerate Pilly Putty.

Variations: Our hounds gobbled up the plain molasses version. If your hound needs some extra encouragement, you can add 1/2 t. concentrated chicken or beef stock paste ("Better than Bouillon" is one brand) to the mixture to make it more tasty. Use a fork to mix the paste into the flour before adding the molasses and oil. ■

Lisa Quast is President of GPA/Minnesota. This article originally appeared in the March/April 2012 issue of Home Stretch, newsletter of GPA/Minnesota. It is reprinted here with permission of the author.



Harvey and Kelli Gibbs adopted Caroline from GPA/Emerald Coast. Little did they know that Canine Good Citizen training was just what they needed to bring Caroline out of her shell.

Caroline Becomes a Canine Good Citizen

Story and photos by Karen Prichard

I was intrigued by the distinct note of concern I heard in Kelli's voice when she spoke of her retired racing Greyhound, Caroline. It was clear from my conversation with Kelli that she needed help with training her dog. Kelli admitted that since her adoption, Caroline still was not comfortable with people, despite having lived with them for quite a while. In fact, she would hide in the bedroom whenever family or friends stopped by, and she never wanted to interact with people.

Caroline's fears were of great concern, so I knew we had to concentrate on building her trust with humans. Kelli seemed determined to help her beloved dog, so I did something without precedent for me. I invited her to bring Caroline to my next class, which happened to be a preparation course for the Canine Good Citizen (CGC) test.

Kelli was not fully aware of the American Kennel Club's (AKC) CGC Program, but she was interested in hearing about it. I knew the CGC exercises would most likely be too advanced for Caroline, but I felt strongly that she needed help sooner rather than later. I suggested that since it was a smaller group class, the socialization alone would probably be very helpful to Caroline. Kelli agreed, so she planned to attend the first night on a trial basis and see how Caroline responded.

I started to think about how I could help this dog. Hearing about Caroline reminded me of a summer job I once had at a local Greyhound track. I had often worried about the future of these incredible athletes once they retired from racing. Thankfully, since that time, many wonderful organizations have been established, such as Greyhound Pets of America (GPA), whose volunteers work tirelessly to find homes for these dogs. I am a supporter of Basset Hound rescue myself and am familiar with some of the difficulties a dog can face when transitioning to live with a new family.

My goal was not only to have Caroline feel safe but also to invite her to try new things in a controlled environment where we could set her up for success. I started thinking of ways to adapt my curriculum to support her. I immediately reached for one of my favorite books, *Citizen Canine*, by Dr. Mary R. Burch, Ph.D. This is the official book of the AKC CGC Program, and it contains some ideas and training methods that I could incorporate in helping Caroline. The author is director of the AKC's Canine Good Citizen Program, and her book offers a sound, applied behavior analysis approach to dog training. It is also a great resource for descriptive information on the CGC exercises. Dr. Burch affirms: "The Canine Good Citizen Program is becoming widely recognized as the behavioral standard for dogs in our communities. Some of this country's largest insurance companies will insure breeds not otherwise insurable if the dog has the CGC award." Dr. Burch further expounds on the CGC by saying, "We are so proud to be helping dogs become well-respected members of our communities."

Established in 1989, the CGC Program stresses responsible pet ownership and includes ten exercises a dog must pass in order to become a Canine Good Citizen. The requirements are designed to determine whether a dog can be well-behaved at home and in the community. All dogs who pass the ten-step CGC test may receive a certificate from the American Kennel Club. There are approximately 78 million dogs in the U.S. More than 500,000 have earned their CGC title since the program's inception, and an

average of 50,000 CGC certificates are awarded each year.

Florida passed the first legislation supporting the CGC in 1991. Since then, at least 39 states have followed suit. In addition, many therapy dog organizations either use or recommend the CGC test for future therapy dogs. Kelli is a speech therapist and said her dream would be to have Caroline become a therapy dog one day. Clearly the CGC class was a step in the right direction, so I looked forward to meeting Caroline and her family.

My heart melted when I met Caroline on the first night of class. She was obviously tense, uncomfortable being petted, and avoided direct eye contact. However, she was perceptive and alerted to light noise coming from a train passing down the road. When in new surroundings, her apprehension increased; she kept her tail tucked tightly.

Kelli and Caroline had not participated

in formal obedience training. However, Kelli was very supportive of Caroline throughout the class, while withholding positive reinforcement when Caroline showed fear. Caroline was shy, panted nervously, and had separation anxiety, all of which made her an unlikely CGC candidate. Regardless, Kelli and her husband, Harvey, decided they would attend all the classes with Caroline, if only for the important socialization the experience would offer. She had a lot to learn; little did we know that Caroline had some lessons in store for us as well.

As we got underway, Kelli and I shared with others in the class the fact that Caroline was primarily there to socialize. I knew the students would be very supportive of Caroline, as I have been fortunate to have some of the nicest people come to me for training. I explained that with Caroline, we were not worried about actually taking the test, but instead wanted to avoid putting any



Caroline wears her Canine Good Citizen kerchief with pride.

pressure on her. I asked each person to introduce themselves and share what goals they hoped to accomplish by the end of the class. During these introductions, Kelli explained that she and her husband Harvey had adopted Caroline from the Emerald Coast chapter of GPA. This was a nice surprise to me, because that adoption group has helped a large number of Greyhounds from the track where I worked as a teenager.

I was excited to work with a retired racer and was determined to help Kelli and Harvey reach the goals they set for Caroline. We had a long road ahead of us.

Getting Started

We worked with Caroline to help her become comfortable taking a treat from her owner outside of her home, as well as to accept petting from others without fear. We also worked to build her confidence so another person could hold her leash when her owners were not present. Sit, down and stay exercises would be an ultimate goal, but in the beginning, these seemed almost unreachable.

I knew immediately that Kelli and Harvey were up for the challenge by the way they adoringly looked at Caroline. Kelli said, "Caroline is our first Greyhound, our heart dog." Kelli further explained, "I discovered the breed at a meet-and-greet while in college. The dogs were so calm and sweet, and one of them leaned her whole body against me for support." She was hooked, and knew when the timing was right, she would adopt a Greyhound. After the heartbreaking loss of their older German Shepherd, they decided it was time to add another member to the family. They researched the Greyhound breed further to be sure it would be the right fit for their family. After viewing Caroline's picture on the GPA/Emerald Coast website, they were smitten.

Caroline was fostered by Bettie and John Grinsted, who were happy to share more details about her once they knew Caroline had a prospective home. They also agreed to bring her to a meet-and-greet, and Kelli recalls: "The first time I saw her easing down out of the van into the parking lot... that same sweet, but shy, expression on her face, I knew she was the one!"

Caroline was calm and gentle once they brought her home. She also exhibited great intelligence by figuring out how to find the back door and let her new family know she needed to go out the very first night. It wasn't long before Caroline started to come out of her shell for Kelli and Harvey, and she showed great personality by learning to "roo" and "speak" for a cookie. Caroline was a different dog, however, when she was outside her home. If people approached on their daily walks, she would hide behind Kelli and Harvey. Watching Caroline struggle with her insecurities led her caregivers to start thinking about ways to help her become more confident. Kelli and Harvey knew the great personality Caroline had, and they wanted the rest of the world to see it too.

Training Holds the Key

Caroline's family knew training would help build her confidence. And that's where I came in. We decided to start by desensitizing Caroline and train her by using positive reinforcement — without coddling her. Our first night of training, Kelli was anxious. As she said, we "knew how nervous Caroline was when away from home, as she would shake and pant hard. Our trainer's approach was very gentle, and she took everything very slowly with Caroline. We were all a

great match, so it was a very positive experience!"

Teaching a dog the CGC exercises can be a challenge, particularly for a Greyhound with no prior training. Regardless, Kelli and Harvey decided to work on all the commands and see how Caroline performed over time. As the instructor, I began to work with them as a family unit to teach them how to practice with Caroline in class and at home. It is important when training to involve the entire family and spend time doing short training sessions with the dog at home.

I had high hopes for Caroline as soon as the first class, because it was clear that Kelli and Harvey would practice with her daily. We started our approach by gently petting and brushing Caroline to help her prepare for the first three CGC test items. The first exercise is Accepting a Friendly Stranger, in which a person approaches to greet only the handler. The second is Sitting Politely for Petting, and the third is Appearance and Grooming. Both of these tasks required Caroline not to shy away when meeting strangers, have her head and feet handled, and be comfortable while being lightly groomed. Everyone was instructed to be extremely gentle with her and she soon seemed to enjoy the human contact.

It was also important to start teaching



Cara, adopted by Mike and Joanne Bast of Edgewater, Md.

Caroline to sit. I felt they would need plenty of time to work on this exercise. After teaching them a couple of different methods to try, we finally found the one that elicited the best response from Caroline. Kelli and Harvey were patient and worked hard to get her comfortable with Sitting on Command. They also practiced the Down, Stay and Coming When Called exercises separately and worked hard to proof all three exercises in a variety of settings. It was amazing how quickly she learned. We now had a Greyhound who could perform several exercises — including the sit!

Thus began a true alignment of the stars as we began to find our own ways to enthusiastically work as a team. Since Caroline frequently went on walks with a loose leash, she breezed through the practices for some other CGC test items, such as Out for a Walk, Walking Through a Crowd, and Reaction to Another Dog. She had little or no Reaction to Auditory and Visual Distractions and began to stop panting and shaking after a few weeks. Over time Caroline had also become comfortable with another person holding her leash while her family was out of the room for three minutes. Her separation anxiety greatly decreased, and it became apparent that she would be able to perform the Supervised Separation exercise.

Caroline soon became excited to come to class. She started to take cookies from Kelli and Harvey in the car and outside of their home. One night, she willingly gobbled up treats from different participants around the training room. She progressed quickly, to the amazement of her family, fellow classmates — and to my own amazement as well. The consensus was that Kelli and Harvey should attempt the CGC test with Caroline.

There were no expectations or pressure on Caroline, but Caroline had discovered that she trusted people, and positive training was fun. She blossomed with growing confidence as she learned more skills. She even started to come out of the bedroom and practice her “sit and stay” when people visited her home.

It was soon time to take the CGC test. What happened next was an amazing race to the finish. Not only did Caroline learn to perform the exercises, but she passed her

CGC test with flying colors! Caroline earned her Canine Good Citizen certificate, and Kelli hopes that one day she will become a therapy dog.

I had a conversation with Kelli recently to discuss the possibility of Caroline joining my next therapy dog preparation class. The joy in Kelli’s voice when she discussed Caroline was unmistakable. Kelli and Harvey continue to work on Caroline’s training, which has only enhanced the wonderful personality they always knew was there. Before, people couldn’t get past their initial impression of a shy, fearful dog. However, these days, everyone who meets Caroline sees only her sweet expression and gentle spirit. Kelli and Harvey say there are many things that Caroline can do now after earning her CGC. “Caroline will now approach people on her own terms to sniff them and check them out,” Harvey says with pride. He and Kelli feel her growing confidence is illustrated by the fact that Caroline will let children pet her without walking away. And they are thrilled that she will now “cockroach” on command.

Training Caroline has been a wonderful experience, and as the saying goes, “It takes a village.” Many elements came together to help Caroline become the dog she is today. It was not the enticement of a bunny that helped her chase her dreams, but rather the all-encompassing lure of the love shared as part of the human-canine bond. The goal of becoming a registered therapy dog may be a long way off, but as Lily Tomlin said, “The road to success is always under construction.” Caroline reminded me that patience, positive training, and a loving, supportive home can help a Greyhound reach the finish line. ■

Karen Prichard and her husband Tim are AKC Canine Good Citizen Evaluators and have their own dog training business. Cherry and Cassidy, their current therapy dogs, are two of the first Basset Hounds to earn the AKC’s new Therapy Dog title. Karen and Tim are active Delta Society® Pet Partner® teams and registered Reading Education Assistance Dog® (R.E.A.D.) volunteers. Karen is one of 39 R.E.A.D. Instructions in the United States. For more information on the AKC Canine Good Citizen program, visit www.akc.org



Ace, adopted by Lynn Fredericksen of Dallas, Texas. Susan Moore



Tommy Corey with Rocky (AMF Rock Solid), adopted by Ann Ensminger from Greys Landing Greyhound Placement, Pittsburgh, Pa. Tommy's mother, Denise, works in the A Ray Kennel at Wheeling Downs in West Va.

Teaching Children to Be Kind: Retired Racers Can Help

By Mary Renck Jalongo, Ph.D.

“Children can be cruel,” as the old saying goes. Today, however, with bullying and school violence as the top concern of many educators and families, we can no longer afford to assume that children will outgrow such behavior. One school principal I know put it this way: “With incidence of school violence on the rise, we live in constant fear of being the lead story on the six o'clock news.”

So how do we go about teaching children to be compassionate? Bringing in the dogs has been a proposed solution for centuries. In fact, according to historians, some of our modern ideas about pet-keeping have their origins in

the Victorian era, when making children responsible for the care of pets was regarded as an antidote to cruelty. One current trend is humane education, defined as “a process that encourages an understanding of the need for compassion and respect for people, animals and the environment and recognizes the interdependence of all living things” (World Animal Net, 2012). The research tells us that children form humane attitudes when others, particularly respected adults, model compassion for them. This is accomplished when adults: (1) show empathy toward animals, (2) teach them how to care appropriately for an animal, (3) connect with animals emotionally, and (4) regard animals as important helpers/friends. When you think about it, there are many examples of these behaviors as kennel/track personnel, adoption organization representatives, loyal

volunteers, foster families, fund raisers/contributors, and Greyhound adopters collaborate to help a retired racer find a permanent home.

Becoming a Humane Educator

If you are conducting programs for children about Greyhounds, with or without a Greyhound dog present, you could be a humane educator. A humane educator is defined by the Association of Professional Humane Educators as “anyone who teaches and promotes humane attitudes toward people, animals and the environment. This includes, but is not limited to, anyone who teaches animal welfare, animal rights, animal behavior, environmental concerns, character education, cultural studies and any combination of the above.” When those of us who work with retired racers visit a classroom and

talk with children, we are showing children that some adults, at least, are dedicated to protecting animals. In my rural area of Pennsylvania, for example, I can drive down a back road in any direction and see dogs that are in misery, tied to battered dog houses, tethered on ropes or chains and standing in mud and feces up to their ankles. I may not be able to exert much influence on adult neighbors who treat their dogs like junk parts for a car, but when I arrive at school with an elegant, gentle, groomed, and trained Greyhound, she becomes a walking contradiction of that heartless treatment seen all around. It shows, rather than tells, children that there is another way to be with our dogs, to make them our companions, and to love them like the best friends that they truly are.

Zoe Weil, the president of the Institute for Humane Education (www.Humane



Becky Shellenbarger of Indiana, Pa. shows her love for her Greyhound, Satin. *Indiana Gazette*



Teaching even very young children to respect animals can make the world a kinder place. Rusty, adopted by Paul and Jodie Damon of Oconomowoc, Wis.

Education.org) has identified several elements of humane education touched upon in the remainder of this article (see her YouTube speech, “The World Becomes What You Teach” (www.youtube.com/watch?v=t5HEV96dluY)). Key elements of humane education, according to Weil, include: (1) providing accurate information, (2) fostering the 3 Cs (curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking) so children can evaluate information and solve problems, (3) instilling the 3 Rs (reverence, respect, and responsibility) so that children will act with kindness and integrity, and (4) offering positive choices that benefit oneself, other people, the Earth, and animals so that children feel empowered to help create a more humane world.

Providing Accurate Information

When Greyhound groups host their meet-and-greets and other community events, children are taught an important principle of humane education: to provide

accurate information. At meet-and-greets hosted by Monica’s Heart Greyhound Adoption, I overhear children who have grown up around Greyhounds confidently fielding common questions (Do they make good pets? How long do they live? Are they old when they retire? Do they need a lot of exercise? Why do they wear muzzles? Are they housebroken? Do they have medical issues? Were they abused?). Children soon see that others have major misconceptions about the breed, such as assuming that any home would be better than track life or that the goal of getting a Greyhound is to let him or her “run free”. This helps to underscore the importance of providing accurate information in an understandable way.

Making Responsible Decisions

Children need opportunities to evaluate information and grapple with solutions. Here again, the world of retired racers offers many opportunities. Older students, for example, might consider the issues raised when a ken-

nel or track closes and, suddenly, a large number of dogs need to be rehomed or, they might read something in CG Magazine that sparks a discussion within the retired racer adoption community. Children soon realize, by listening to accounts of failed placements, that it is more important — both for the dogs and the humans — to find a good match than to hurriedly place an animal and have it bounce back due to overzealous recruiting. Such experiences help children to see the consequences of responsible and irresponsible decisions.

Acting with Kindness and Integrity

Children who are immersed in the world of retired racers also observe the righteous indignation of those who work with Greyhounds when other people do not act with kindness and integrity. For example, a group of Greyhounds that were used at a veterinary office as blood donors arrived and needed everything — baths, nails clipped, teeth cleaned — and the group wondered



Camryn Pham and her Greyhound Donner show off their pretty teeth. *Amy Pham*



Ibindigo "Gabe," adopted by Jeff and Shelley Lake of Paola, Kan., shows Eddie Henchek that he's just playin'. *Shelley Lake*

aloud why these animals had been so neglected. Children also learn that, unlike the adults they know and respect, some owners apparently do not have a bond with their Greyhounds and return them for the most ridiculous reasons (my dog's littermate, for example, was returned for barking!). Situations such as these are a constant reminder that reverence for life, respect for animals and acceptance of responsibility for a retired racer are not always in evidence even though they definitely should be.

Recognizing That the Positive Actions of One Person Are Significant

Children who participate in efforts to promote retired racers as pets see that finding just one dog a good home has a ripple effect; it makes a difference — for the dog, the kennel, the family, and the organization. They also see that responsible owners may have to make heart-wrenching decisions, such as giving up a loyal Greyhound when the owner becomes a permanent resident of a nursing home and can no longer care for the dog. Specific situations surrounding retired racers, played out day after day offer concrete examples of an individual's ability to exert a positive effect in the world.

Conclusion

Life's greatest lessons are more "caught" than "taught." The ideal way to develop an admirable human trait such as kindness takes time, starts early, provides many demonstrations of the behavior, and offers ample opportunity to put it into practice with careful guidance from experts. Although many people who are committed to retired racers may think it is a stretch to view themselves as humane educators or experts, the reality is that those who model kindness for children definitely are both. ■

Mary Renck Jalongo, Ph.D. is a professor of education at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Her latest project is an edited book on humane education during early childhood for Springer international publishers. She has adopted two retired racers from Monica's Heart in Altoona, Pa. and volunteers to support the group's efforts.



Wingo, adopted by Kathy Madej of Anchorage, Alaska.



Kyra and Sophie, adopted by Jim Reeve of Santa Rosa, Calif.



GreySave volunteers give dogs bathroom breaks on Homecoming Day as the dogs are being readied for their new homes.

Valuing Your Volunteers

Story and photos by Bonnie Jeffers

Our Greyhound adoption group recently had a \$4,200 day. How? Fifty people showed up to help process a load of dogs from the track. For seven hours a number of volunteers shuttled the dogs from station to station, bathed them, cleaned ears, clipped nails, and gave vaccinations. Other volunteers microchipped them, fed them, photographed them for the website, tested them with small animals, and completed all the necessary paperwork. Meanwhile still other volunteers served breakfast, snacks, and lunch for the entire crew.

I checked the website of the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics to see what it would have cost to pay people to do that. Averaging the hourly wages of people engaged in grooming, veterinary assistant work, office work, cooking, and more, I calculated an average wage of about \$12.00 per hour. We had 50 people; that's \$600 an hour. Multiply that by seven hours, and we had a \$4,200 day.

The benefit of labor provided by volunteers may not show up on the group's balance sheet, but it is one of our most valuable assets.

- Sales clerks average \$9 to \$18 an hour. Our meet-and-greet volunteers do similar work for free.
 - Boarding kennels charge \$20 to \$50 per day (that's \$600 to \$1,500 per month, per dog); our foster families do it for free and usually throw in food, toys, transportation, exercise, play time, and some training on top of it.
 - Advertising and public relations professionals charge thousands of dollars to inform and educate the public about an organization; our volunteers do it for free.
- Volunteers are also some of our biggest donors and fund-raisers.

Why do people take time away from their families and leisure activities to do tiring work, and for no pay? In short, why do people volunteer? Some do it for the social interaction; others want to do something meaningful; still others do it because they believe in the cause. Whatever the reason, they are sacrificing of themselves, and they are providing a valuable service. It's important to remember two things: First, the volunteer has a lot of options. He or she could be playing golf, making money, or volunteering with any number of other organizations. Second, the volunteer is not an employee. He or she is not being paid, is not a subordinate, and is doing the organization a favor by helping out.

Every volunteer contributes to the "personality" of a group, but leaders are especially responsible to set the tone for an organization. These leaders, whether board members, area coordinators, event organizers, or meet-and-greet leads, keep volunteers coming back . . . or they drive them away. Leaders keep volunteers coming back by letting volunteers know that they are valued. How? It really doesn't take much; just some planning, courtesy, and appreciation. In short, some leadership.

Organize and support your volunteers. I recently turned down a volunteer request from someone in another organization because I've found that she is disorganized, does things at the last minute, and is not available to provide support or answer questions either before or during an event.

A good leader lets volunteers know ahead of time what will happen and what is needed

or expected. He or she provides the proper level of training or guidance. He or she also makes sure that everyone has the supplies, assistance, and information needed to do the job.

Make your volunteers comfortable while working. Provide chairs, heaters, fans, or shelter if needed. In most cases, provide food if you have people working more than a few hours, especially if they are at a home as opposed to in a commercial environment. (Tired and hungry people are also less productive and more likely to grumble.)

Say thank you. I once volunteered at a Humane Society where the volunteer program was robust, and many volunteers had been there 10 years or more. I quickly saw

why. The volunteer coordinator said thank you many times and in many ways. She walked around the kennels daily talking with volunteers and thanking them for their work. After a special event, every volunteer (sometimes that was 60 or 70 people) received a handwritten thank you note with a photo of him or her working at the event. The notes weren't long: "You registered 1500 people at the dog walk, thank you!" Annual Christmas parties and summer brunches with small gifts and length-of-service award pins were another way of saying thanks. When this volunteer coordinator was promoted, someone else took over who didn't know the secret of saying thanks. Within two years, only a handful of volunteers remained.



GreySave volunteers check pads, clip nails, and clean ears as part of processing the Greyhounds retiring from the track.

Make it fun. Years ago we remodeled our kitchen. To save money, we offered to donate money to a charity in exchange for having six of the men in the group help demolish a wall and drop ceiling. News spread and 15 men and women showed up. Demolition has never been so fun. Those who knew what they were doing guided the others; everyone took on a task, even hauling the junk to the dump. The job was completed in no time, and to this day, those people reminisce about how much fun it was and remark that they would quickly offer to do it again if we ever decide to do another remodel.

I am fortunate to work with a Greyhound rescue group that has a reputation for valuing its volunteers. Newcomers often comment on how friendly, positive, and helpful everyone is. Yes, we get the work done, but we also try to remember that volunteers are valuable; that's how we have \$4,200 days. ■

Bonnie Jeffers lives in Chino Hills, Calif. with husband Jim and Greyhounds Cassiopeia, Artemis, Diana, and Lucius. They volunteer with GreySave Greyhound Adoptions.



GreySave volunteers check newly retired racers for ticks before giving them a bath.



Lexus, adopted by Tamara and Frank Ciocci of St. Michaels, Md.



Christy Caballero's retired racer Mabel likes to hang out at the Triangle Bowl. Beau Little, one of the bowling alley's co-owners, demonstrates how bowlers "pat the Mables" for good luck.

Mabel, Triangle Bowl's Lucky Charm

Story and photos by Christy Caballero

Look at Mabel, sleeping that innocent sleep, her pink tongue peeking from her mouth. Then her feet start to move, to twitch, and soon the little muffled barks come. I wonder which track she's racing down in dreamland.

Mabel (BF Park) left a long and respectable history on the race track, running 79 races in over three years at Multnomah Kennel Club (Oregon), Tucson Greyhound Park (Arizona), and Shoreline Star (Connecticut). But our girl has also come a long, long way in her life after racing. We adopted her just before her fifth Valentine's Day birthday. She was anxious and shy. Over the past five years, she has learned to live life out loud, making hundreds of friends at Triangle Bowl and other places where you just don't typically see Greyhounds — Macy's, Ace Hardware, the liquor store, Barnes & Noble, and Borders. She's helped hand out a lot of Greyhound adoption group business cards.

Mabel enjoys lots of friends, but always keeps her eye on “Papa.” My husband Herb Caballero is her “reason for being” these days. In fact, Mabel’s niche at Triangle Bowl began because Herb was working on his game one day, and I wanted to bring her in to see him for a minute.

Mabel seems to know in her soul that it was Herb who brought her home that February day, in spite of several strikes against her. Mabel was anxious, nervous and very vocal — she was crying at the adoption event. Our counselor advised us to consider others instead. Herb wanted to take her for a walk. Then he never let go of her leash.

He said later that there were other dogs there that we may have liked, but he believed that she needed us. It was that memory that prompted me to stop in at the bowling alley, to let Mabel look in on her Papa.

I hadn’t ever seen a dog in the bowling alley before. But I was banking on how polite and endearing our Mabel was, and just walked her in the front door looking for Herb. Then Mabel quietly went about her business of stealing one heart at a time.

The rest is history.

Triangle Bowl is operated by three partners — Kurt Bogner, Beau Little, and Scott Little — and when it comes to Mabel’s status as “ambassa-dog,” it’s unanimous.

She even has an embroidered “Mabel, Triangle Bowl Ambassa-Dog” vest to prove it.

For Kurt Bogner, part of the joy of having Mabel around is in knowing she has a great home.

“She’s such a nice dog,” he said. “When I was about 25 years old, I went to Greyhound races. Then I found out what happened to them when they retired —that was the end of Greyhound racing for me. I’m so glad things are different now.”

Beau Little hugged on Mabel and said, “You are the softest dog I’ve ever felt. I could fall asleep on you!”

His wife, Casea, said “She’s our Mascot Dog! She’s a sweetheart and we love to see her. She’s beautiful, just the best dog, so mellow.”

Manager Travis Malakowsky is often the first one to see Mabel come in the door.

“I just like her personality,” he said. “She puts a smile on your face.”

Bowlers smile because she comes in with plenty of good luck on board. The tradition is to “pat the Mables” to keep the strikes coming.

Warming up for league, Charles Buchanan noticed Mabel and said, “I didn’t realize they had a mascot — that’s COOL! I’m a dog lover, they’re definitely man’s best friend!”

During his second game, he said, “She’s

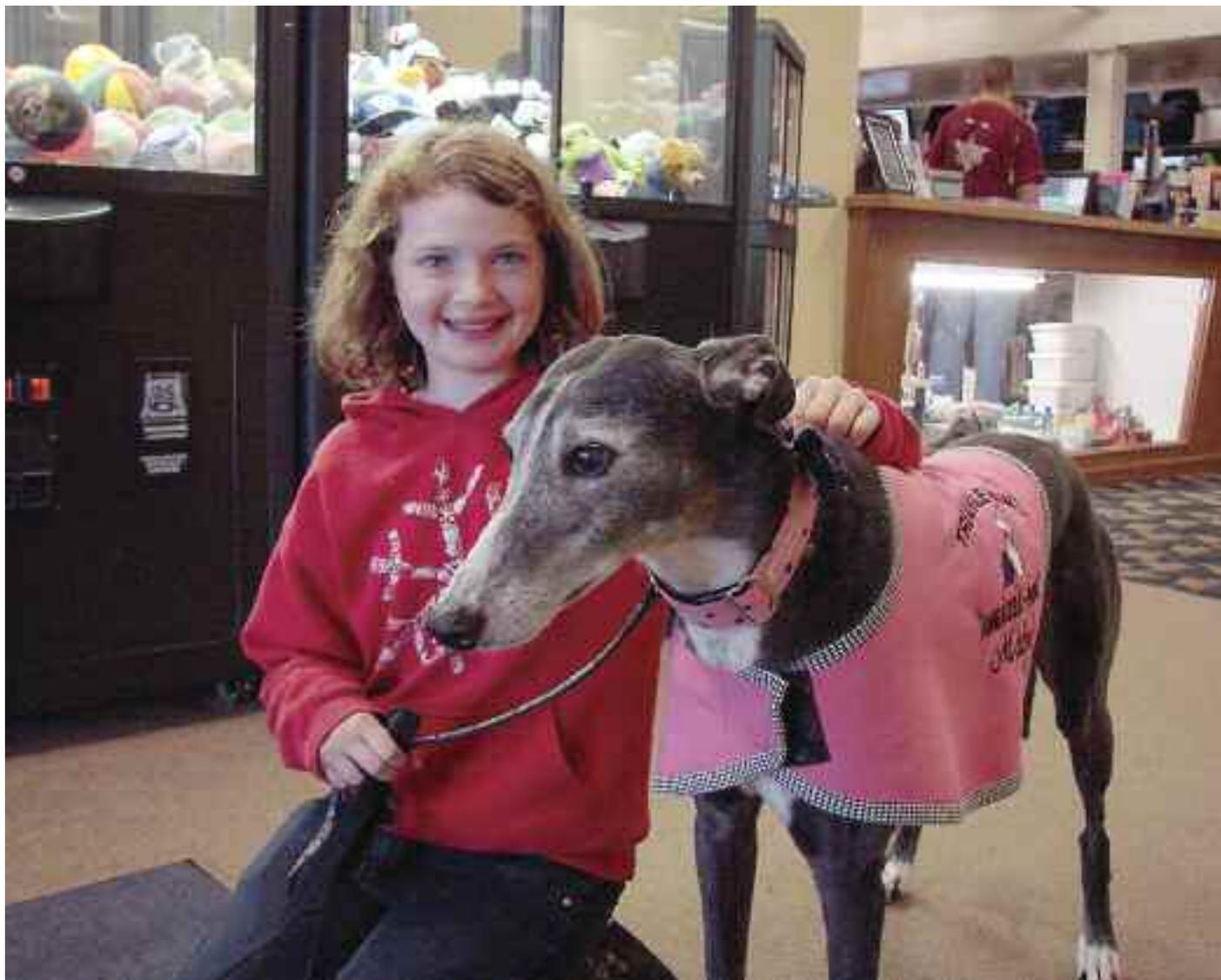
great motivation. I bowled my average the first game because of her!”

Bowler Carl Storms said, “Mabel provides a calming effect when you’re around her. No matter how bad you’re bowling, when you go up to say hi she doesn’t judge, she provides moral support. It’s like she says, ‘Yes, I know you’re bowling like crap but that’s OK. Pet me and see if things change.’ Sometimes it does and sometimes it doesn’t, but either way her smile is what counts.”

How does Herb feel when Mabel comes



Angela Fauland likes nothing better than to spend time at the Triangle Bowl watching her grandson bowl, petting Mabel, and demonstrating her excellent taste in reading material.



Katie Rheume likes spending time with Mabel: "She's kind of a chill dog."

to the bowling alley?

"It's like being a proud papa. I remember when my granddaughter Sarah used to come in, and all the heads would automatically turn and look at her. It's kind of like that, because everyone is always so happy to see Mabel. But mainly, I just like it when Mabel comes to me and rubs right up against my side. She's my girl."

"And everybody pats the Mabels for good luck. She brings us luck every time."

Sometimes, the luck isn't about bowling at all. Mabel's longtime friend at Triangle, Angela Fauland, has been through more than her share of health challenges, including breast cancer. Mabel stands by her wheelchair as encourager. Angela comes faithfully to watch her grandson bowl.

If Mabel and I don't get to Angela first, she'll find us.

"I just love Mabel," Fauland said, holding Mabel's face in her hands. "I would love to have a dog just like her, but for now I get to love Mabel."

When she was in the hospital recently Herb and I visited Angela and one of the first things she said was, "How's Mabel? I LOVE that dog!"

Bowler Justin Fugleberg just can't get over Mabel the Ambassa-dog.

"Well, first, it's amazing that a dog is allowed in the building and, second, that everyone is so happy to see her all the time. She's just so mellow and well-behaved. You hardly know she's here except she's so cool to have around!"

Whether Mabel is on the move or staying in one place, people come to her.

"I think she's a sweetheart," said Missy Miller. "And she attracts so much attention from the kids."

The kids come and go, or come and stay, hug her neck, pet her or sit on the floor with her.

"She's a good dog and she's so soft," said young bowler Wesley West.

One of Mabel's newer friends, Katie Rheume, said, "Mabel's kind of a chill dog. She's really, really relaxed and she loves kids, and she's SUPER soft."

Triangle Bowl partner Scott Little has admired Greyhounds ever since meeting his first one up close.

“I remember visiting with Richard Cummings, the president and CEO of Multnomah Greyhound Park; he used to always have this beautiful Greyhound in his office.”

“These dogs are almost regal — a truly beautiful, regal dog,” said Scott. “To me, that’s when I’ve arrived — when I can afford to have a house and a big yard, and a Greyhound in the yard.”

There’s another reason Scott believes Mabel belongs at Triangle Bowl.

“It’s like having a place of athletes, and having a successful, retired athlete come and visit at your house. She’s earned the right.” ■

Freelance writer and photographer Christy A. Caballero lives a couple of deer trails off the beaten path in northwest Oregon. Speckled fawns in the yard, the sound of the river washing onto the beach, or the sight of the ocean all make her smile. Her work has earned three Dog Writer’s Association of America Maxwell Awards, most recently for her pet column. She has also been recognized by the National Federation of Press Women, including a recent national award for her pet column and a national award for a feature story and a long history of regional NFPW awards for feature stories, poetry and photography. After years as a daily newspaper correspondent and columnist, she is focusing on her first love, creative work. She has pieces published in anthologies, magazines, and specialty publications.



Triangle Bowl co-owner Scott Little knows that a bowling alley is just the right place for a retired professional athlete like Mabel.





Is your Greyhound dominant, or assertive? They are not the same thing. Wren and Tyler, adopted by Brian and Deanna Swartzfager of Columbia, Md.

Dominance Theory: Leave It for the Wolves

By Deb Levasseur, CTB

Have you ever thought of your dog's behavior as dominant? Ever thought your dog was trying to undermine your authority with its bad behavior? Have you watched dog trainers speak about dominance on television and are now more confused than ever?

To understand dominance theory, it is important to know the meaning of this term. Dominance is defined as “the status in a social group, usually acquired as the result of aggression that involves the tendency to take priority in access to limited resources, such as food, mates, or space.” The problem with dominance theory is that this dog training methodology is based on studies of wolves “*Canis lupis*.” But dogs are not tame wolves. Dogs are their own species “*Canis familiaris*.” They are scavengers in nature more than predators. In the wild, dogs live solitary lives; wolves live in packs. It is also important to note that feral dogs have never reverted to become wolves. Applying study of wolf behavior to dog behavior is flawed right from the get-go. These studies mainly involved captive wolves that were thrown together inexplicably (not a natural wolf pack consisting of Mom, Dad and the pups). Dr. Ian Dunbar, a well-known veterinarian, animal behaviorist, and dog trainer, once said: “Saying ‘I want to interact with my dog better, so I’ll learn from wolves’ makes about as much sense as saying ‘I want to improve my parenting — let’s see how the chimps do it.’”

As a dog trainer and behavior therapist, I am surprised to still hear people referring to their dog's behavior as dominant. While dominance theory was very popular in the past, most dog trainers now prefer positive training techniques. I suggest that dog owners replace the term *dominance* with a more accurate description of their dog's

behavior. To quote Stephen McKay CPDT-KSA, a fellow dog trainer, "Once you put on those dominance glasses, all behaviors are seen through those filters. It becomes a relationship based upon suspicion that everything the dog does is motivated by a desire to somehow undermine the owner."

Even between canines, so-called dominance is very fluid as dogs are never dominant over everything. For example, a generally submissive dog could love toys so much that he takes them from a more assertive dog. Dogs protect what they really care about and only need to control access when the resource is limited. If a household has enough resources for everyone, dogs do not have to compete for them. If resources such as food and water were scarce, they would compete to survive and the stronger dogs would win. However, this is an example of the survival of the fittest and has nothing to do with dominance. Some dogs, like people, are more assertive than others. This assertiveness should not be confused with dominance. Dogs are not egotistical, nor do they have the need for power and control. In most cases, describing a dog's behavior as dominant is not accurate.

Often behavior problems believed to be the result of dominance are due to lack of proper training. Dog owners can be unrealistic in their expectations of their pets and label them as stubborn, dumb, or dominant when they do not readily comply. Keep in mind: Dogs need many repetitions in many different places and situations in order to really know a cue. Dogs do not generalize well. Changing one small factor changes everything for a dog. Some issues could also be related to stress or fear. For example, the dogs who growls at you when you lay beside him on his dog bed may not trying to control his bed and be the boss over you. He may actually be uncomfortable with you invading his personal space. If you yell at this dog when he exhibits this behavior, he could become even more fearful of people in his space. Dogs certainly can have an issue with guarding food and valuable resources, such as the couch. This should be addressed as a guarding issue, not a dominance issue.

Raising dogs is much like raising children. Good parents do not use pain, fear, or

intimidation in raising their children. Owners do not need these techniques to raise their dog. Dogs, like children, need clearly defined rules and boundaries and to understand the consequences of disobedience. Consequences must be fair and enforced consistently. Proper positive training techniques will increase a dog's confidence, while poor training methods can damage the relationship between dog and owner. If an owner experiences difficulty training their dog, particularly when their pet is displaying aggressive behavior, I would strongly recommend they seek help from a certified positive dog trainer.

Science has come a long way from the Monks of New Skete who wrote the book advocating such methods as the alpha roll-over. Even they have rewritten much of their theory, so why are some people still buying into alpha roll-overs, scruff shakes, staring the dog down, choking the dog, etc... to show him who is boss? Packs are managed mostly by submission, not by dominance; when a wolf is seen over the top of another wolf, often it is because the wolf on the ground rolled onto his back willingly.

Going through doorways first or eating

before your dog eats will not show him who is boss, and it will not promote leadership in your relationship. Dog owners need to be calm, assertive, and in charge. Dominance and leadership are two different methods to achieve this control. Dominance is the use of force through aggression to gain priority access to whatever an individual desires. Leadership, on the other hand, is the ability to influence the behavior of others. A person can be dominant by bullying, or be a leader by providing incentives and rewards. Would you rather be forced or convinced? It's no different for dogs.

I believe most owners bring dogs into their lives for the special bond only dogs and humans share. Why risk damaging this unique relationship with dominance theory? Let's remove our "dominance glasses" and see our dogs for what they truly are — animals that are trying their best to love us and live in our world but need our training and leadership. ■

Deb Levasseur, Certified Trainer and Canine Behavior Therapist, is the President and Founder of Maritime Greyhound Adoption Program, based in Moncton, New Brunswick.



Pippa (Cobblepot Cruze), adopted by Wendi and Don Cowie of Johnstown, Pa.

Saturday, January 26

Greyt Gathering Fun(d) Raiser

Greyhound Pets of Arizona

9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Tempe Papago Softball Park

Tempe, Ariz.

Annual get-together and fundraiser for all our Greyhound families to bring their Greyhounds and have fun. Vendors of Greyhound goodies, raffles, auctions, and other FUNdraising games. Contact: Cher Bethancourt, 1-877-454-6347; www.gpa-az.com

Sunday, January 27

Annual Greyhound Community Picnic

God's Greys Greyhound Group, Inc.

2:00 to 5:00 p.m.

7259 Hiawassee Oak Drive

Orlando, Fla.

Three hours of nonstop fun with muzzled Greyhounds running free as they and their owners enjoy 10 acres of fenced-in wide open spaces, pot luck picnic, Chinese auction, raffle, nail trimming, and more. Contact: Carol Becker, (407) 578-7496 or godsgreys@mac.com; www.godsgreys.com/events

Saturday, February 23

Running Home Annual Fundraising Dinner and Auction

Greyhound Adoption League of Texas (GALT)

6:00 to 9:30 p.m.

Southlake Hilton

Southlake, Texas

Annual fundraising gala featuring local celebrities (meet Janine Turner!) and athletes whose goal is to raise much-needed funds for the veterinary costs of the Greyhounds taken in by GALT. Tickets \$125. Contact: Shannon Forrest, (817) 449-3544 or shannon.forrest@flightsafety.com; Sara Ramadan, (214) 395-8649 or sarajramadan@gmail.com; www.galtx.org



Sophie, adopted by Liz Popescue of Glendale, Ariz.

**Thursday through Sunday,
February 28-March 3**

Sandy Paws — Greyt Fun in the Sun
Greyhound Guardians, Inc.

3:00 to 9:00 p.m. Thursday; 9:00 a.m. to
10:00 p.m. Saturday/Sunday; 9:00 to 11:00
a.m. Sunday

Oceanside Inns and Suites and Quality Inn
Jekyll Island, Georgia

Registration and Rootique (for Sandy Paws
merchandise) open Thursday. Friday features
vendors and seminars, a group dinner, and a
live auction. Saturday features more shop-
ping, seminars, live auction, presentation of
the Guardian Angel award, ice cream social,
crowning of the King and Queen, games,
nail trimming, and group walk through
Jekyll Island's beautiful
historic district. Contact: Nancy Eifert,
(904) 568-4822 or sandy-paws@comcast.net

**Thursday through Sunday,
April 11-14**

Hound Dog Howliday/GPA National
Business Meeting

GPA/Emerald Coast

Bay Beach Inn

Gulf Breeze, Fla.

Hound Dog Howliday is not a gathering . . .
it's a party! (This year's theme: Hooray for
Howlywood.) Celebrate the Greyhounds
that have touched our hearts. Join us for a
howling good time with four days of
Greyhounds, fashions, food, and meeting
with friends. Greyhound Pets of America
will hold their National Business Meeting
on Friday, April 12. Don't miss the fun in
the sun in Florida. Contact:
Connie McMillan, (850) 476-2522 or
constancemcmillan@hotmail.com

Saturday, April 13

Spring Banquet

GPA/Central New Hampshire

6:00 to 10:00 p.m.

Grappone Conference Center/Courtyard

Marriott

Commercial Street

Concord, N.H.

Annual spring banquet features guest speak-
er Dr. Guillermo Couto from The Ohio
State University College of Veterinary
Medicine/Greyhound Health and Wellness
Program. This will be a wonderful opportu-
nity to spend an evening with Dr. Couto
and learn more about our Greyhounds.
Seating is limited to 120 so buy your tickets
early! Menu for the buffet and ticket
purchase info will be posted at
GPA-CNHC.org in January. Contact:
Stephen Shepard, Director/Treasurer,
(603) 225-7274 or
shshepard@myfairpoint.net or
director@gpa-cnhc.org.



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



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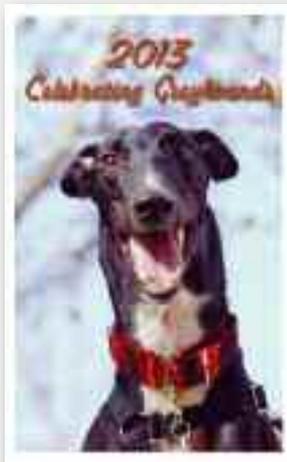


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Deadlines:

Spring issue: December 1st

Summer issue: March 1st

Fall issue: June 1st

Winter issue: September 1st

Kane (Red Elk) 2002-2012

Kane was four when he was adopted by Alexis Mulhearn. He had recently retired from racing and had muscles that would have made Arnold Schwarzenegger proud. Kane was a real character. When he arrived at his new home he was on the bed within an hour, which was impressive for a dog who had never been in a house before. Kane shared his life with several other Greyhounds and dogs who wished they were Greyhounds. Kane took his leisure time very seriously, and was a world class snoozer. On one occasion he even snoozed in the middle of the road when he was in a parade. He was a great pet therapy dog, enjoyed attending events to be admired by the public, and loved roaching on his many beds. Kane will be at the bridge lying on a soft bed in the sun waiting for the rest of us to join him — so long as we do so quietly and don't disturb his snoozing. He was featured in "Kane's Air of Disdain" (Winter 2008 CG).

**Pal "Pagliaccio" (Asti Notorious) 1998-2012**

Pictured on page 3 of the Summer 2005 issue of CG, Pal was adopted at three-and-a-half years old. He was the perfect Greyhound. No really, he was. He knew about all the things newly-retired Greyhounds aren't supposed to know: stairs, cats, glass doors . . . and couches. Pal was an outgoing smiler who viewed everyone as his friend. He earned his CGC and Delta Pet Partner honors, and visited for many years at several Connecticut nursing homes and hospitals. But his favorite thing in life was stuffies. Oh, did he have a collection, and without fail Pal took one to bed every night. Because he was the perfect Greyhound, Pal was totally responsible for every single camper who subsequently arrived at Camp Greyhound, including his brother, Seamus. For almost eleven years, heartdog Pal loved and was loved by Jan Zulkeski.

**Tater 1997-2012**

Tater was a little brindle girl that brought joy to people's lives. She taught how cozy it can be to lay on the floor and share a blanket during a cold winter night. She taught how to properly eat an ice cream cone, licking all the ice cream and then (what a wondrous invention!) eating the cone afterwards. She taught how much fun burrowing into a pile of fall leaves can be. She taught that there are no eyes prettier than those of a Greyhound. She taught about laughter by sharing her silly picture (Winter 2004 CG, p. 8). She taught that the destination is secondary; the ride in the car is what really counts. And she taught everyone around her the true meaning of unconditional love. Adopted and loved for 15-1/2 years by Jeff and Evelyn Gliha of Broadview Heights, Ohio, Tater will be dearly missed.

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

Celebrating Greyhounds: The Magazine
The Greyhound Project
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