

# Celebrating Greyhounds

Winter 2013 Online Magazine

*What's Inside:*

Galgo Adoption in Europe

Greyhounds in the Ballet

The Joy of Play



*Cara by Petra Postma*



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The Magazine for Greyhound Adopters, Owners, and Friends

Winter 2013



*Blitzen and Jewel, adopted by Judy and Jim Louder of Moncton, New Brunswick.*

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# From the Editors

To say that 2013 was an eventful and challenging year for *Celebrating Greyhounds* Magazine is an obvious understatement. After all, it's already 2014, and you're just now reading our Winter 2013 issue on your computer or tablet. But it's here at last, and we are delighted to present this first full edition of the magazine in digital format.

Our goal in producing *Celebrating Greyhounds* as a digital magazine has always been to continue to offer the features that our readers have long enjoyed, while at the same time embracing the enhanced possibilities afforded by this new medium. You will see many familiar topics, such as Medicine, Arts, Behavior, and Adoptions, in this issue. You'll recognize many of the authors as longstanding contributors. And as always, our pages are filled with beautiful images of Greyhounds.

As demonstrated in our Fall preview, the digital format also allows us to include a much wider variety of visual



features. We hope you will enjoy the videos, slideshows, and animations that accompany the articles in this issue. These features can enrich our content in meaningful ways – for instance, by illustrating key concepts in behavior or training articles, sharing information that is less easily conveyed by a still image, or allowing us to publish a greater number of photos from a special event. We look forward to offering more of these engaging elements in future issues.

The Greyhound world, as many of us have known it, has changed significantly in recent years. We aim for our coverage to reflect some of these changes and to highlight the evolving challenges of Greyhound adoption. One example faced by the adoption community as a whole is the necessity of moving adoptable dogs over long distances. Future issues will feature articles on ways to address these transportation logistics and to enhance support for and awareness of Greyhound

## Celebrating Greyhounds Magazine

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adoption, particularly in regions where these special hounds are less visible.

The digital format also provides an opportunity to foster stronger connections throughout the Greyhound community. We hope to engage those who enjoy the convenience of reading online, but might not subscribe to a printed magazine. Importantly, now that access to *Celebrating Greyhounds* is no longer limited by the prohibitive costs of postage, we welcome new readers and contributors from around the world. Look for expanded coverage in future issues of the lives of Greyhounds – and their Galgo cousins – outside of North America. The current edition puts the spotlight on nearly two decades of Galgo adoption in Northern Europe. Features on Greyhounds in Australia and in Italy are also in the works, so stay tuned!

As busy as 2013 was for *Celebrating Greyhounds*, 2014 promises to be even more exciting. As you may have read, we are currently seeking a new permanent Editor-in-Chief. We are grateful to Ellen Schneiderman

for shepherding the magazine through its initial transition to digital. Although Ellen elected not to continue as Editor-in-Chief, we are delighted that she will remain on as a regular contributor. We are also very fortunate to have retained our experienced and dedicated volunteer editing staff, whose commitment to this magazine is truly inspiring. To all of our volunteers, we offer our deepest thanks.

The crux of this magazine's success and relevance has always been the quality of its content and the loyalty of our readers. We appreciate and value our longstanding contributors and thank them for staying with us through this transition. We also invite participation from new writers, photographers, and artists, and welcome ideas and proposals for new [submissions](#).

To our readers, we can only promise that as long as there are stories to tell about Greyhounds, we will be here – hopefully, with you by our side.

*Naty, Michele, and Melissa*

## DISCLAIMER

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

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

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# Your Letters

## Thyroid Testing

After reading the article on thyroid testing [Summer 2013 CG], I wish to add my two cents, for what it's worth. National Greyhound Adoption Program houses approximately 75 Greyhounds year-round and has adopted almost 8,000 over the past 20 years. During that time, we have had many Greyhounds that could be categorized as spooks, and/or were very shy or were lacking confidence. Many of those Greyhounds responded favorably to thyroid supplementation. We do a T4 test on every Greyhound that comes into our facility and have probably done about 5,000 T4 tests over the last 15 years. Greyhounds that appear to lack confidence after settling in become candidates for thyroid supplementation. With many dogs, we have seen positive results. The results can be dramatic and you can usually see confidence build rather quickly. I have personally had several of my own dogs, including an Italian Greyhound, on thyroid supplementation. I would not use it if I did not consider

it to be absolutely safe for dogs. Some veterinarians oppose these philosophies but none of them have had the opportunity to supplement as many dogs as we have over such a long period of time with such wonderful results. My small Italian Greyhound, who would literally hide in the closet when not on thyroid supplementation regressed quickly if he missed a day's dose. The same applied to my beautiful blue dog, Phantom, if he did not get his daily dose. I want to clarify that all of my dogs that were supplemented were done so under the guidance of our staff veterinarians. Admittedly, my staff veterinarians would initially be very skeptical of specifically why thyroid supplementation would make a spook a non-spook. Thyroid supplementation does not work in every case. Over the years we have seen a handful of dogs that became hyperthyroid. Those dogs were either given a lower dose or taken off the medication.

**David G. Wolf**

**Director, National Greyhound Adoption Program**

CG  
Letters





## **CG Magazine's Transition to Digital**

So enjoyed your letter [to subscribers] and felt better understanding the decision behind the change. (Change... never a good thing right?!?) I think the standout 'bold' made the point that this IS about the welfare and adoption of Greyhounds! I did laugh, as I was reading the letter I saw the following quote: "You can be the ripest, juiciest peach in the world, and there's still going to be somebody who hates peaches!" Made me think of all the neat changes we often make at work, and I have to stop and realize; there will be people that don't like it but...it is what it is. Thank goodness for people like you who are willing to come in and make positive change.

**Kim Williams**  
**Via Email**

I, too, will miss the print copies. I put them on the table at our Meet & Greet because the articles and photos are so great. Working at a computer all day makes reading a "magazine" on the computer less appealing.

**Nancy Seils**  
**Via Facebook**

Not sure that no longer having hard copy of the *CG Magazine* is that great. We use older copies at meet and greets. I give subscriptions as gifts to folks that don't necessarily have access to a computer for viewing. I also leave old ones at the VA hospital to promote adoption. Maybe you'll appeal to a new crowd, but I see it as a means to eventual attrition.

**Les Mutchie**  
**Via Email**

I was heartbroken at the news in your latest issue that there will no longer be a print edition! I LOVE *CG Magazine* and looked forward to each and every issue arriving in my mailbox. The print quality of the magazine, as with all other aspects of it, has always been outstanding and I will truly miss holding those magnificent glossy pages in my hands. But I understand the economics of your decision...So I'll adjust to the new format. It just won't be the same. Kudos to all of you for the fabulous work to date. Although we won't have a hard copy to curl up with I'm sure your digital

**CG**  
**Letters**





copy will be nothing short of high quality. Just know that a lot of us will miss the excitement of finding our latest issue of CG in the mailbox. Now for sure there won't be anything decent in my mailbox ever...nothing but bills, bills, bills.

***Michele Truhlik***  
***Via Facebook***

### **Response to the Fall 2013 Digital Preview**

Thank you for letting us sample your new digital CG *Magazine*. I'm old-school and like the idea of holding paper in my hand (book, magazines, etc.), so I wasn't sure how I would feel about your changeover. However, I must say, to my surprise, I really enjoyed it. As always, I look forward to my next issue. Thank you all for your many years of dedication to a wonderful magazine.

***Karen Butler***  
***Via Email***

Thanks for letting us view the CG Digital Preview. Just wanted to tell you that when I viewed this on campus, using a very fast T1 line internet connection,

it still took a while to open the website. At home, with a slower DSL or even for people with dialup, this could really take significant time. I realize there is always a trade-off between wanting to include cool graphics and download time, but I think people would likely get frustrated if it takes a long time to view the magazine.

I am happy to read that some communities are finding that a private dog park works for them. We have those in Gainesville, Fla., but yet have not found any Greyhound people who have had good experiences there. It doesn't change human nature — people still don't watch their dogs or notice when things are about to get out of hand. Greyhounds are just not used to aggressive dogs, especially of other breeds, and often are the ones to end up with stitches. Fortunately, we have a farm and have access to lots of open, adjacent land, and we run our own Greyhound Play Days and Walks for all the area Greys. It's great to see up to a dozen or so hounds running free!

***Lori Rice***  
***Via Email***

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Letters





I cringed when you made the decision to go to digital, but if this sample is any indication of what's to come sign me up as a fan! Great, easy to use, beautiful graphics and I love the blinking greyhound!

***Denise Emmer***  
***Via Facebook***

I like the digital format. As a commercial printer by trade, I am partial to hard copy everything! But being in the industry, I totally understand why the change was necessary probably more than most. Thank you for a great start on a new chapter.

***Ellen Ghere Paulus***  
***Via Facebook***

We welcome your letters (up to 250 words) and photographs. Please send letters to the Editor via [email](#) and include your full name 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.

**CG**  
Letters



*Tyra, adopted by Melissa Douthwright and Jay Barkhouse of Moncton, New Brunswick.*



# The 9th Annual Jingle Bell Walk



*Festive hounds assemble in front of the Civil War Monument for their traditional holiday roo. Photo by Ron Mesard.*





# The Jingle Bell Walk: Greyhound Adventures and Trail Bound Hounds Come Together to Remember the Hounds

By Jennifer Saker



*Santa-hatters and their reindogs. Photo by Barbara Redmond.*



*A well-dressed pack of hounds stops traffic on busy Charles Street. Photo by Ron Mesard.*

Each year in December, Greyhound Adventures & Networking Group of Greater Boston, Inc. and Trail Bound Hounds of Southeastern Massachusetts, two local non-profit walking clubs, sponsor the Jingle Bell Walk. The Walk is a tribute to the dogs from

these groups who have passed away during the year. The two groups have interchanging members and walkers, and have participated in a variety of community outreach activities to promote Greyhounds as pets. The first Jingle Bell Walk in 2005 was a natural collaboration

of the two: it was a way to remember lost hounds, yet celebrate their lives and carry on their legacies by way of giving.

Greyhound Adventures is a non-profit group based in eastern Massachusetts that started out almost ten years ago as a few friends





*A pause in front of the Visitor Information Center on Park Street attracts attention. Photo by Ron Mesard.*

getting together on the weekends to walk with their Greyhounds. The walks became a regular Sunday morning occurrence and the group grew as new Greyhound friendships were made. Melissa Cook and her dog Avalanche,

and Barbara Redmond with her hounds Klem and Rocky, made the group official in 2005. Jennifer Saker and Quiet Man came on board in 2006. The trio have been holding Sunday morning walks all over eastern Massachusetts



*Abe, adopted by Barbara Redmond of Stoneham, Mass., and Chumley, adopted by Jenn Boulay of Fall River, Mass. Photo by Ron Mesard.*

ever since. Sadly, none of the original Adventure hounds are still with us, but their spirits will forever live on through the group.

Similarly, Trail Bound Hounds is an all-breed non-profit group who walk in different locations south of Boston on Saturday mornings. Also in 2005, Kerri Lopes and Maria DeLellis, along with their Greyhounds Gus, Doug, Battle, Yardman, Rizzo, and Kiwi, were friends who got together to hike and explore trails. They





*The author's Greyhounds, Wylie and Raspberry, enjoying the festivities.*

*View the slideshow to see more Jingle Bell Walk hounds. Photos by Ron Mesard.*

expanded their group over the years, mostly walking with other Greyhound owners but also welcoming dogs of all shapes and sizes into their pack.

Some may wonder what would keep these two walking clubs going for approximately nine years? Part of the satisfaction is getting to meet and bond with so many special



*Marco, adopted by Kerry Lopes and Mark Ready of Dighton, Mass., walking in memory of his Greyhound sister, Fuzzy. Marco suffered a spinal injury prior to being adopted, but his custom wheels allow him to keep up with the big dogs! Photo by Ron Mesard.*

dogs. The natural progression of this shared experience is the desire to come together to honor the hounds after they have passed on. One of the best ways thought of to celebrate the lives of these loved hounds was to hold a gathering: a big party in Boston in December with sleigh bells, antlers, roos, and lots of smiles.





*Zandy, adopted by Lisa and Peter Vergakis of Braintree, Mass., and Sanz and DeeDee, adopted by Christine Lyons of Attleboro, Mass.  
Photo by Ron Mesard.*

Why the Jingle Bell Walk? All participating dogs receive a jingle bell necklace to wear and ring in honor of their departed friends. The event takes place every December in downtown Boston, and as many as 125 Greyhounds have participated in any given year. The walk is essentially a parade of antler-

clad hounds adorned with jingle bells — quite a scene for holiday shoppers, ice skaters on the Frog Pond, and people going about their business on a Sunday morning. Passersby take photos and call friends; overheard frequently is, “You can’t believe what I’m seeing!”

The first Jingle Bell Walk took place in December of 2005. Since then, the event has honored and remembered over 250 dogs from the groups who have passed away. The making of bells for each participating dog to wear was not only meant to be festive, but also as a gesture to ring in memory of the hounds who are no longer with us. We also raise money in their honor to make sure their lives continue to have an impact on the future. Donations are made in the celebrated hounds’ names to a pre-selected foundation dedicated to canine health and wellness. Past beneficiaries have included [Morris Animal Foundation](#) and The Ohio State University’s [Greyhound Health and Wellness Program](#), previously headed by Dr. Guillermo Couto. These two non-profit initiatives have helped owners of retired racing Greyhounds in many ways, especially in the areas of research and treatment of canine cancer, which has affected the Greyhound community tremendously. In





*Click to view more Jingle Bell Walk hounds on parade. Photos by Ron Mesard.*

2012, the biggest donation year for the Jingle Bell Walk, the event raised over \$5,000 for OSU with matching gifts from The Greyhound Project.

Over the past eight years the Walk has raised a combined total of over \$20,000 in donations given to both Morris Animal Foundation and OSU's Greyhound Health and Wellness Program. Some of the dogs' names

are inscribed on plaques at Morris Animal Foundation headquarters in Colorado. This year the Walk again benefited Morris Animal Foundation and their funding of many studies that help advance veterinary science for our dogs.

While we are thrilled that the donation totals over the years have grown, unfortunately the number of dogs lost has also increased. But what better way to carry on those names than to raise funds in their honor and have a hand in helping hounds in the future? The rise in donation amounts can be attributed to enhanced awareness of members in both groups, increased membership as a result of new adoptions, and growing popularity of social media, which has helped the Massachusetts Greyhound community to connect better than ever before. The groups used to spread walk meet-up plans by word of mouth and telephone calls, but now use technology to organize events and to reach greater numbers of Greyhound adopters throughout the region.

Hounds and their people have joined the Jingle Bell Walk from other states and from as far away as Canada. The Walk attendance has grown steadily each year as new adopters and new dogs join in the celebration. The brisk northeastern winter weather adds to the festive atmosphere. The names of the remembered dogs are adorned on participating dogs' and humans' coats, and are also listed on our websites and in social media communications. During the Walk, all types of holiday attire are seen on the dogs





*Best-dressed girl: Pearl, adopted by Sarah Norton of Quincy, Mass. Photo by Jennifer Saker.*

and owners. Small prizes are awarded for the most festive hounds. Over the years, winners have included: most bells, oldest/youngest hound, best-dressed male/female or couple, and sometimes random winners chosen by pre-marked bells. Often our youngest walkers judge the most festive hound contest. This year's best-dressed recipients were Pearl and Chumley, pictured.



In addition to honoring our dogs and raising money, the Jingle Bell Walk helps to promote Greyhounds as companion animals to the general public. Both Greyhound Adventures and Trail Bound Hounds have prided themselves on not only being walking clubs, but in essence being roaming meet and greets that give members a chance to show off their hounds. And isn't that every Greyhound owner's favorite thing to do? One hundred Greyhounds in antlers and bells walking through the city's busiest public park attracts a lot of attention, especially from those who have never seen a real Greyhound before. It's a free, fun promotion of Greyhound adoption. People always stop to ask questions. They are amazed at how quiet a pack of 100 dogs can be (except of course during the group roo) and at how well they get along with each other. The Jingle Bell Walk has been showcased on the local television news and even made the front page of the Boston Herald newspaper two



*Best-dressed boy: Chumley, adopted by Jenn Boulay of Fall River, Mass. Photo by Jennifer Saker.*

years in a row. The local Fox station provided this year's media coverage by featuring the event during the evening news program.

Adoption groups, walking clubs, or simply friends with Greyhounds can gather in any city and do something similar to promote and honor our wonderful dogs. We are lucky that Boston is considered a walking city, but nearly





*Play video to watch the procession of Jingle Bell Walk hounds. By Scott Henshaw*

every city has a park or other safe gathering place to showcase and celebrate such a unique breed of dog. In previous years, when the walk was smaller in attendance, we strolled down trendy Newbury Street and stopped to pose for pictures with the Ritz-Carlton doormen. Other highlights unique to Boston are walking past Cheers, the State House, and the Frog Pond

ice skating rink, and ending at a statue in the center of the Common for an annual group photo. Our mid-walk break takes place at Park Street station, right on the historic Freedom Trail and located at one of the busiest pedestrian corners of the city. Talk about reaching the public!

The holiday season is about bringing joy. The Jingle Bell Walk brings joy to our members, walkers, families, and friends, to our dogs who love to walk with their pack-mates, and to the public who gets such a kick out of the hound parade. For those who have lost dogs in the past year, the Jingle Bell Walk brings them joy by celebrating the precious lives of their loved ones.

This year, we rang a bell for Missile, Rizzo, Holly, Cobb, Coyote, Cajun, Luke, Jimmy, Pax, Jetta, Evie, Fuzzy, Nikki, Louise, Zero, Chaucer, Nellie, Whisper, Charlie, Lucky, Bonanza, Frank, Adam, Dandi, Meri-Carol, Mikasa, Morgan, Kingsley, Autumn, Sadie, Emmy, Buddy, Vaughn, Keeper, Ziva, Rolo, Paddie, Kobe, and Kallie.

Peace, Joy, and Roos to you and your families. ■

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*Jennifer Saker is vice president of Greyhound Adventures & Networking Group of Greater Boston, Inc. She resides in Framingham, Mass. with her Greyhounds, Raspberry and Wylie.*



If you would like more information on putting together an event like the Jingle Bell Walk, or information on **Greyhound Adventures** or **Trail Bound Hounds**, please visit our websites or email [info@greyhoundadventures.org](mailto:info@greyhoundadventures.org).



# The Joy of Play

By Deb Levasseur, CTB



## How important is play to dogs?

More specifically, how important is regular human-initiated playtime for man's best friend? Research suggests that playtime is just as important as a good diet and exercise for a happy and healthy canine. What are the benefits of play, and how can we implement playtime into our dog's daily routine?

One key benefit of play is stress reduction. Dogs become stressed because they have limited ability to control and reduce their stress levels. Dogs don't have the power to take themselves for walks, nor can they provide themselves with enrichment toys and stress-reducing play activities. A simple 15-minute play session with our dogs can help eliminate their stress and will leave them with a feeling of peace and

*Crush (right) bows to invite Tyra to play. Crush and Tyra were adopted by Melissa Douthwright and Jay Barkhouse of Moncton, New Brunswick.*





*Jellybean (Mollarydacheeze), adopted by Jeff, Pam, Gracie, and Jacob Gottschalk of Oromocto, New Brunswick, chases his frisbee.*

contentment. As a canine behavioral consultant, I can honestly say that one of the major causes of behavioral issues in dogs is stress, which all too often goes unnoticed by their owners.

Another crucial role of play is exercise and energy release for dogs. This is also beneficial to the human who plays with them. Play can lower our blood pressure and help us to cope better with our own stressors. When the weather does not allow us to take our four-legged companion on his evening walk, a play session is a great substitute. Fetch, hide-and-seek the treat, and tug-of-war are all terrific indoor games. For outside play, a toy attached with rope to a pole — often called a lure pole or flirt pole — that you can lure your dog to chase is an excellent way for your dog to burn energy without tiring yourself. Teaching your dog to catch and fetch are also fun energy-burning activities.

Play also promotes learning. We all learn better when we are having fun. Playing can be a brilliant way to teach dogs many important rules. If done correctly, your playtime may double as a training session. Your dog can learn important





*Tyra and Crush, adopted by Melissa Douthwright and Jay Barkhouse of Moncton, New Brunswick. /*

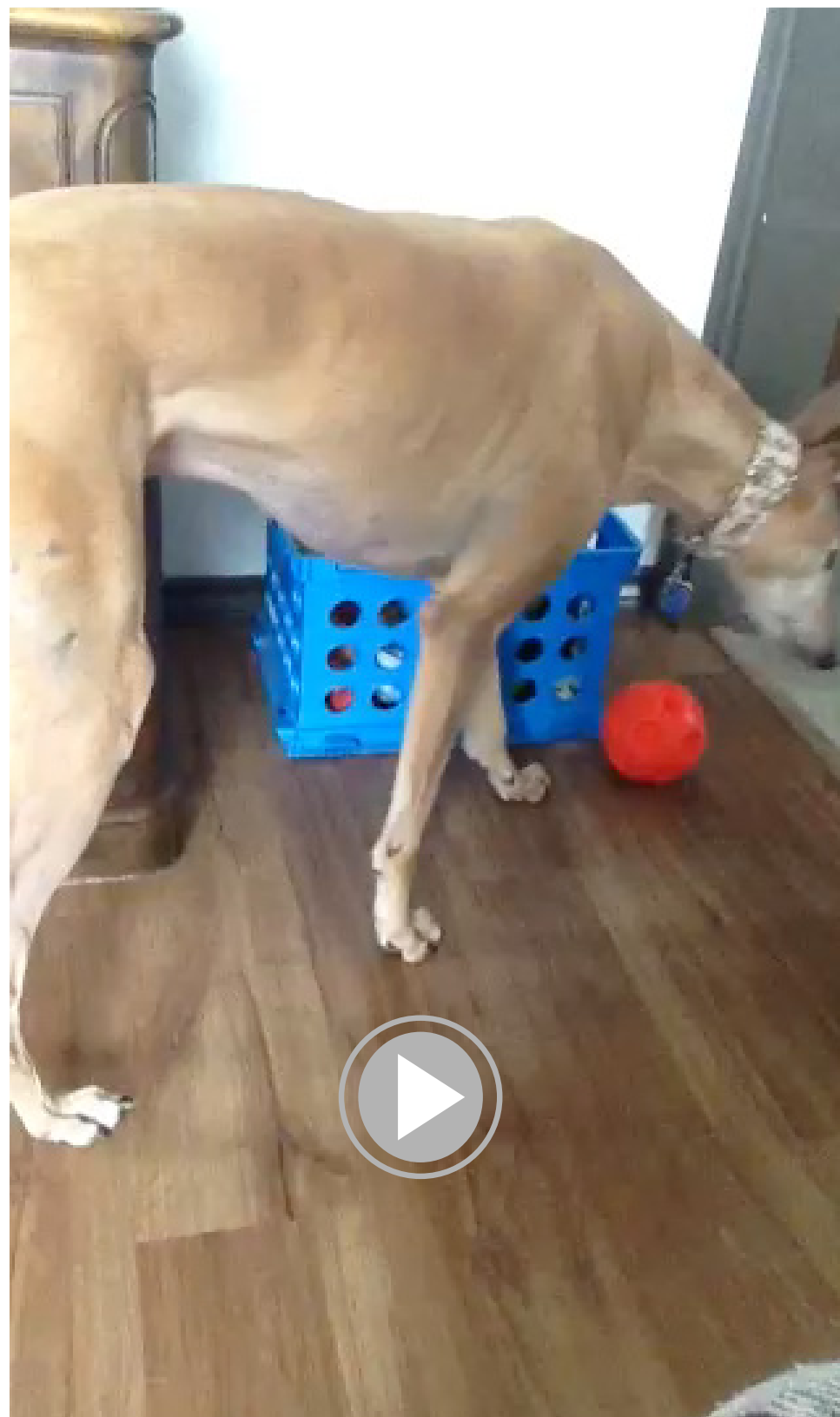
boundaries by following playtime rules such as no biting, grabbing, or resource guarding. If a rule is broken, stop the activity immediately and remove yourself from the situation. Your positive leadership role will also be reinforced by initiating and ending activities and consistently enforcing your rules. You may have to remember to end the playtime before your dog becomes bored with it. If he drops a toy at your feet, ignore him for a few minutes, and then you can reinitiate the play.

Bonding with our best friends is also important and play can enhance your relationship with your pet. If you want your dog to love you as well as look up to you, the best way to accomplish that goal is to spend quality time with him. Many Greyhounds fresh off the track have never had the opportunity to learn how to play, so you may have to show him the ropes. Always remember, if you are having fun, so is your dog. Dogs are often quite perceptive of our moods and feelings, so a little enthusiasm during playtime can go a long way.





*You don't need to have a fenced yard to provide enrichment activities for your dog. Food-dispensing puzzle toys are a great way to combine play and learning indoors. Watch Kai, adopted by Cherri Belyea of Quispamsis, New Brunswick, figure out how to get treats from his toy.*



Enrichment-based activities are another great way to enhance playtime with your pet. At our annual Greyhound picnic this year, I created an enrichment center by cordoning off an area of the beach with temporary fencing and then filling it with wet sand. I buried all kinds of smelly objects and treats in the area for the dogs to hunt and discover. Of the five senses, a dog's sense of smell is the strongest, so it goes without saying that dogs were born to sniff!

This activity is easy to replicate in your backyard. Hide or bury a wide variety of smelly objects for your dog to seek. Scenting out items is a huge stress reliever for dogs as it encourages them to use their brains, which burns energy and helps them feel at ease.

Enrichment walks are another excellent way to relieve your dog's stress and bring him more joy. Regularly go for walks in new areas





that include lots of exciting smells. Let your dog sniff to his heart's content. Some great places for enrichment walks are train stations, behind restaurants, the dump, and stores. The smellier the environment, the more

interesting the walk will be for your dog. Just be careful to watch for anything that could cut your dog's feet and for dangerous items that he may be tempted to ingest.

When trying to schedule playtime, remember that dogs are crepuscular (most active at dawn and dusk), so aim for a playtime during those periods. Implementing daily play is like anything else: we have to add it to our routine until it becomes a habit. Before you know it, you will be looking forward to your play session just as much as your dog.

Playtime is a great way to enrich your dog's life by relieving stress, releasing energy, and deepening your bond. Our pets provide us with companionship and unconditional love. They most definitely deserve the joy of play in return. ■

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*Deb Levasseur, Certified Trainer and Canine Behavior Therapist, is president and founder of the [Maritime Greyhound Adoption Program](#), based in Moncton, New Brunswick, Canada.*



*Freddy (Freeride Red), adopted by Crystal & David MacNeil of Keller, Texas, enjoys play with his humans.*



# Heartworm Update

## Current Recommendations for Diagnosis, Prevention, and Treatment

By Jim Bader, DVM, CVCP

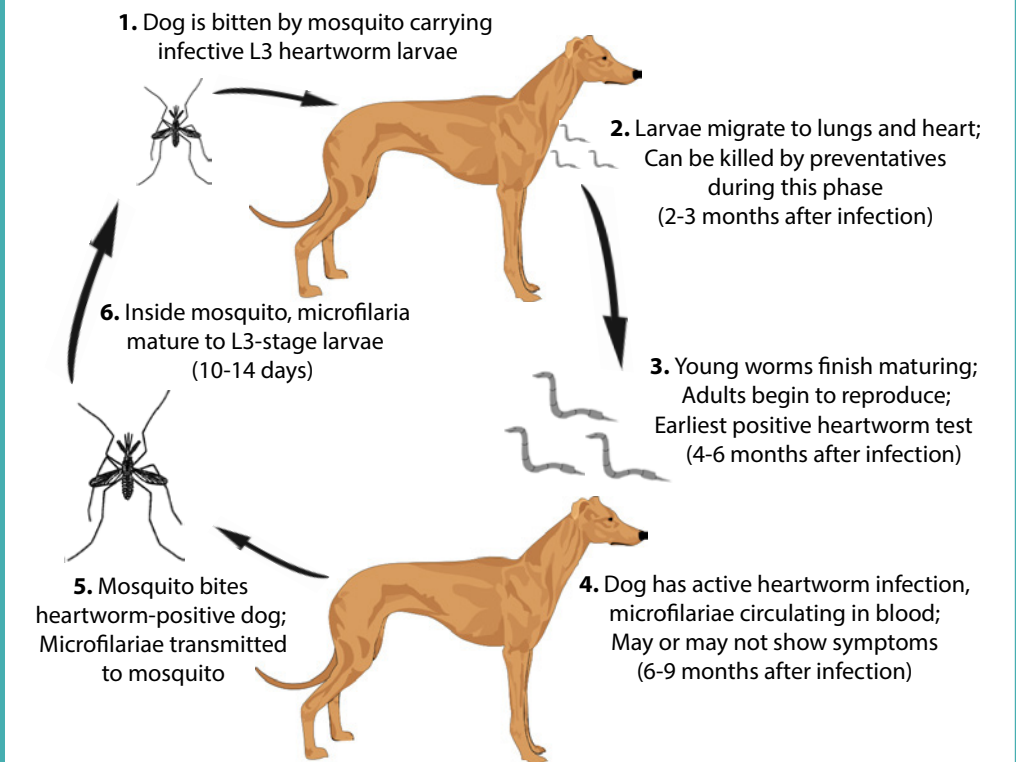
Heartworms are a type of parasitic nematode, or roundworm, that lives in an infected animal's lungs and heart. Heartworm disease was originally thought to affect only canids — dogs, wolves, and foxes — but is now widely recognized in felids (cats) as well. The incidence in cats is far less than that in dogs. Heartworm disease is a serious medical condition that can eventually lead to death due to either respiratory or heart failure. Although heartworm disease is preventable and is treatable in the early stages, the later stages of disease are more difficult to treat. Pets with advanced heartworm disease may succumb to its effects in spite of all efforts by the veterinarian.

### The Heartworm Life Cycle

Heartworm is transmitted by various species of mosquitoes. The adult female heartworms in an infected animal produce offspring called microfilariae. These microfilariae circulate through the blood stream and are ingested by the mosquito when it feeds. Inside the mosquito, the microfilariae must mature to the third larval stage (L3) before they are able to infect another animal. For this reason, heartworm cannot be transmitted directly from an infected animal to another dog or cat. Inside the mosquito, maturation of microfilariae to infective L3 larvae typically requires 10-14 days.

When a mosquito carrying heartworm bites a new animal, the infective larvae crawl into the wound, continue to mature, and ultimately migrate through the animal's tissues and blood vessels

### Heartworm Life Cycle





to his lungs and heart. It can take up to 90 days following the mosquito bite for heartworm larvae to reach the target tissues, and it is during this migration phase that the young worms are susceptible to the medications used to prevent heartworm disease. If no preventative medication is administered, the young heartworms eventually arrive at the lungs and heart, finish maturing, and then begin to mate and produce microfilariae. The microfilariae circulate in the blood, and the cycle begins again when a new mosquito bites the infected animal. The entire life cycle — from the time of infection via mosquito bite until the adult heartworms are producing new microfilariae — occurs over a period of seven to nine months.

Heartworm disease in dogs has several clinical signs and stages. Early in the disease, a Greyhound may show no evidence of infection; this stage is usually diagnosed on routine screening tests. Later in the disease the Greyhound may experience one or more symptoms, such as coughing or excessive tiredness after exercise. The severity of symptoms

is directly related to the number of worms living inside the dog, the length of time since infection, and the animal's activity level. Dogs with large numbers of worms and who are more active will usually show more severe symptoms.

### **A Parasite Inside a Parasite: Wolbachia**

Another feature of heartworm disease with important implications for treatment is the heartworm's own internal parasite. Mature female heartworms harbor a bacterium called Wolbachia, which is thought to be required for reproduction. This bacterium is also believed to be an important cause of the inflammation in an infected Greyhound's lungs, leading to a cough or other signs of respiratory disease. Because Wolbachia are killed by antibiotics, a Greyhound with heartworm disease whose only symptom is a cough may improve with antibiotics. Once the antibiotic therapy stops, the cough returns because the Wolbachia return.

### **Stages and Symptoms of Heartworm Disease**

**Stage 1** – No clinical signs or a slight cough. This stage may be confused with a form of kennel cough, or other respiratory disease. If a Greyhound is treated for a respiratory infection at this stage, symptoms may improve for a short time due to reduced Wolbachia burden, but the cough will eventually return.

**Stage 2** – The Greyhound may have a cough and will tire more easily on walks. The lungs may have altered sounds when listened to with a stethoscope, indicating changes in their ability to absorb oxygen.

**Stage 3** – Worsening clinical signs of Stage 2. Also, the Greyhound may collapse during exercise, show accumulation of fluid in his abdomen, and the heart and lungs will exhibit additional abnormal sounds.

**Stage 4** – This is an uncommon stage called Caval Syndrome and is a sudden and usually fatal condition. When a large number of heartworms are present, some worms may migrate into the large blood vessels entering the heart. This can cause blockage of the vessels and an abnormal reaction to the worms themselves in which the Greyhound begins to destroy its own red blood cells. The Greyhound usually presents because he suddenly collapsed and will have dark urine and pale gums.



## Detection

Heartworm disease is diagnosed with a simple blood test, which detects substances in the blood that are produced only by adult female worms. In rare cases, a false-negative test could result if there are only a few female heartworms present at the time of the test, or if all the adult heartworms present are male. A false-negative result would be of concern only if the Greyhound shows clinical signs of heartworm disease. In this case, additional testing such as chest radiographs or an ultrasound of the heart (echocardiogram) could reveal either the presence of heartworms or evidence of changes due to heartworm infection.

Importantly, a false-negative result can also occur if the test is performed early in the cycle of infection. Because the test measures a substance that is produced only by adult female worms, a newly infected Greyhound will not have a positive heartworm antigen test until at least four to six months after the mosquito bite occurred. For this reason, it is a good practice to perform a heartworm test immediately, and then retest six months later, especially if the Greyhound has never

been tested before or his history of heartworm prevention is unavailable or questionable. The Greyhound should receive heartworm preventative during the six-month interval between tests.

In some cases, a Greyhound may also be screened for the presence of microfilariae circulating in the blood. This test is performed by observing a few drops of blood under a microscope or, if possible, by filtering a small amount of blood and then examining the filter for trapped microfilariae.

## Treatment

The only approved treatment for adult heartworm disease is Immiticide® (generic name: melarsomine), which is manufactured by Merial. The availability of Immiticide® has been limited at times, so an owner should check with her veterinarian to ensure that an adequate supply will be available for the entire treatment regimen. Although there are numerous reports of other treatment approaches for adult heartworm infections, these regimens are not approved by the Federal Drug Administration. Use of

alternative treatments would be considered extra-label therapy and must be agreed upon by the Greyhound owner and the veterinarian.

The goal of treating adult heartworm infection is to kill the parasites slowly, in order to minimize damage that dying worms inflict on the dog's lungs and major blood vessels. This is accomplished by first treating the Greyhound with the antibiotic doxycycline. Doxycycline is usually administered for about six weeks during the treatment to kill the Wolbachia living inside the adult heartworms. Without doxycycline treatment, killing of the adult heartworms by melarsomine would result in release of large numbers of Wolbachia into the animal's bloodstream, leading to a potentially severe inflammatory response. Doxycycline reduces this risk. However, doxycycline has increased in price dramatically over the last few years. The cost for a six-week course of doxycycline may be a few hundred dollars. The veterinarian may suggest a different antibiotic after consultation with the Greyhound owner.

Melarsomine is given after the Greyhound has received at least one week of antibiotic therapy



and may be administered in either a one-step or two-step protocol. The one-step protocol is two injections of melarsomine 24 hours apart. The two-step protocol is three injections total: one injection followed by two injections 30 days later, with the second set of injections spaced 24 hours apart. The Greyhound owner and the veterinarian should decide together which protocol to pursue. Because melarsomine kills only adult heartworms, the Greyhound may also be given medication to eliminate larvae from the bloodstream. Retesting six months later to confirm that treatment has been successful is essential.

## **Prevention**

The best treatment for heartworm disease is to prevent infective larvae from maturing to adulthood during the early stages of infection, and all of the commercially available heartworm preventatives target immature worms. Recently, there have been questions regarding the availability and efficacy of heartworm preventatives. Two separate events have affected the availability of monthly heartworm preventions in the last two years.

First, two Novartis products (Interceptor® and Sentinel®) were not available for about one year due to production issues. These products are available again and no further problems have been reported. Secondly, Virbac's Iverhart Plus® was recalled due to stability issues with the active ingredient in the medication. Due to these issues, this product has been permanently discontinued.

Monthly heartworm prevention appears to be safe and effective at this time, but there have been concerns about the potential for heartworms to become resistant to commercially available preventatives. These concerns arose following reports of patients in Georgia and in the Mississippi Delta who tested heartworm-positive, even though their owners had administered the monthly preventatives as prescribed.

Some studies suggest that nematodes can develop resistance to the medications used in monthly heartworm preventatives. These medications — termed macrocyclic lactones — include the avermectins (e.g., ivermectin) and milbemycin. There is evidence, in nematodes other than heartworms, that resistance to

## **Recent Issues Affecting Availability of Heartworm Preventatives**

Beginning in early 2012, Interceptor® and Sentinel® were unavailable for about a year due to manufacturing issues at a Novartis plant. Although there were no known issues with the heartworm prevention products, they were caught in the FDA's dragnet. The FDA subsequently assured that manufacturing practices were correct at all levels and for all medications. The products recently became available again and no further issues have been reported.

Virbac had two issues with their heartworm prevention products. Virbac recalled a single lot of Iverhart Max® tablets in 2012. The company then issued a recall of six lots of their Iverhart Plus® product, again due to stability issues. Stability issues mean the amount of medication originally placed in the product is no longer present. The strength of the medication in the tablet may not be adequate to protect the patient from heartworm disease. These issues led Virbac to discontinue the Iverhart Plus® product entirely.



macrocyclic lactones is due to an alteration in a protein called P-glycoprotein. This alteration has been discovered in some heartworm microfilariae, but its clinical significance is not known at this time. In one study, heartworm microfilariae that have the altered P-glycoprotein were eventually killed by avermectins, but only after multiple doses were given.

Studies such as these have important implications for heartworm prevention regimens and may influence dosing recommendations for heartworm preventatives. Dosing recommendations for some products have undergone significant changes: Elanco's Trifexis® insert states "For heartworm prevention, give once monthly for at least 3 months after exposure to mosquitoes," and Novartis' Sentinel® and Interceptor® inserts state "... continuing until at least 6 months after the dog's last seasonal exposure." These changes are due to the fact that one dog in each of two studies had a heartworm present after receiving only a single dose of the medication. All dogs receiving three consecutive

months of prevention did not have any adult heartworms present. These studies are the basis for current recommendations by the American Heartworm Society for year-round heartworm prevention and annual heartworm testing. This includes the northern states where mosquitoes are not present during the winter months.

What does all this mean for a Greyhound owner? It means due diligence in administering heartworm preventative. The potential for a heartworm infection is now greater with the advent of new strains of microfilariae that, while not technically resistant to preventative medications, may require multiple doses to be eliminated fully. Yearly testing is a must, because the best time to treat a Greyhound for a heartworm infection is before he shows any symptoms. Finally, visit the [American Heartworm Society](#) website regularly for the most up-to-date and accurate information. ■

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*Dr. Jim Bader is a regular contributor to Celebrating Greyhounds Magazine.*

### **For more information, see the following articles**

[Bowman, D. D. \(2012\).](#) Heartworms, macrocyclic lactones, and the specter of resistance to prevention in the United States. *Parasit Vectors* **5**, 138. PMID: 3406940.

[McCall, J. W. \(2005\).](#) The safety-net story about macrocyclic lactone heartworm preventives: a review, an update, and recommendations. *Vet Parasitol* **133**, 197-206.

[Hampshire, V. A. \(2005\).](#) Evaluation of efficacy of heartworm preventive products at the FDA. *Vet Parasitol* **133**, 191-5.





*A newly rescued Galgo — safe, but scared.*

## ADOPTIONS

# A World of Difference

## Reflections on Almost Two Decades of Galgo Adoption in Europe

Story, photos, and video by Petra Postma

**I**t's been about 15 years now since I was given a little article, clipped out of a women's magazine. It told the story of abused dogs in Spain and how an organization — Greyhounds in Nood Nederland — in the southern part of the Netherlands was working to find homes for these animals. I nodded at the person who gave it to me and wanted to put the article away.

"Weren't you looking to add a dog to your family?" he asked.

A few months later, after many phone conversations with representatives of that same organization, we drove five hours

to pick up our first Galgo. Little did we know how much adding Isa to our lives would change everything. Three months later we made the same long trip again, this time to pick up Kit, a little black Irish Greyhound girl who had come from the Mallorca racetrack, also in Spain. Another month later, I went from being an adopter to also working as a volunteer. I joined a fast growing group in Europe who were finding out that there was something fundamentally wrong with the treatment of sighthounds in Spain.

Fifteen years ago in Europe, we knew little about the Galgo Español. England





*Rescued Galgos in a van on their way to [Fundacion Benjamin Mehnert \(FBM\)](#).*

and Ireland were known for their Greyhound racing and that was about it. Adoption efforts were restricted to the Islands themselves. But suddenly, Greyhounds were coming from Spain.

Greyhound racing had begun in Spain around the time of World War II, and at one time the country had 18 oval racetracks. The tracks began closing as gambling became less profitable during the 1970s, and by the

time I became involved with rescue, there were only a handful left. As the last remaining Greyhound tracks in Spain were closing, some of these dogs started appearing in shelters in other countries, like Belgium.

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**When the last Greyhound racetrack in Spain — the Meridiana track in Barcelona — closed in 2006, Scooby was able to take in 100 dogs. Some of the remaining dogs went to other rescue groups in Spain.**

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The conditions of these Greyhounds were horrifying. Broken legs that hadn't been treated. Blindness in one or both eyes due to neglect. A few European organizations — Greyhounds in Nood in the UK, [Greyhounds in Nood Belgium](#), and [Greyhounds in Nood Nederland](#) — began working together to help these animals. Soon these groups made





*During the rescue of 17 Galgos near Seville in 2012, Isabel of **FBM** carries a Galgo who is too weak to walk.*

contact with and offered assistance to a Spanish shelter named **Scooby**.

Scooby accepted the offer of help from abroad with both hands. In those early days, Scooby was located in an old

warehouse with no water and no lights. All of the sighthounds were kept on the second floor, to prevent people from stealing the hounds once they had been nursed back to health. In Spain no one wanted to adopt

these animals, there was no financial support, and the number of dogs continued to grow.

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**Greyhounds in Nood Nederland remains one of the better-known Dutch organizations. They are active in finding homes for and raising awareness about Galgos and in supporting the Spanish shelters. To date they have placed over 1,500 Galgos into loving homes.**

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At that time, Greyhounds in Nood Nederland was a small group with just a few volunteers, struggling to find the money needed for transports and the people willing to make the long trip to Spain and back. Volunteers were working almost every imaginable job: helping with incoming





*Galgos are often kept in horrible conditions, without water or food, living amid trash.*

transport, screening people who wanted to adopt, and following up on adopted dogs. We all learned along the way and jumped in where needed. The biggest struggle was — and remains — convincing people of the need to help by adopting an

animal from abroad.

Once every few months, a van would make the 1,000-mile trip to pick up a group of dogs and drive back the same 1,000 miles to waiting adopters, who could take them home the same

day. More often than not there were dogs who looked like Greyhounds, but with small differences. These were the Galgos, the hunting dogs.

With the Internet, things changed, fast. Organizations like [Scooby](#) started reaching out to other parts of Europe. Pictures started to appear; often showing severely abused or hanged Galgos after hunting season had closed. It became clear that something was seriously wrong with the way Spain treated her own national sighthound, the Galgo Español. Used to hunt hare for only a few months each year — from November until early February — the hunters breed another generation rather than spend money during the off-season on food and medical care for these dogs. Thousands of Galgos are discarded every year, often in gruesome ways. We soon realized that hunting was the larger problem, after most of the Spanish racetracks had closed.





*This young Galga was found running through traffic with a broken leg.*



*The broken-legged Galga receives care when she arrives at FBM.*

One horror story followed another. With the help of the Internet, word spread, and we all learned. We learned about the breed, the abuse, and about the diseases that we didn't have in the northern part of Europe. We also learned that there were more organizations in Spain trying to help the Galgos, all of whom were struggling because money was

tight. They all had to rely on financial help from abroad. Spain had no animal welfare laws, and there was little pressure to make structural changes to reduce the numbers of discarded dogs. The only thing the Spanish government did was to set up *perreras*, or killing stations, as a cheap way for hunters to get rid of their unwanted dogs. No effort was

made to re-home dogs left at the perreras; these were simply places where hunters could drop off their Galgos and the problem would be solved for them.

Then, numbers started to appear, and over the last few years have grown from roughly 40,000 Galgos abandoned each year to some recent estimates of closer to





*Play the video for more scenes of the rescue of these Galgos, and watch them on their first day in safety at [FBM](#).*

70,000. These are only approximations, based on the numbers that end up in the Spanish shelters, since there is no database that keeps track of Galgos born. While the

hunting associations do require hunters to microchip their animals, many Galgos are bred by backyard breeders and gypsies. Most Galgos found are either not chipped or

have had their microchips cut out.

So how does it work these days? Galgos can come from many places. Some rescue groups have started working with the hunters and are able to collect the Galgos directly. Others go to the perreras and try to buy as many Galgos from them as they can accommodate. Often, active rescue efforts are needed: Leaving food out in the streets for the Galgos and then going out at night to catch them. Making trips to the middle of nowhere when a female with puppies has been spotted. Reacting to a phone call when someone spots a Galgo on a busy road. Or just dropping everything while shopping or traveling because one has seen a Galgo in need.

One thing all of these rescued animals have in common is the need for immediate medical care before they can go into a home. Many of the Galgos found have



fractures that need attention. Most have open wounds, are emaciated, and carry parasites. Then there are the less urgent medical needs, including spay or neuter, blood tests for the Mediterranean parasites (Ehrlichia, Leishmania, and filarial worms), rabies vaccinations, microchipping, and obtaining health certificates.

These last three are required if the Galgo is to be adopted outside of Spain, which is nearly always the case. In the last few years, the European Union has come up with some very strict laws for the transport of animals. These laws specify every detail of the process, down to the transport vans. Updating a van to comply with the new rules can be quite expensive.

A recent development within Europe is the need for what is called the TRACES (Trade Control and Expert Systems) number for every animal that is being transported

abroad by an organization. The TRACES number is part of a new system that allows European Union nations to monitor and control the movement of live animals and animal products and is designed to reduce the spread of disease. While this number provides an extra level of security, it also increases costs and adds substantially more paperwork for the Spanish organizations.

All in all, the amount of work faced by the organizations that rescue these animals in Spain is growing. The number of Galgos needing rescue each year is rising, and the costs of getting these dogs healthy and keeping them fed continue to escalate. The current economic crisis in Spain has made it harder to recruit volunteers, and more are always needed. While most adoption groups pay the Spanish rescue groups a set amount for each Galgo and support the organizations by donating food and supplies,

it just isn't enough.

Veterinarian and food bills continue to pile up. The basic cost of caring for one Galgo who isn't injured is around \$300 US; this covers spay/neuter, blood tests, vaccinations, microchipping, passport, and deworming. These costs are significantly higher for the many animals who come in with fractures, need treatment for a disease like leishmaniasis, or are about to give birth. Some larger shelters may house as many as 500 Galgos at one time, with more coming in daily during the hunting season.

Still, the Spanish rescue groups are continuing the fight for a better future for the Galgos. Thanks to educational seminars that are set up by these shelters, rescue workers are able to communicate and work with local authorities; reach young people in schools; and even talk with the hunters directly. Rescue groups also denounce the



abuse whenever possible. Recently the **BaasGalgo** organization took a hunter to court after he hanged two Galgos. Both dogs were ultimately traced back to the hunter, and he was sentenced to seven months in prison.

The Spanish and European adoption groups continue to pressure the Spanish government to enforce the laws that do exist and to ask for better treatment of all

hunting dogs in Spain. These ongoing efforts of the past 15 years have led to some small steps forward, but a lot of work remains to be done.

To learn more about Galgo rescue, or to support these efforts, please contact any of the Spanish or European adoption organizations — some are mentioned above — or contact **SAGE** for additional information. ■

### About the author

*Until she moved to the United States four years ago, Petra Postma lived in the Netherlands and was heavily involved with Galgo rescue and adoption in Europe. These days, she still works for the Galgos through her photography and through **SAGE** (Save A Galgo Español), an organization dedicated to educating through the Internet and seminars, to supporting Spanish rescue organizations, and to finding homes for Galgos here in the United States.*



*The author's dogs, Galgo mix Paquita and Galgos Cara and Lehto, frolicking in the snow.*



# ADOPTIONS



*Caroline Vogt with Greyhounds Sabrina and Suede and Eileen and Mike Saks with Greyhounds Holly and Curly show off some items donated at the Redner's Supermarket Meet and Greet. Photo by Kathy Diemer.*

## A Meet and Greet with a Big Payoff

by Eileen Saks

If your group has a kennel, then we have a great fundraiser for you. For the last several years, we've been doing a special kind of meet and greet twice a year, for two groups with whom we volunteer. The idea actually came from a local supermarket, Redner's Warehouse Markets Inc. We asked if we could do a meet and greet with our dogs and seek donations. The supermarket was not keen on our asking store patrons for money, but it would allow us to ask

shoppers to purchase an item or two for the kennel while they shopped for their own orders and then give us their donations on the way out. Redner's has been very good to us.

We supply shoppers with a list of needed items as they enter the store. We request supplies such as paper towels, laundry detergent, dog treats, bleach, sponges, etc. The flyer asks the shoppers to consider buying an item and donating it to us when leaving the store.





We recommend prioritizing items on the flyer from most to least needed. Shoppers tend to buy more items near the top of the list. Have enough flyers to hand out — better to have too many than too few. Choose the supermarket's busiest day and time, which is often Saturdays or Sundays between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Volunteers hand out flyers and others handle dogs. The latter attract lots of attention and questions. A lot of people pet the dogs, who demonstrate what wonderful pets they can be, just like at a regular meet and greet. We have group information and brochures available as well.

We have had much success with this event. Shoppers are most generous and very few come out empty-handed.



In fact, we find most donate a number of items on the list. Depending on the space available outside the store, four to five dogs are ideal. Make sure you don't have so many there that it makes getting into the store difficult for shoppers. Courtesy to shoppers translates into donations.

The event is easy to do. All you need are folding chairs for the dog handlers, beds for the dogs, and one or two minivans or SUVs to transport donations to your kennel. We use shopping carts with group identification signs (attached to the cart with rings) to collect the items as they come out. We bring enough signs for at least two carts, so while one is being emptied into a van, the other is available to receive new donations.

Once about half an hour goes by, the carts fill up rapidly as those who received the flyer finish shopping. We find a three-hour event is enough time to get much-needed supplies while keeping the dogs and volunteers happy.

If you like this idea, find a supermarket willing to allow the event. We recommend contacting the corporate office of the chain to get permission and then have them approach the manager of the store you've selected. Point out to them that on meet and greet days, the store will sell more products, so you both win.

Each time we've done this, people have donated upwards of \$1,200 in supplies. That's extra money for the store and money that does not have





*Caroline Vogt with Greyhound Daphne and Lisa Fritz with Greyhounds Ariel and Holly greet customers outside the supermarket. Photo by Lynn Mullery.*

to be spent by your group. Shoppers like that they are directly contributing to the care of the dogs instead of just dropping a dollar or two into a jar. It is an added bonus if you generate interest in Greyhounds and get an adoption out of the event.

Be sure to contact the store manager before the appointed day. He or she can arrange for your setup location to be near the door where most shoppers enter the store.

Of course, thank the manager in person the day of the event, being sure to mention how much they have helped and how much extra they sold. A written thank-you note to the manager and the corporate office from the kennel director or group board is also a good idea. You want to be able to repeat the event.

While waiting for adoption, Greyhounds need to be cared for. We hope this idea helps you do that. ■

*Eileen and friends volunteer for [Greyhound Adoptions of Florida](#) and [National Greyhound Adoption Program](#). Eileen has been both an adopter and a volunteer since 1995.*



*Zero, adopted by Tony Ryon of Hopedale, Mass. Photo by Scott Henshaw*



# THE ARTS

## *Gigi and Salisbury Star With The Washington Ballet by Henry Townsend*







Two Greyhounds starred in The Washington Ballet's recent production of *Giselle*, one of the greatest ballets in the romantic tradition. Set in a German village in the Middle Ages, it tells the story of Giselle, a peasant girl in love with Duke Albrecht, a young nobleman. *Giselle* first debuted in Paris in 1841 and has become one of the most famous and oft-produced ballets. For our purposes, the ballet reaches its height in the first act, when an aristocratic hunting party enters. As anyone at the ballet in Paris in the 19th century would have known, a hunt would usually include a few Greyhounds.



*The Houndsmen and their Hounds*

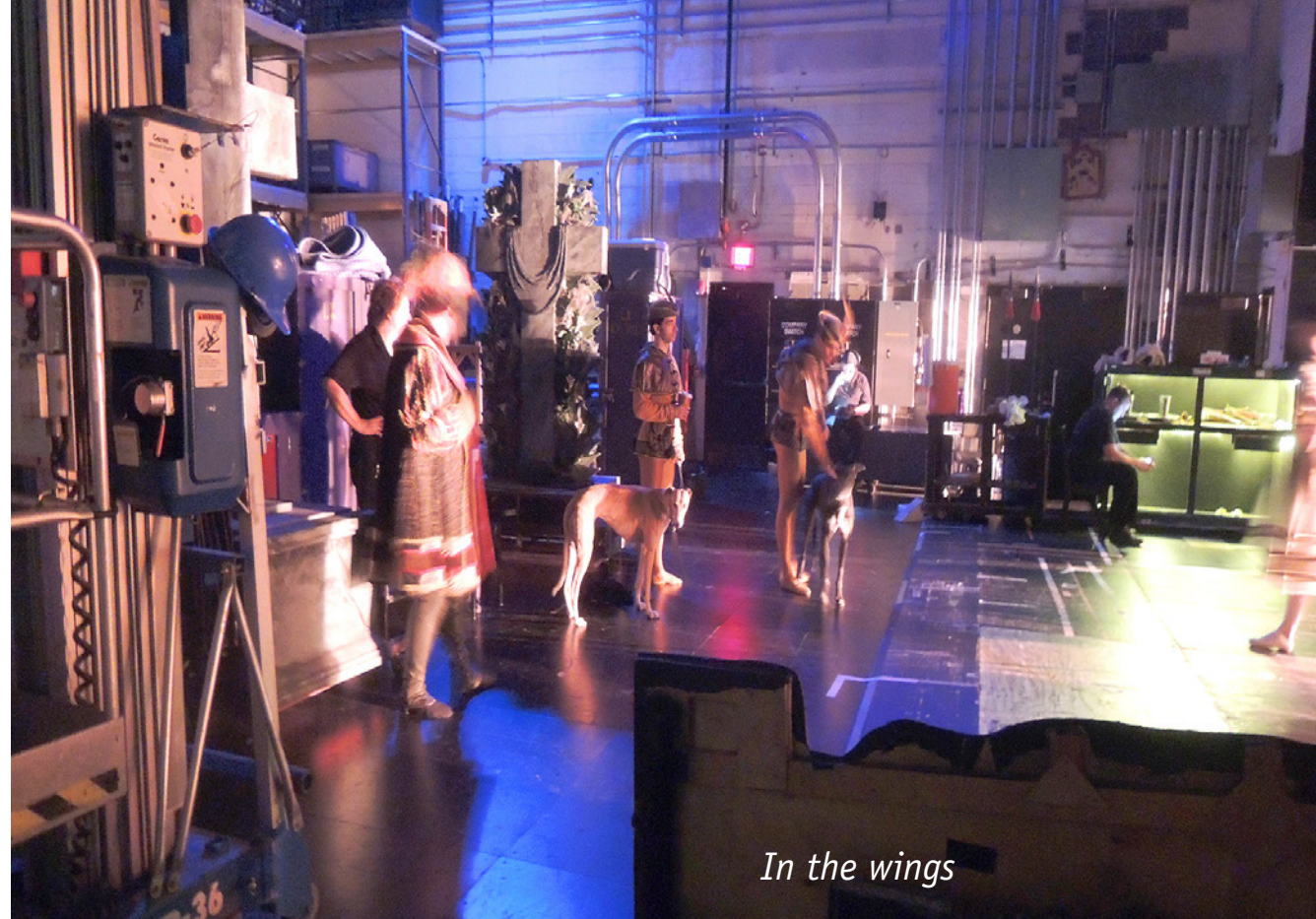




Septime Webre, the artistic director of The Washington Ballet, naturally wanted two Greyhounds in the hunting party, so wardrobe supervisor Monica Leland recruited Gigi and Salisbury. Salisbury was an easy choice: he had performed the same role in 2004 and has been a familiar presence at the Washington Ballet studio since 2003. Salisbury, whose photo appeared in the Spring 2011 *CG Magazine*, visits the studio often because Ms. Leland cares for him when the author and his wife go on vacation looking for Greyhounds in Art. (She assures us that Salisbury enjoys taking classes with the other dancers and is making good progress.) In the 2013 production, Gigi, a fawn Greyhound, was a lovely and complementary counterpoint to the black Salisbury. Leland also used her tailoring skills to design and fashion new collars for these dancers.

*Monica Leland, Salisbury, Gigi, and friends at the Kennedy Center*





*In the wings*

After two rehearsals and a preview, Gigi and Salisbury appeared in six performances from Oct. 30 through Nov. 3 in the Eisenhower Theater at the Kennedy Center. They thoroughly enjoyed their work and demonstrated their naturally calm personalities. They were unruffled by the music, the bright stage lights, and the audience. The dancers doted on them with treats, pats, and frequent hugs. After all, Greyhounds are wonderfully graceful, lithe, and athletic — just like ballet dancers. ■



*Waiting to go on*



*Henry Townsend and his wife Jessica live with Salisbury, while Edith Wooten and Ivan Bailey live with Gigi, also in Georgetown, not far from the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C.*

*Gigi and Salisbury walking on stage*



*Nardia Boodoo, Tamako Miyazaki, Gigi, Ed Birce, Salisbury, and Luis D. Ramirez. Photo by Carol Pratt and courtesy of The Washington Ballet and The Kennedy Center.*





*Hounds, Morgann Rose, and Ed Birce*





# Going to the **Dogs**



**GREYHOUND RACING,  
ANIMAL ACTIVISM, AND  
AMERICAN POPULAR CULTURE**  
**GWYNETH ANNE THAYER**

## REVIEWS

### **A Thought-Provoking Look at the Heart of Greyhound Racing**

*Going to the Dogs: Greyhound Racing, Animal Activism, and American Popular Culture*

By Gwyneth Anne Thayer

Lawrence, Kansas: The University Press of Kansas (2013)

ISBN 978-0-7006-1913-9

\$34.95

No matter where you stand on dog racing, there's food for thought and much to learn about racing Greyhounds in Gwyneth Anne Thayer's recently released (June 2013) *Going to the Dogs: Greyhound Racing, Animal Activism, and American Popular Culture*.

An outgrowth of Thayer's 2010 doctoral dissertation, *Going to the Dogs* is neither a puff piece for the business of dog racing nor a crusade for its ban. Rather, it's an

attempt at an honest, measured, thought-provoking conversation about the people, forces, culture, and events at the heart of Greyhound racing.

*Going to the Dogs* is concurrently reflective, insightful, and deeply researched as well as disturbingly honest. Thayer's overview of anti-racing's persistence in using inflated statistics, outdated images, and dubious tactics to garner support is fact-based and concise. If you can't bear the



details of the early industry's disregard for Greyhound welfare, you can still read *Going to the Dogs*. For the most part, the book is cleanly divided into chapters that enable the reader to bypass the more unsavory details (Chapter 5) about abuse in dog racing's past while learning about its history, politics, economics, and the social changes that are leading to its demise in the U.S.

Remember, not that long ago dogs — all dogs — had jobs, whether they were herding, hunting, or hauling. In the Greyhound's case, that job has stayed much the



same, but its constituency hasn't. Initially employed to run down small animals for the entertainment of Europe's landed gentry, by the early 20th century racing had emerged as the Greyhound's new occupation. So, instead of culling rabbits, Greyhounds entertained, and the payoff for racing enthusiasts came from a well-placed bet. In American popular culture, Greyhound racing was understood, then and now, says Thayer, not as a sport of the elites but as a working- and middle-class spectator sport inextricably linked with gambling.

## A Class Act

Calling "class" the great unspoken topic in American history and culture, Thayer assesses the friction between

those in racing and adoption as rooted fundamentally in class struggle and cultural upheaval. That is, the Greyhound business is made up primarily of working-class men. Adoption's forces? Educated, middle-class women. Nothing foments discord like one culture's attack on another's way of life.

Likewise, Thayer explores a similar dichotomy in early anti-racing champions. These, she reports, focused on the moral and economic ruin that could befall gamblers. Initially, animal advocates focused on the live rabbits being used as lures, not on the hounds. Thayer describes how this issue was ironically resolved via the invention of the mechanical lure, a device that helped spread racing across the nation. Be



sure to visit the section after the last chapter to see the comprehensive list of states and cities where tracks do or did operate, whether legally or illegally. It's eye-opening to see how widespread Greyhound racing once was.

Thayer was drawn to this topic by her relationship with her hound, Zachary (More Curious), a 72-pound, black ex-racer who left the Southland track in 2004 after zero races. But she was also drawn by myriad questions asked

by many of us who have adopted these dogs, questions for which factual

answers seem lacking. Case in point: How did Greyhounds come to America, and why?

The stock answer is with Irish immigrants. But think about it, says Thayer. Most Irish emigrated to escape the deprivation of the potato famine. They settled in the U.S. in urban areas along the East Coast, not in the agrarian Midwest that is dog racing's birthplace. She calls it a romanticized myth that impoverished Irish immigrants could have schlepped Greyhounds to sell amidst their meager possessions. So were they brought to eradicate rabbits in the American West? Maybe. By whom and from where? There simply are no records.

And why are there so many tracks in Florida? The Sunshine State made a natural home for dog racing as the state beat the tourism drum and working-class people with more leisure time came looking for excitement. It's these same elements that fostered dog racing's shady side, exemplified by the involvement of gangsters such as Lucky Luciano and Al Capone, and attracted entertainers such as Frank Sinatra and Jackie Gleason to the tracks for gambling. Gleason even owned racing dogs, Thayer reports. Likewise, race attendance by the likes of Babe Ruth and Dizzy Dean, baseball players in Florida for spring training, provided another dose of glamour.





Along the way, Thayer makes good use of dog racing's sporadic cameos in movies and TV to reflect its perception in popular culture. These include *Dark Hazard* (1934) and *Hole in the Head* (1959), which mirror racing's criminal links. The ethics of dog racing are center stage in *The Odd Couple's*, "And Leave the Greyhounds to Us?" (1971). Here, Felix and Oscar verbally spar over the fate of a racing dog Oscar won while playing poker. Then there's the 1963 *Walt Disney's Wonderful World of Color*



segment, "Greta the Misfit Greyhound" and *The Simpsons'*

"Roasting on an Open Fire" (1989) and "Two Dozen and One Greyhounds" (1995).

## Finish Line

Read with an open mind, *Going to the Dogs* is unblinking, provocative, and comprehensive. Whatever you do, check the footnotes and bibliography. They're packed with interesting details, useful information, and references that are a window into the practices and people on both sides of the argument.

When asked if she sees any chance for racing and adoption to work more collaboratively and expansively for the post-racing welfare of hounds, Thayer looks to the middle ground. She says while parties on opposite ends of

this conversation are intractable, she interviewed many people on both sides willing to cooperate for the welfare of the hounds. She believes cooler-headed, more compromising forces can prevail and find new solutions to protect racing Greyhounds.

*Going to the Dogs* can be ordered from the [University Press of Kansas](#) or from your favorite online or brick-and-mortar bookseller. ■

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*Mardy Fones is a member of the Board of Directors of [GPA Nashville](#) and has four Greyhounds. She and her husband own dogs racing at Southland and Birmingham.*





## ADOPTIONS

# Three Ways to Use Adopt-A-Greyhound Month to Increase Adoptions

How-to suggestions on public relations, events, and social media

By Sarah Norton



*The author's dogs, Dash and Bear.*

*It's not too soon to begin planning your approach to April's **National Adopt-A-Greyhound Month**. Whether your goal is to make an impact on your own or through an adoption organization, these ideas may help get the planning juices flowing.*

### Public Relations

A feature story by local or national media is a great way to introduce Greyhounds to a broad audience. In seeking media exposure, remember that the easier you make a reporter's job, the more likely you are to get the story. Local media seek the local angle on every story, so you are helping them do their job when you offer an interview with a volunteer or board member who resides in the same neighborhood as their audience. Offer to visit the reporter with your hounds; there is nothing like a real live Greyhound to capture their hearts, pens, and cameras. Print





*Donna Deskin created this eye-catching graphic of her dog, Buffy, and shared it via social media to promote Adopt-A-Greyhound month.*

publications can always use high quality photos, radio stations want good sound bites, and television stations and websites want good video (more on video suggestions later). Since magazines need a lot of lead time, getting the word out early is crucial.

John Pellegrino, founder of [Let It Be Known Public Relations](#), helps The Greyhound Project secure media placements for Adopt-A-Greyhound Month (more than 200 since 2009). Some of his secrets for getting the media's attention:

- Send an initial email with a pitch no longer than a paragraph. Cut and paste a press release below it for background (see [sample press release](#)). Do not include an attachment unless it's a photo.
- Make one round of follow up calls.
- Send follow up emails; later, send a secondary round of follow up emails.
- If you get no response, choose someone else at each media outlet and start the calls and emails all over again.

John says, "I space contact with the media out by a week or so, and I am polite and not pushy so I do not turn the media member off. It's important to remember that media members receive numerous PR pitches each day and have a lot to sift through."

John also says it's important to have the right email subject line. "Make it clear that it's a newsworthy story topic, and do not use a subject line that sounds like your email is spam or a sales pitch."

## Events

An event can be a fun way to involve existing volunteers and recruit new ones, to raise money, and to introduce the hounds to potential adopters. Many groups take an event they had already planned and marry it with the Adopt-A-Greyhound Month "hook" to interest the press.





*Perry (Rico's Penguin), later adopted by Mark and Christi Schwiger of Canal Fulton, Ohio, models an "I'm adoptable" vest. Photo by Wendy Eaton and courtesy of [Ohio Greyhound Gathering & Adoption](#).*



*Windy and Comet, later adopted by Marcia and Martin Zawacky of Canton, Ohio, in their donation vests. Photo courtesy of [Ohio Greyhound Gathering & Adoption](#).*

Explore whether you can set up a booth at another group's or organization's event. Veterinarian offices' open houses, Chamber of Commerce sidewalk sales, community craft fairs, flea markets, and farmers' markets can provide good opportunities for exposure.

Ask local parade organizers if your non-profit can participate. Organize a group to participate in a fund-raising walk or — if you have a Greyhound who's been conditioned to run with you — take him along on your next road race.

Prepare Greyhound fact sheets to introduce the breed to people who may not have time to chat. The Greyhound Project offers a [sample tri-fold handout](#) that you may use as-is or adapt for your group.

Vary the route of your usual walk to include busy pedestrian areas. Strike up conversations with anyone who shows interest in your dogs. Use the opportunity to hand out business cards with your adoption group's contact information. Offer to visit schools, libraries, or Scout groups to introduce the dogs and talk about responsible pet ownership.



## Here are a few proven tips and tricks for a successful event:

- Dress adoptable dogs in an “adopt me” bandana or vest.
- Make or purchase donation jackets with a clear pocket so the dogs can do the soliciting for you.
- Make a sign that says “\$1 donation to feed the dogs” — you may be surprised how many people take you up on it! Of course, you’ll probably want to scrimp on the meal before the event and make the “treats” their normal diet.
- Fill a large, clear bowl with colorful hard candy. Even people in a rush pause for free food.
- Accept credit cards. Fewer and fewer people are carrying cash, and you’ll increase the odds of receiving on-the-spot donations. Smartphone apps make accepting credit cards easier than ever. Fees vary widely, so be sure to read the fine print.
- Make every contact count. Have a free raffle for a donated prize or a basket of goodies, and collect contact information on the entry forms. (The word “free” is the most powerful word in marketing. Just don’t over use it.) Include check boxes on the form for capturing interest in volunteering and for opting out of your mailing list.

## Social Media

Social media marketing should include content that readers want to share with their own social networks, resulting in the best form of advertising: word of mouth. No one pays as much attention to your



*The Greyhound Project’s PSA featuring Cal and his search for a long-term commitment has garnered more than 150,000 views.*

marketing as they do to the opinions of someone they know and trust. Create or share content about National Adopt-A-Greyhound Month that followers of your group or page are likely to pass along. Post fun photos from your events and make sure all people are tagged, so the images appear on their profile pages. You could also share beautiful images with clever messages or short, poignant video clips like the



public service announcements offered by The Greyhound Project. Post links to these public service announcements on YouTube, or have fun creating your own videos.

As an individual, you can change your Facebook status to “April is National Adopt-A-Greyhound Month. Contact [insert your group’s name] or visit [adopt-a-greyhound.org](https://adopt-a-greyhound.org) to learn more.” You might also share a photo and bio of an adoptable Greyhound, featuring a different hound each day or week.

## Make a Plan Now

Most importantly, don’t wait until April to get the wheels in motion! Having regular planning meetings beginning in January, even a brief weekly phone call or email update, will keep your team focused and help get the word out in time to make the most of your efforts. ■

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*Sarah Norton manages VCA Wakefield Animal Hospital and has served on the board of The Greyhound Project for 14 years.*



*Adopt-A-Greyhound Month promotions featuring the author’s dogs, Dash (left) and Birdie.*



# In Memoriam



**Cara**, adopted by Joanne and Mike Bast of Edgewater, Md., appeared in the following issues of *CG Magazine*: Winter 2006, Fall 2007, Summer and Fall 2010, Fall 2011, Winter 2012, and on the cover of the Spring 2011 issue.

## **Cara (DG's Duracell) 2001-2013**

Cara was beautiful, strong, and always a good girl. She raced as DG's Duracell, until her career ended in Melbourne, Fla. with a broken leg. Mike and Joanne Bast met her there two days later, when they were visiting GPA/Central Florida. Dennis Tyler asked Mike to help him change the splint on a broken leg. As Mike was holding "the pointy end," he said, "Dennis, you won't have any trouble finding this girl a home. She's sweet." He was right. Six weeks later, Cara was on her way up the coast to GPA/Maryland and her new home with us.

Cara was our constant. She knew every Greyhound we've had and raised two of them from pups. She had a way with people and was an excellent ambassador for Greyhound adoption. Cara also had what we called a "tattle tail" — every thought she had was transmitted directly to her tail, which wagged a lot and gave away exactly what she was thinking.

In January, Cara was diagnosed with an inoperable spindle cell tumor. Before that, we thought she was a drama queen because she would shriek when her veterinarian walked into the exam room. In truth, she was one of the strongest souls we've ever met. It was with very heavy hearts that we said goodbye to her.



**Sweet Tart**, adopted by Connie and Ray Caputo of Orchard Park N.Y., appeared in the Fall 2007, Fall 2008, and Fall 2011 issues of *CG Magazine*.

**With In Memoriam, we honor and bid farewell to the Greyhounds whose stories and images have graced previous issues of *Celebrating Greyhounds Magazine*.**

## **Sweet Tart (NSX Sweet Tart) 2000-2013**

Pet me, play with me, pay attention to ME! was her motto.  
Or possibly...outside is my favorite place to be.  
Inside, outside, all...day...long.  
Regardless of conditions — rain, snow or wind  
And oh my, did she love to dig!

Would whine for me to notice her  
And bark if that didn't work.  
Another ploy — nose nudges under the arm!  
To keep you near, she'd touch you by extending her paw.

Her name was perfect. Sweet most of the time, tart sometimes,  
But...it could easily have been Smarty, Shadow or Velvet.  
Knew many tricks; followed you everywhere; the softest coat...ever.  
Figured out how to get what she wanted; it really was, ALL about her.

Had beautiful eyes that reached into your soul,  
Was so good at communicating what she wished for.  
Her greeting was to smell your breath,  
Yet rarely was a kiss rewarded.  
She was curious about all animals  
And not afraid of any, big or small.

Quite the homebody, but loved Meet 'N Greet,  
Acted like a regal queen, such a good ambassador of the breed.  
Would get excited en route,  
And drag me to see her friends, old and new.

The couch was off limits at home,  
But the sitter would never know,  
By the way she hopped right on,  
As soon as I walked out the door!

She loathed me leaving her,  
Yet ignored me on return,  
It's her sassy attitude and precociousness  
I miss the most.



# You're Invited

## **Sunday, February 16, 2014**

Winter Gathering

GPA Nashville

1-4 p.m.

Tennessee Livestock Center, 1720 Greenland Drive,  
Murfreesboro, Tenn.

Vendors, fun run, food, games. All Greyhounds and  
Greyhound owners welcome.

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

[gpanashville@gmail.com](mailto:gpanashville@gmail.com)

## **Friday through Sunday**

February 21-23, 2014

10th Annual Solvang Greyhound Fest – West Coast  
Greyhound Gathering  
Solvang, Calif.

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

## **Thursday through Sunday**

March 27-30, 2014

Sandy Paws — Greyt Fun in the Sun

Jekyll Island, Ga.

Weekend-long event featuring vendors, speakers,  
parade, costume contest, king & queen, blessing,  
memorial and LOTS more.

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

[sandy-paws@comcast.net](mailto:sandy-paws@comcast.net)

## **Saturday, April 26th, 2014**

Pie Social

Greyhound Pets, Inc.

1-4 p.m.

Brightwater Center, 22505 State Route 9 SE,  
Woodinville, Wash. 98072

Homemade Pies and Silent Auction – Fundraiser

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

[chrisnooney@me.com](mailto:chrisnooney@me.com)



*Tyra, adopted by Melissa Douthwright and Jay Barkhouse of  
Moncton, New Brunswick.*



### **Sunday, May 4, 2014**

Spring Fling  
Greyhound Options, Inc.  
12-4 p.m.  
Northwest Park, Windsor, Conn.  
Free admission, raffle, auction, food, contests and games, lots of fun! All Greys are welcome!  
[www.greyhoundoptions.org](http://www.greyhoundoptions.org)

### **Friday through Sunday**

May 9-11, 2014  
Greyhound Gathering – Kanab  
Greyhound Gang  
Kanab, Utah  
This FUNdraiser features three days of heavy petting where friendships are formed, funds flow to help hounds and events are attended by all. Blur of Fur, Costume Parade, Canine Carnival, Yappy Hour, Hikes, Best Friends Tours, Auctions, Talks & Demos and so much more.  
[www.GreyhoundGang.org](http://www.GreyhoundGang.org)

*Celebrating Greyhounds Magazine* offers a free events listing service in our “You’re Invited” section. We list events (e.g., reunions, picnics, and benefits) on a first-come, first-served basis as space permits. For more on how to submit your event listing, see our [Submissions page](#).

### **Sunday, June 1, 2014**

Gathering of the Hounds  
11 a.m. – 4 p.m.  
Great Lakes Greyhound of Indiana, Inc.  
Woodland Park, 2100 Willowcreek Rd., Portage, Ind.  
Annual indoor event celebrating the Greyhound breed. Many contests (best costume, trick, tallest, smallest, etc). Group rooing and Blessing of the Hounds. Vendors, raffle, and plenty of good food. All leashed Greyhounds welcome.  
[www.greatlakesgreyhound.org](http://www.greatlakesgreyhound.org)

## **Knot Rite**

William Agosto



“Anybody can make a snowman.  
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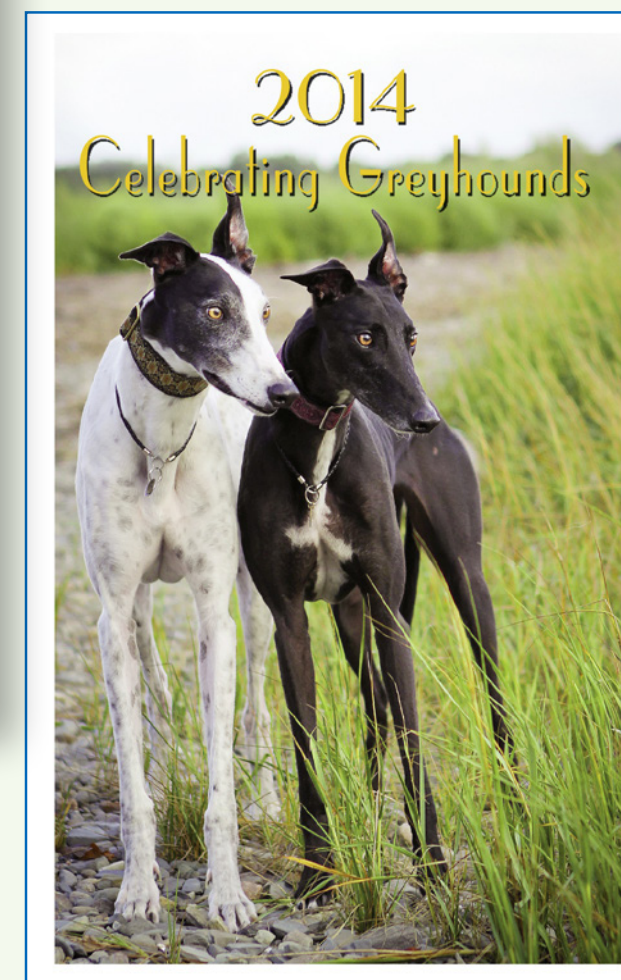
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The deadline for photo submission for  
the **2015 Calendar** is **March 1, 2014.**

See our **website** for submission instructions.