

News and Roos

from GPA/Three Rivers Greyhounds, Inc.

December 2010

Issue #2



OUR GIFT TO YOU!



As 2010 draws to a close, the officers and directors of GPA/Three Rivers Greyhounds, Inc are thankful for the many blessings that our organization has received over the past year. We are especially greyful for those of you who have reached out and brought a retired racing greyhound into your home and heart.

Because so many greyhounds still are awaiting their forever home, we would like to extend this special invitation to you. From now until January 7, 2011, individuals who have adopted a greyhound either from Three Rivers Greyhounds or another adoption group have the opportunity to adopt another greyhound for a reduced adoption fee of \$150. An adoption application is still necessary, and for those other than TRG adopters, a home visit will still be required.

Right now, TRG has 3 beautiful hounds waiting for adoption, plus several additional waiting in the wings to be brought into our adoption program. Is now the right time to add another hound to your family? We're sure our adoptables (Willy, Sadie and Louie) will say yes! They are ready for you to open your home and heart to them in return for a lifetime of unconditional love!

The Officers and Directors of Three Rivers Greyhounds, Inc.

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The following letter to Santa was intercepted by a TRG elf. If you are able to help with this request, it would be greyfully appreciated!

*Dear Santa'*

*As we greyhounds patiently wait for our forever family & homes, we have been talking about what we would like our stockings to be filled with as you pass over our foster home at the kennel.*

*Most of the hounds agree that a rawhide bone, the kind with the big knots on the ends would be a wonderful treat! The boy hounds say that it is like smoking a good Cuban cigar! The girl hounds just enjoy a special treat when received!*

*So Santa, we hope that you can make our wish come true!*

*Roos!*

*TRG Hounds*



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## Lucky Survivors of Ebro Racetrack Tragedy

There is, unfortunately, no shortage of stories detailing the atrocities that unfold in the racing industry when greyhounds fall prey to people who exploit and destroy them.

The latest tragedy at Ebro Racetrack in the Florida panhandle is just one of many similar stories to horrify not just the greyhound adoption community, but animal lovers around the world who have expressed their outrage by signing a petition directed to the Florida Regional Division of Pari-Mutuel Wagering in Tallahassee.

At the hands of Ronald Williams, a trainer at the racetrack, 40 greyhounds were left to starve in a kennel after the racing season closed at Ebro. This senseless act of cruelty has fallen under the scrutiny of the Florida authorities to determine what actions will be taken and what penalties will be assessed in the aftermath of the tragedy.

As is always the case when tragedies come to light in the racing industry, Greyhound Pets of America (GPA) was quick to respond at both the national and chapter levels to provide broad-based support to ensure the safety and eventual adoption of the hundreds of hounds still waiting to be removed from the kennels at Ebro.

In keeping with its commitment to the mission of GPA, Three Rivers Greyhounds has provided its own small, but significant aid to the enormous GPA effort to mobilize the resources necessary to address the overwhelming needs of these hounds.

On November 13, 2010, Wild Hogs, now known as Willy, made the long trip in a transport trailer filled with many other greyhounds from Ebro to Baltimore. There, he and 6 other tired and happy hounds, met the GPA/Maryland volunteers who took them to a local vet for a brief health evaluation. It was there that Willy began the ride home to Wexford. Willy took full advantage of the soft bedding and went out like a light for the entire trip!

Willy is currently waiting for his forever home after a complete physical exam, a dental cleaning and the all-important neutering. Willy was diagnosed with Pannus, a chronic, but very manageable condition that affects the cornea. Willy's condition responds very well to daily eye drops.



On December 4, 2010, another Ebro hound will arrive from Florida. All Said 'n Done, now known as Sadie, is alive today due to the compassion of Dennis and Claire Tyler, GPA/Central Florida officers and greyhound saviors. On their way home to Florida following their September greyhound road trip through Wexford to Buffalo, they stopped at the kennel where the dogs eventually perished in Ebro and took Sadie, along with others to safety in Melbourne. Had it not been for Dennis and Claire, the death toll in the Ebro kennel would have been higher.



Sadie will join the other two hounds, coming from Florida, in the GPA/Three Rivers adoption program. For the first time in the short history of our chapter, all of the greyhounds available for adoption are from Florida racetracks!

Although the recent tragedy at Ebro has received much needed publicity and attention, we must be ever mindful of the thousands of greyhounds across the country, in kennels at all of the operating racetracks, that are desperately waiting for a forever home.

With the economic recession taking a toll on the profitability of many businesses, the greyhound racing industry is no exception. When money to meet expenses to race greyhounds is in short supply, only the fastest dogs find their way to the racetrack. The rest of the greyhound lives, now more than ever, depend on adoption groups everywhere to save them from an uncertain future.

We need your help! Please consider opening your heart and home to a retired, racing greyhound!

~~ Kyle Catanzarite

## Greyhound Wisdom



by Dan Durso

I'm beginning to realize that greyhounds are like wives. Now, honey, before you take offense to this comparison, consider the following: Wives and greyhounds have some things in common. They both desire attention, enjoy occasional treats, and love to have their fur/hair stroked. Pampering, cuddling and kisses are required to maintain a good relationship.

My wife, and my greys, can get what they want simply by giving me puppy dog eyes. As much as I like thinking that I'm alpha dog in our house, I find myself submissive to their sweetness. I've learned not to disturb either of them when they are sleeping, and not to ignore them while they're awake.

As you can see, honey, there is a comparison. It is my sincere hope that this does not get me time in the doghouse! After all, I do roo you!

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We, Three Rivers Greyhounds, recently participated in a gathering of various breed-specific adoption groups called Dogtoberfest. I was excited about the amount of attention our greys received, and proud of the way they conducted themselves. Our greys have this whole meet-n-greet thing down pat. They use charm and desire for attention as an attractant. While some of the smaller breed dogs were non-stop yapping, our hounds stood tall, silent, and proud. I found it interesting to watch the behavior of other breeds compared to the greys when meeting people. Our greys do not jump, bark or in any way act in such a manner that put people into a caution mode.

I have come to realize that our responsibility at meet-n-greets is merely to get the hounds there, and to answer questions. The hounds do the convincing. The more we can get our greys in the public eye, the more success we will have finding home for deserving greyhounds.

~~~~~



*Remembering Those Hounds that  
have recently crossed the Bridge.....*

*Pasha Durso  
Bill (Iruska William) Evans  
Indi Catanzarite  
Valentine Leyland*

**Thank you to the following individuals who have made donations to Three Rivers Greyhounds since our last newsletter was published:**

Bernie Antol  
Rich and Cindy Losego  
In memory of Pasha and Bill ~Anonymous  
Kim Pierce



## How Greyhounds *Raced* Into My Life



One day during 1998, while walking through the Greater Pittsburgh airport, I saw a poster of the National Greyhound Adoption Program (NGAP; Philadelphia, PA) suggesting Greyhound adoption. That was a period of my life when I had recently lost two dogs that I raised from pups. I recognized a void in my life and found the message of the poster very appealing. I was a 'jogger/runner' and felt an instant identification with the idea of having racing dogs as running mates. I stopped at a pay phone in the airport and called the 800 number given on the poster. After leaving my name and phone number on an answering machine at NGAP, I proceeded on my journey, excitedly anticipating the possibility of owning Greyhounds! I made an immediate decision that I would adopt 2, so as they would have company when I was at work. I must admit, in my excitement about adoption, and for some strange reason, I thought the process would be 'expense-less,' that NGAP was just "giving Greyhounds away." So, when I received a call from NGAP a few days later and learned that there was a fee attached to adoption (to cover expenses), I was naively surprised. However, that did not stop me from asking for an application. Well, 2 months later, I drove to the Pittsburgh airport to pick-up Buddy and Angel. At that time, prior to the 9/11 tragedy, NGAP was flying the adopted Greyhounds via US Air cargo planes to your nearest airport (courtesy of US Air). By the way, Buddy and Angel were my new names for them to replace their racing names. I wanted to help them, if possible, leave the memories of probable abuse/neglect at the racetrack.

Well, that day was the beginning of a relationship between 'dog and man' that has been/is rewarding in many ways. A few months after I obtained Buddy and Angel, I met a person (while running with my Greys) who had an adopted Greyhound but could no keep her because of living arrangements. So, a few days later I became the proud owner of Star. They were a terrific trio. We lived in a small house with an acre yard which I fenced-in for them.

We traveled many places together (including regular jogging) and eventually moved to Savannah, GA, because of employment circumstances. After 6 months in GA, we moved back to PA and settled in Mercer County. This time it was a 4 acre lot which I enclosed (using used chain link fence I acquired). After installing a doggy door into the house, they had/have full access to the property and their 'retirement haven.' Unfortunately, I lost Angel 2 years later to a speeding motorist on my road. That brought significant grief and loss. She is buried in our front yard with a head-stone, picture, written tribute to her life, collar and tags, displayed in her memory.

I was considering adopting additional Greys from NGAP when I met Kyle Catanzarite and began expanding my Grey adoptions. In a short time, I was the proud owner of Pal, a champion racer from Wheeling who broke his leg during a race. Thanks to the 'bungled' surgery of his vet and the 'giving-up on him attitude' by his owner, Pal raced into my life, and has not stopped since. He presented a new challenge to me for jogging/running. Wow was he fast and powerful! In my view, he would still have won Greyhound races – but that never happened again! A few weeks later Kyle "manipulated me" [☺] into taking Patsy, the first senior adopted. What a treat Patsy has been as well. Patsy became a runner with the "Gang" in our 3- 5 mile run a few times each week. She forgot about her age and 'senior' status. I forgot, shortly before Patsy, I adopted Daisy – a 6-month old Beagle! She does not know she is little! The Gang accepted her immediately and they became inseparable. She runs with the Gang and is the 'distance runner.' I soon realized that Daisy needed a more suitable playmate (size and age). So - Kyle to the rescue! I let Kyle know that I would love to have a puppy Grey. I had seen her Cole and was jealous (☺)! Well, wouldn't you know it, Kyle got back to me in a short time with the opportunity to get Dolly, a 2 month old Greyhound from Florida who was the result of an accidental pregnancy at a breeding farm, part of a throw-away litter (the litter was to be euthanized), no use to the racing industry because they did not know who the father was and could not register her for racing. So little Dolly joined my Gang. What a joy. Rowdy? Mischievous? Over-active? Playful? Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes. So Dolly and Daisy became the Mutt & Jeff, David & Goliath, Ying & Yang, of my GREYT Gang. Run, play, fight, contest, lick, bite, love, sleep – together all day. Well then, my crew was complete. Ooops! Guess who contacted me a short while later, inquiring if I would consider fostering 'Pean the Dream,' another senior who had been rejected by two prospective owners (changed their minds). Who could lay such a name on a Greyhound. If for no other reason than to change her (continued on page 4)

name, I HAD to take "Peaches" [same initial sound as Pean in order to minimize her confusion?]. All right now, who has been paying attention? What is the count? You should know that I have been accused of being 'nuts . . . crazy. . . goofy . . . . But NOT by Greyhound lovers.

I considered opening my own Greyhound Kennel in Mercer, PA. Greyhound Retirement Retreat.. Greyhound SafeHaven.....Greyhound Bed 'N Breakfast.....Greyhound Play Station. By the way, did I mention I have had 3 cat members of the Gang? Peaches, Callie, Sam. Yes, I know, a Grey and cat named Peaches? It only caused them a little emotional confusion! They adjusted.

Since that time I have added Christian, Anubis (Galgos), Chemoney, and Starbud for a total of 11 Greys since 1998. Sadly, I have lost 6 via death and gave one to a Greyhound lover who lost her Grey (Kyle arranged for that gift). My pet cemetery includes 6 Greys and 3 cats, all memorialized with headstones, pictures, and a written

tribute. My current Gang consists of Pal, Christian, Dolly, Anubis, and Daisy. You can see us on a ½ mile run on: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PLWICpyoa0>

So that is my story. What is the bottom line? Options: (1) If it was not for Kyle, I would have less cleaning "mud/dirt/grass in my house? (2) I would have smaller grocery bills? (3) I would have more room in my bed? (4) I would not trip as often going to the bathroom during the night? (5) I would not have as much dog dung to shovel? (6) I would have missed the fantastic life experience of sharing my life with marvelous, loving, beautiful animals: my gang of Greyhounds (and Daisy). I choose # (6).

Message: Adopt Racing Greyhounds! They will change your life for the better.

Greytfully, Jim Evans

## **2011 Greyhound Pets of America National Meeting in Orlando, Florida**

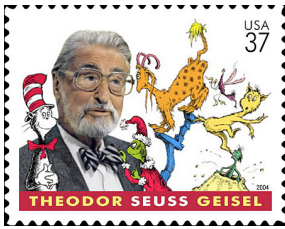
Greyhound Pets of America will hold its national meeting on January 14<sup>th</sup> in Orlando, Florida where officers and directors from chapters nationwide will come together as a community dedicated to the welfare of greyhounds.



There will be four GPA/Three Rivers Greyhounds representatives traveling to the meeting to take part in the decisions and discussions that will determine how the GPA chapters will respond to current challenges in the adoption community individually, and how they will work together to solve problems collectively. This venue also provides an opportunity for chapter officers and directors to meet and network with new people and to reconnect with longtime friends.

In addition to this meeting, the representatives will attend the 27<sup>th</sup> International Canine Sports Medicine Symposium, also held in Orlando, on January 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>. This annual event provides an important opportunity for anyone concerned about the health and well-being of greyhounds to hear what veterinarians and other canine health professionals are sharing on the latest information available.

Attendance at both events will certainly enhance the knowledge base of the Three Rivers Greyhounds adoption group members and in turn this knowledge will be shared with adopters to become more aware and informed of greyhound health issues.



*Oh, the places we've been.....*

Three Rivers Greyhound volunteers haven't let the grass grow under their feet waiting for 'green eggs and ham' to appear! An active group of volunteers has taken the message of greyhound adoption throughout the Pittsburgh area.

### **Pennsylvania Animal Law Conference**

In August, our group was an exhibitor at the annual Animal Law Conference at the Marriott in Pittsburgh. Many attorneys including Allegheny County District Attorney Stephen Zapalla were in attendance to learn the latest on issues of animal cruelty and animal law. A mock trial was held to debate the issue of whether compensable damages for the loss of a pet included compensation for loss of companionship rather than just pecuniary damages.

### **'Consider a Greyhound' course at CCAC North**

In mid October, TRG volunteers did a 3-hour presentation on the greyhound, the racing industry and the adoption process as part of the Community College's 'community education' programming. Three hounds – Malden, Rosie and Tyke – did a greyt job showing what wonderful family pets retired racers make.

### **Southminster Church program, Mt Lebanon**

A group of 50+ people invited three Rivers Greyhounds to present a program at their weekly luncheon meeting. Greyhounds "Rosie" and "Al" (now known as Gonzo by his forever family) enjoyed mingling with the seniors!

### **Meet n' Greets at Pittsburgh Harley-Davidson, Just Dogs Gourmet, and Tractor Supply**

Greyhounds and their owners met with the public at these events. As always, we answered many questions about our retired racers and why they make the perfect pet! Thank you to Tractor Supply for the bag of tennis balls and the biscuits, which are being used for our hounds waiting for adoption.

### **Green Tree Library Meet n' Greet**

"Arlo" and "Rosie" accompanied their owners to a meet and greet at the Green Tree Library. Because of the Library's excellent publicity, approximately 45 guests attended. Children received a greyhound coloring page and a 'what color is a greyhound' word search. Several families showed interest in adopting a retired racer in the future.

### **Butler Spirit of Christmas Parade**

A cold blustery day greeted us the day after Thanksgiving as TRG volunteers and hounds marched in the 46<sup>th</sup> annual Spirit of Christmas Parade in Butler. Our hounds wore double coats to keep warm and marched with the best of them. Even though the parade announcer called us 'groundhogs' at one point, that couldn't stop our greyhounds from attracting attention and interest from the parade watchers. Special thanks to Rocco Ricky, Gianna, Zorro, Tyke, Finn, Rosie, Emma and their owners for participating in this event!

Do these events sound like fun and something you as a greyhound owner might want to be part of? Help spread the message of greyhound adoption and volunteer at one of our upcoming events. Notices are sent via email and/or Facebook postings, in addition to our regular monthly meet and greets held at area Petco's (these are listed on our website under events).  
**VOLUNTEERS ARE ALWAYS NEEDED!**

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A special thank you!

Three Rivers Greyhounds would like to recognize the special efforts of Jimmy Durso, age 14, who has been instrumental in making our fundraising project of selling Sarris Candy a greyt success! Jimmy has been selling the candy bars weekly at his parents' bowling league and has sold a total of 260+ candy bars. A big thank"roo" to Jimmy for his efforts and to the Southwest Bowling League, Main St. Bowling Center in Greensburg for supporting this project!



PENNIES FOR PUPS!



A while back, I suggested the idea of saving pennies for the hounds. Although I don't have a count, Susy and I have managed to make the can we are saving them in feel heavy. At that time, I suggested not only saving your pennies from change, but also to pick those up that you find laying around.

A recent article in the Tribune-Review made me say "WOW!" A local church raised \$10,000 (1 million pennies) in just seven years! If you do the math, that's \$1,428.37 per year. Their success was due to creativity. Yes, they did it with pennies! Their creativity included getting others involved with donating pennies, and friendly competition for pennies.

I ask each of you, if you're not already doing so, to get on board with "Pennies for Greyhounds". The following is a list of ways to collect pennies. If you have an idea not seen here, please share it with us!

- Save the pennies from your change
- Pick up pennies you see laying around, even those on the ground!
- Any change found in laundry can be counted!
- When someone asks you for a favor, ask them for a penny or two in return.
- Start a cuss jar (or anything you're trying to break the habit of will work)
- When friendly wagering such as the outcome of a game, or who is right on an issue, bet a few pennies for the pups.
- Get everyone you know involved and compete with your friends to see who can collect more pennies.

Pennies for the Pups can be successful if everyone is on board. We can collect them every six months, or as often as necessary. The hounds will be forever greyful!!!

~ Dan Durso

ADOPTION UPDATE - Bella and Maz

Three Rivers Greyhounds recently received a 'makes us smile' email from adopters Paul and Diane Passantino. We thought we'd share it since the message captures what so many of us feel after a greyhound has entered our lives.

"...Just wanted to tell you how Bella and Maz are doing these days. The answer is "grey"! It's been 8 months this weekend we picked them up and I can't tell you how wonderful it is to have them. They have adjusted so well and so fast and are an absolute joy. They are in great health and are thriving. They get along great and enjoy each other's company and love their daily walks.



Bella is like the maid. She makes sure that Maz's bowl is licked clean and any cookie crumbs left by Maz on the rug are vacuumed. She is a character for sure. Likes affection and gives lots of kisses. Just a sweet dog.

Maz is as crazy than ever. What a clown! He likes to play and loves affection and Diane's knitting. He likes anything soft. Always sticking his head in Diane's knitting bag and taking her yarn. I'm back here on the computer and he stands here with his head on my leg (like now) and wants to be petted and I naturally oblige.

Many times in the evening I will sit on the floor and I have one head on one leg and the other head on the other leg. Other times Diane and I are sitting watching TV in the evening and ask 'do we have any dogs?' Go in the bedroom and find them upside down sleeping on their beds. Wherever they are happy is fine with us. I hope they have forgotten the track and only remember the good things that started with you rescuing them and now with us. They may think they have hit the lottery but it is us who are benefitting."

....Thank you Paul and Diane for sharing this with us! We're glad that your greyhounds came with the add-on features of vacuum cleaner & yarn organizer!

The following article is reprinted with permission and was originally published in the Summer 2010 newsletter of GPA Central Florida. Claire Tyler is the Secretary/Treasurer of GPA Central Florida.



THOSE UNFORGETTABLE EYES

Since the racing season ended in late March, we have managed to assist greyhounds at other locations throughout the state. We have made trips to Naples, Sarasota, West Palm Beach, Ebro and Sanford/Orlando Kennels. We are known for our ability to move greyhounds into adoption. Owners and trainers are constantly calling or e-mailing us. In Florida with its 13 greyhound tracks, there is always one constant need – “Homes for Greyhounds!!”

On July 20, we made a trip to the Sanford/Orland Kennel Compound. Our mission was to evaluate and cat test greyhounds that were available. We were in the process of putting a shipment together and adoption groups had given us their requests. Our major problem was in finding cat friendly greyhounds. The shipment we were preparing only had requests for 6 no cat greyhounds. Considering we would be transporting 40 greyhounds this gave us a very low percentage of no cat hounds.

We arrived at the compound at 7 AM, and immediately started going to the different kennels. Dennis had lists of greyhounds that were to be evaluated. One kennel was closing down, so we went there first. One by one the greyhounds were introduced to our volunteer cat and we did a quick evaluation. So many greyhounds would nuzzle up to us and look for a friendly ear rub. We would keep our fingers crossed that they would pass the testing. The best personalities and dogs with confidence tended to also be not cat friendly. As we left each kennel, we would look back and see all these faces and eyes staring back at us.

That day we managed to visit **13** different kennels and evaluated **89 greyhounds**. We selected **11** greyhounds to come back to Melbourne with us, and the following week we brought back another 13. There were a few greyhounds that tugged on our heartstrings and we felt it was important to take them. We have always said, “There are greyhounds that **we need** and then there are greyhounds that **need us**.”

We shared the information on the 65 remaining greyhounds with the other adoption groups in Orlando. Our big hope is that room will come available and they will all get homes. It’s hard not to forget their faces. We continually have visions of those haunting, unforgettable eyes reaching out to us, saying “Don’t forget me – come pick me.”

~ Claire Tyler, GPA Central Florida

GPA/THREE RIVERS GREYHOUNDS, INC.

CONTACT US AT INFO@GPATHREERIVERSGREYHOUNDS.ORG
GPA /Three Rivers Greyhounds, PO Box 111202, Pittsburgh PA 15238
Phone / Fax: (724) 216-5820

President ~ Ruth Scheller
Vice President ~ Louise Evans
Secretary/Treasurer ~ Susy Durso
Directors—Sue Yanakos, Kyle Catanzarite

