

News and Roos

From

GPA/Three Rivers Greyhounds, Inc.



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FROM OUR PRESIDENT North American Greyhound Adoption Conference – Speakers Recap

The 2014 NAGAC was a huge success, and TRG had lots of fun hosting greyhound lovers from all across the country! Attendees from Idaho, California, Florida, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Tennessee, and many other states enjoyed 3 days of nothing but greyhounds!

The speakers were very informative and entertaining; I think everyone learned at least one thing they didn't already know about our beloved greyhounds.

The first day started with an update on the state of the racing industry, prepared by Garry Guccione – Director of the National Greyhound Association. Gary was unable to attend the conference in person, so our very own Kyle Catanzarite presented on his behalf. His update is included elsewhere in this newsletter for those who couldn't attend the conference.

Next up was Lee Livingood, best known as the author of "Retired Racing Greyhounds For Dummies", a book near and dear to all of us! Lee is a greyhound owner herself, and knows the breed inside and out.

Ann Bolens, director of The Sunburst Project, gave us an update on the logistical issues involved in transporting the overwhelming number of greyhounds needing to move from Florida to non-racing states. The Sunburst Project is able to move nearly 1000 dogs per year out of Florida to adoption groups in other states!

Melissa Cook, President of The Greyhound Project, updated us on their latest endeavors. The Greyhound Project is an organization that offers support to adoption groups everywhere. These are also the folks who publish the "Celebrating Greyhounds" calendars and "Celebrating Greyhounds" magazine.

Susy Durso, Secretary/Treasurer of TRG, worked long and hard on an entertaining presentation "A Year In The Life" – this photo essay chronicled the first year of life of a litter of greyhounds puppies. We saw photos of mom before the puppies were born, and all through the first stages of life until the puppies were ready to head off to training.

Friday ended with an update from documentary filmmaker Bill Buchanan, who has been working on a film entitled "Greyhound, Racing Into The Light." Bill has been working on this labor of love for 4 years now. Please visit www.greyhoundmovie.com to view the trailer, or to make a donation to help fund this project.

Saturday was dedicated to our keynote speaker, Dr. Guillermo Couto, co-founder of The Greyhound Health Initiative. Dr. Couto is the premiere veterinarian in the country when it comes to greyhound health and physiology. He is also one of the most entertaining speakers on the planet!

Sunday finished up with a local veterinarian, Dr. Kate Ewald from Wexford Veterinary Hospital, giving a presentation on greyhound dental hygiene. We all know how important it is to maintain our greyhound's dental health, but Dr. Ewald really drove the point home.

As you can see, the conference was very educational. TRG is very grateful to our speakers and all those who helped make the conference a success.

~~ Ruth Scheller



Inside this issue ~~

<i>National Greyhound Assn.</i>	<i>p.2</i>	<i>Thank you to our Donors</i>	<i>p.5</i>
<i>NACAG Track Tour</i>	<i>p.3~4</i>	<i>Thunder phobia</i>	<i>p.8</i>
<i>GPA Nat'l Meeting</i>	<i>p.3</i>	<i>Bridge Hounds</i>	<i>p.8</i>
<i>Upcoming Events</i>	<i>p.5</i>	<i>Conference through Eyes</i>	<i>p.9</i>
<i>Cole, A greyt Recovery</i>	<i>p.6~7</i>	<i>of Greyhound Project</i>	
<i>Greyhound Factoid</i>	<i>p.7</i>		

Report from Gary Guccione, National Greyhound Association



Gary Guccione, executive director of NGA (National Greyhound Association), and coordinator of AGC (American Greyhound Council), was unable to present at the conference as planned. Gary graciously sent his presentation, "Status of Greyhound Racing in America—2014," to TRG's Kyle Catanzarite, who delivered the presentation on his behalf.

Through Kyle, Gary extended his sincere thanks to the conference attendees for all that we do to care for our greyhounds, while noting how much upheaval has occurred in the greyhound racing industry in the past few years.

- Once there were 59 tracks in the US and now there are 23
- NGA membership was previously 7,000 and that has decreased to approximately 1,300 members
- In the past about 50,000 greyhounds were bred annually. That rate has fallen to approximately 12,000

Gary cited an imminent threat of more track closures due to the introduction of alternate types of gaming and the tracks' initiatives to have the right to reduce and/or eliminate their live greyhound racing. He also cited proposed legislation affecting the racing industry.

Great strides in greyhound welfare through education and track inspections have been made, addressing safety issues and injury and disease prevention in greyhounds. The American Greyhound Council has been striving to increase awareness of greyhound adoption. Their policy includes using the Three C's of adoption: Communication, Compassion and Cooperation.

(The conference was a great success. With several greyhounds as part of our current family, I am proud to be a part of greyhound adoption for the past 20 years.)

~~ Maryann Flot





2014 Greyhound Pets of America National Business Meeting

The 2014 GPA National Business Meeting was held during the North American Greyhound Adoption Conference in Pittsburgh and was attended by 20 out of 37 chapters, with an additional seven chapters offering Proxy votes.

This year's topics included:

1. Attendance mandates at the Business Meeting. It was determined that chapters need to either have a physical attendance or a proxy attendance to remain in good standing.
2. A fundraising committee was developed to raise funds for GPA National. The national organization relies on donations to offer grants and to assist many needs of hounds trying to find their way to their forever homes. This committee will be chaired by Susy Durso from TRG.
3. There is a new GPA directors discussion board that has been initiated for chapters to discuss and share ideas, thoughts and concerns. All of the discussions this year were about to make GPA National more accessible to each chapter and to bring cohesiveness to the organization.

~~ Susy Durso

NAGAC Track Tour

One of the many highlights from the 2014 North American Greyhound Adoption Conference was the track tour that took place on Saturday, June 21. Approximately twenty-five folks loaded onto a school bus and headed down to Wheeling Island for a behind the scenes tour of the racetrack and a greyhound's life there.

It was a fun bus ride with lunch provided. As folks loaded the school bus, many mentioned fond memories of days long ago on their bus rides to school. Many admitted that they might have been a little mischievous on their school bus in the "olden days". For this ride, everyone was well behaved.



The tour started with a view of the track from inside large windows where folks would watch the races. The view from this point was quite impressive.

At this time, we got to meet one of the eligible greyhounds up for adoption. He was a handsome black male that got lots of attention from all of us. Before we knew it, a race was about to start. This was the first time seeing an actual race for many. We were awestruck as the hounds ran past the window and made their first turn.



The next step on our track tour was to go outside and view a race up close and personal. We were able to stand right at the fence that was a few yards back from the track. We got to hear "Here comes Spunky" and once Spunky passed us, we could hear the gates open and the dogs were let out. It was surreal seeing them go past us, so close, and yet they were a blur. There wasn't a sound made as the greyhounds went past.



They put meaning to the saying, "poetry in motion." Many of us commented that this was one of the most beautiful sights we could have ever seen. In full stride and paws off the ground, the hounds seemed to float on air. It was all over in a matter of seconds. What an adrenaline rush it was for all of us.

After we saw a few races, we were escorted to the area where the dogs get ready. We got to meet Pam Webb, who runs the GPA adoption kennel, and we got to see all the hounds up for adoption. We saw the turn out pens where they go for bathroom duties, romp around and hang out. We were also able to pet a few of the adoptable hounds. Everyone agreed that if some folks would stay behind, we could bring some hounds home. It was hard not taking them all with us.

The new director of racing, Mr. Jim Gartland, also spoke with us. He told us how he came to be the new director of racing, his background in racing, and his love of greyhounds. He was more than willing to explain the racing aspect and went into great detail about the condition of the track and how important it is to him that the track is well maintained for the hounds. He went on to mention that the track is soil tested to ensure that it has the right mixture for the safety of the hounds.

The last part of the tour was where the dogs go after the race is finished. We saw them come off the track, and got to pet the blue ribbon winner of a race. We did notice that the winner was followed by track help who held a cup to catch his urine; every winner has their urine tested after a race.

We then met track veterinarian Dr. Bohenko. She provided a wealth of information on what goes on behind the scenes. We saw the dogs getting ready to put on their racing silks, watched them get weighed, and saw them walk out to get ready for their race. We learned that a dog's weight is very important and if there is as much as a two-pound change from their last race, the trainer is notified. We saw the big tubs of water where the hounds get cooled off and rinsed after a race. The hounds we saw there were getting lots of attention from the track personnel as well as us. They looked happy to be getting lots of attention.

The tour lasted a little over an hour and time went by so fast. Everyone agreed that we wished we could stay longer. This was an amazing experience, and many of us came out with a lot more knowledge than we had going in. Some of us were a little apprehensive about what we would see or hear. But, I think I can honestly say that we all left with a very positive experience. Some of us even had hounds that raced at this track. so it was really cool to see where our best friend spent a portion of his or her life.

~~ Lisa Paulson

COLE: A GREYT Recovery!

by Jim Evans

After having the privilege of providing a forever home for 11 Greyhounds, 2 Beagles, and 5 cats over the past 15 years, I decided to make room for one more Greyhound in my heart and home in order to share my life with him/her and reap the joy of the reciprocal relationship.

I made that decision after a few months of coming to terms with the necessity of euthanizing another of my beloved Gang! My experience with saying goodbye to my hounds over the years included 3 euthanized, 4 passing from natural causes, 1 running away and ultimately being found dead, 1 given to another grieving Greyhound owner, and 1 tragically killed by a truck in my presence.



And so, with 1 female Galgo, Anubis and 1 adopted female Beagle, Daisy remaining in The Gang, I wanted to add a large male as a leader, protector and friend. Enter Cole (not his racing name). I had seen Cole on the GPA/Three Rivers Greyhounds website for a few weeks and was taken by his color (never had a white with brindle Greyhound) and appearance.

I contacted Kyle Catanzarite, my TRG connection, during mid-October 2013 to ask if he was still available for adoption. Kyle's response was "Sure is!" So I excitedly picked up Cole on October 20th and began our bonding during the long ride to his new home in Mercer County.

For the next three days, Cole began to mesh with Anubis and Daisy, he began to learn the routines of the house and large fenced-in yard, he found his comfortable spot for sleeping, he learned to walk and jog with The Gang, and he also began adjusting to all the never-before-heard noises, objects, and behaviors.

However, that wonderful beginning changed radically on October 24th when, playing in the yard with Anubis, Cole's left rear hock shattered into 5 pieces (as was later discovered). The yelping and screaming were ear-shattering. I was close by working on a fence repair, and as I ran to Cole, he was limping and pacing in obvious pain. I carried him to the car to transport him to my vet and all the while he was anxious and in obvious, excruciating pain.

Thus began a more than 4 month journey that took Cole through surgery, TIC 24/7 care, and many trips to the

surgeons at PVSEC, the large emergency veterinary clinic which is more than hour from my home.

The day of Cole's injury, I contacted Kyle and told her what happened. Subsequently, she contacted the breeder and racetrack kennel owner to share the news of Cole's fracture and to inquire as whether he sustained any injuries while racing. The response she received was that he had a pulled muscle!

And yet, when x-rays were taken of both back legs (to compare the fractured leg with the other leg), it was determined that Cole had two screws in his right rear hock. Obviously, Cole had more than a pulled muscle while racing. It explained why Cole's white coat was stained yellow on parts of his body since it appeared that he was not able to stand up and move away from urine in his crate due to limited mobility while the broken hock of his right leg healed. As is often the case following fractures, Cole raced again after his right hock fracture healed.

The surgeon at PVSEC, who repaired Cole's recently-shattered left hock, opined that the left hock was most likely compromised by racing after the right hock fracture and simply running in my yard was enough to cause the new fracture.

Cole's surgery was done on November 1 with the 5 fractures put together (like a jig-saw puzzle according to the surgeon) with a metal plate and 9 screws. He was casted with a soft cast covering 2/3 of the leg that required frequent changes and surgeon checks over the next 12 weeks. Cole's activity level was restricted, he required some crating, and his beautiful 70 lb body had to be carried in and out of the house several times daily for toileting. All of that and constant monitoring got us through early January.



Then, on January 10, 2014, Cole had his second surgery to remove the plate and screws. Soft casts were again used for a few weeks while the 9 screw holes filled in with new

bone growth. Six weeks later, x-rays showed that the fractures had healed, but only 7 of the 9 screw holes were filled in with new bone. Continued care was required with limited activity (walking on a leash only) and no running for another 3 weeks.

At the time this article was written, Cole was in a gradual rehabilitation period. He was taking walks with Anubis and Daisy and gradually, he was trotting on a leash in the yard. Eventually, he progressed to slow jogging and unleashed

distances and running at will in the yard was reached during early April.

Cole's life was worth saving and at no time during the saga did I ever question my resolve to continue his care and rehab. I know that Greyhound adopters, lovers and caretakers understand that and would have done the same thing.

Having known that Cole had a previous hock fracture would not have changed my mind about adopting him. His presence in my life has been wonderful even with the stress and obligations that have come with him.

Although we Greyhound lovers know that these wonderful beings sometimes come to us with past injuries, we continue to adopt them and share our lives with them. Cole's story is one of many examples of how resilient Greyhounds are, how they endure adversities in the form of physical injuries while racing and how ultimately they heal and spend the rest of their lives surrounded by love in a forever home!

Greyhound Pets of America and the Three Rivers Greyhounds chapter have been very supportive and complimentary to Cole and me throughout this ordeal. Thanks to a GPA Emily Griffin Injury Fund grant of \$1,500 and the financial support from Three Rivers Greyhounds, made possible by ongoing fundraising events to subsidize the medical expenses of catastrophic injuries related to racing, the cost of Cole's surgeries and subsequent care was completely covered.

That support was part of what kept me going through the hard times. The other part was my personal love of Greyhounds (and all dogs) and the wonder of sharing my life with them.



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### *Greyhound Factoid ~ What is a greenhound?*

**GREENHOUNDS** - no, we're not talking about a green card or recycling! Greyhounds in New South Wales, Australia must earn the designation of a "Greenhound" in order to be in public without a muzzle.

How did this come to be? And why would anyone think that greyhounds (pets and ex-racers) need to be muzzled?

The NSW (New South Wales) Companion Animals Act 1998 requires that all greyhounds must wear a muzzle when in a public place. In February 2011, an exemption was made to pet and retired racing greyhounds that successfully complete an approved greyhound re-training program and pass the required assessment.

This re-training includes many topics but is not limited to: dogs and children, introducing your dog to cats, health issues, safety issues, socialization, exercise, etc. -- pretty much what we all learn when we adopt a greyhound. Dogs must be placed in a foster home for a period of not less than 6 weeks. Assessment also utilizes the Greyhound Adoption Program National Temperament Test (GAPNTT). Success or failure must be reported within 48 hours.

And you thought the United States had a lot of regulations!

All greyhounds, except those that have successfully completed an approved re-training program and have been issued a Greenhound collar, must continue to be muzzled while in public.

Only non-racing greyhounds (i.e. retired racing greyhounds, those kept solely for the purpose of being a pet and show greyhounds) are eligible to complete an approved greyhound re-training program, and are therefore eligible for a muzzling exemption.



In addition, fees associated with this designation include fees charged by a retraining program, a lifetime dog registration fee and collar fee. All dogs must also be microchipped.

So the next time you're checking out a new collar for your special greyhound, be *arevful* that he or she is not limited to a green collar when out in public!



*It's that time of year..... thunderstorms and lightning!*



How does your greyhound handle the rumbling, thundering and flashing effects of a thunderstorm?

For some hounds, a storm and all its sound effects does not mean anything. They will continue to sleep soundly on the dog cushion, oblivious to the whole thing.

For others, an approaching thunderstorm triggers every fear and flight response in their body. Rapid breathing, drooling, whimpering, digging, and howling are just a few of the reactions a phobic hound may display. Some of them seem to know a half hour or more in advance that a storm is coming.

As a responsible pet owner, it is important to do everything possible to help your dog calm down and ride out the storm.

A recent article in USA Today lists the "10 steps to calm dogs afraid of thunder and lightning storms."

Competing with the noise (i.e. turning TV on), letting your pooch hide a crate or other safe place, and countering the effects of electromagnetism (using aluminum foil over crate etc.) are a few of the suggestions.

Check out the link here to read the complete article by veterinarian Patty Khuly.

[http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/life/lifestyle/pets/2010-06-10-vetviews11\\_st\\_n.htm](http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/life/lifestyle/pets/2010-06-10-vetviews11_st_n.htm)



*Remembering those hounds  
that have recently crossed the bridge...*

Elsie, treasured companion loved by Bev Stulen



*And also....*

Peaches the Cat, loved by the Durso family; Peaches was the original cat-tester for TRG

*2014 North American Greyhound  
Adoption Conference held June 20-22  
through the eyes of The Greyhound Project*



In June, The Greyhound Project had the honor of presenting at the 2014 North American Greyhound Adoption Conference in Pittsburgh, sponsored by GPA's Three Rivers Greyhounds.

Kudos to Three Rivers Greyhounds for a job well done. This three-day conference was jam packed with great information for greyhound adoption groups, volunteers and greyhound adopters. Among the presenters were Kyle Catanzanite (NGA's State of the Racing Industry Report), Lee Livingood, Ann Bollens (The Sunburst Project), Bill Buchanan (The Spirit of Texas), Dr. Couto, and Dr. Ewald (Greyhound Oral Health).

Melissa Cook, representing The Greyhound Project, talked about building awareness for greyhound adoption and shared the results from the 2014 National Adopt-a-Greyhound efforts.

Three Rivers Greyhounds also presented great information on fundraising and a special slide show of the first year in the life of a racing greyhound. In addition to the speaker line-up, attendees were treated to raffles, auctions, shopping and a wine reception hosted by Grapehounds Wine Tour.

Among the highlights of the conference was the opportunity for attendees to visit and tour Wheeling Downs Racetrack in Wheeling, West Virginia. The tour was conducted during live racing on Saturday afternoon so participants were allowed to get a real behind-the-scenes look at an active racetrack. Tour guides included the track vet, a racetrack commissioner and the GPA adoption kennel staff.

Following two days of seminars, attendees were treated to a banquet riverboat cruise that provided spectacular views of Pittsburgh and allowed participants to discuss and network on key industry initiatives.

It was great to be able to spend a few days immersed in greyhound talk. The energy and passion for the greyhound breed was inspiring and free of political debate. New friends and networking opportunities were formed and hopefully this energy will carry over into the work we all do day in and day out, to make sure our special greyhounds live long and happy lives.

Well done, Three Rivers Greyhounds!

(reprinted from Greyhound Project e-newsletter)



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