

News and Roos

from
GPA/Three Rivers Greyhounds, Inc.



December 2016

Issue #26

WISHING YOU A WONDERFUL HOLIDAY SEASON!

As 2016 comes to an end, it's always a good time to reflect on the past year and what TRG has accomplished as a group. It's hard to believe that our group has been in existence for 7+ years.

On one hand it seems like we've been doing this forever, but on the other hand it feels like only yesterday that a small group was trying to bring this dream to fruition. A lot of hard work went into making TRG what it is today, and we are so very grateful to all our volunteers who work tirelessly every day to promote greyhound adoption.

This year to date, we have placed 38 greyhounds into loving homes; that's a nearly 35% increase over 2015!! We have expanded our M&G presence to several new venues, added a couple of new events to our annual calendar, and even had greyhounds flown in by private plane!

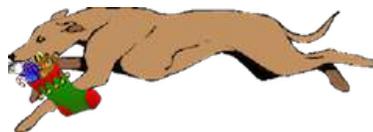
As we approach the New Year and the continuing uncertainty of the future of greyhound racing, we can't afford to slow down. We still have lots of work to do, with many more greyhounds waiting to find their own special family. As 2017 quickly approaches, let's keep our focus and continue to spread the word about the wonderful world of greyhounds!

Please read our holiday letter on the next page and consider a donation to TRG's holiday campaign.

The Board of GPA/Three Rivers Greyhounds wishes you and your loved ones a very Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy 2016! Happy Paw-lidays!

Ruth Scheller, President
Louise Evans, Secretary

Kyle Catanzarite, Vice President
Sue Yanakos, Treasurer



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*WISHING YOU A WONDERFUL
HOLIDAY SEASON
from
GPA/Three Rivers Greyhounds*

During this holiday season, Three Rivers Greyhounds would like to say thank you to all who have helped with our primary mission to promote the adoption and placement of retired racing greyhounds into loving homes. There are still many greyhounds waiting for a forever home.

- ◆ To date in 2016, we have successfully placed 38 retired greyhounds into loving homes! Perhaps one of them is sleeping at your feet (or on your couch) right now!
- ◆ Expenses for preparing greyhounds for adoption continue to rise, as there are increasing numbers of dogs with parasites, dental issues, etc.
- ◆ Medical expenses alone, with few exceptions, now exceed the adoption fee. Total TRG costs from "track to couch" averaged \$465 per greyhound in 2016. (With the increase in the number of adoptions in 2016, more funds were used to offset the difference.)

Our group relies solely on donations to continue the rescue and placement of these loving creatures. Would you consider a **year-end gift** to Three Rivers Greyhounds to provide necessary funding to continue our mission?

Please consider a donation to cover any of the following expenses for greyhounds that will be entering our adoption program:

- \$100 helps cover the cost of one neuter.
- \$50 helps cover deworming, and flea, tick and heartworm preventative.
- \$25 helps cover the cost of a microchip, collar and leash.

However, any amount that you choose to donate is greatly appreciated!

If desired, we will acknowledge your gift in our Spring 2017 newsletter. Complete and tear off the form below and mail it to Three Rivers Greyhounds. Your donation is 100% tax deductible.

Thank you for your support. We continue to be blessed with **dedicated volunteers** who give of their time and talents to promote greyhound adoption, and we extend our sincere thanks to each of you.

The Board of GPA/Three Rivers Greyhounds wishes you and your loved ones a very Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy 2017!

Ruth Scheller, President
Louise Evans, Secretary

Kyle Catanzarite, Vice President
Sue Yanakos, Treasurer

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**GPA/Three Rivers Greyhounds ~ 2016 Holiday Donation**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Amount of donation \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, please acknowledge my donation in the next TRG newsletter.

In honor of \_\_\_\_\_ In memory of \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail your donation to: GPA/TRG, P.O. Box 101033, Pittsburgh PA 15237      THANK YOU!**

*Remembering those Hounds that have recently crossed the Bridge*

**Greycie, loved by Linda Kostka**  
**Magic, loved by the Lanewski Family**  
**Cash, loved by Rachel Battles**  
**Emma, loved by Sue and Bill Yanakos**



**A special thank you to those that have recently made donations to Three Rivers Greyhounds...**

**Ruth Scheller, in memory of Greycie Kostka**  
**Sue and Bill Yanakos, in memory of Max Fahringer**  
**Kyle and Bob Catanzarite in memory of Max Fahringer**  
**Fran laoffola in memory of Max Fahringer**  
**Ruth Scheller in memory of Max Fahringer**

*Greyhounds at Healthy Pets Store*

Recently TRG began showing off our greyhounds at a new meet and greet location ~ Healthy Pets, an all natural & organic pet food store located on McKnight Road in McCandless.

Owner Toni Shelaske has been very generous to TRG by matching donations dollar-for-dollar that we have received during the M&G's.

Our greyhounds send a greyt big "Thank Roo" to Toni and Healthy Pets!

At right, Greyhounds Wolffy (top) and Honey Girl (bottom) getting in the Christmas spirit at Healthy Pets



*A Very Special Thank You!*

Three Rivers Greyhounds would like to say thank you to Levin Furniture and Mattress for their generous donation of \$1250.

With the sale of every Grand Legacy mattress that Levin sells, a portion is set aside for charitable causes. TRG is honored to receive this donation from Levin's.

Because of Levin's generosity, more greyhounds will find their way to a soft couch (or bed) in 2017.



## *Quarterly Meetings for Meet & Greet Volunteers*

TRG volunteers and those interested in becoming a volunteer at one of the Meet and Greet venues that TRG does at various locations are invited to attend the first volunteer meeting of 2017.

The first quarterly meeting will be held Wednesday, January 18<sup>th</sup> at the Community Room in Panera, McCandless Crossing, Wexford from 6:15 pm to 7:45 pm. There will be time beginning at 5:45 pm to order your own food or beverages prior to the meeting (Dutch treat). Jane Fahringer will lead the meetings; in addition to planned topics, there will be time for some open discussion.

We hope to see anyone with the passion for greyhounds who wants to spread the word about greyhound adoption.

Visit our website to see where TRG currently visits and hosts meet and greets --  
[www.gpathreeriversgreyhounds.org](http://www.gpathreeriversgreyhounds.org)

## *The Honeymoon is Over...or The Thrill is Gone*

### **Bringing home your new greyhound and how to keep the honeymoon going.**

The wonderful feeling of bringing home a new grey friend! Love is in the air! But, you should expect your new greyhound to act differently at your home than when you met him at the kennel or at his foster home.

Once he arrives at your house, he will be both excited and nervous (just like you). He may display anxiety and nervousness by panting, pacing, lack of eye contact, potty accidents, chewing, or gastric upset (vomiting, diarrhea, loose stools). He doesn't yet know the smells, the sounds, and importantly, the routines and rules of your house. It is all very confusing.

During the first weeks, to a few months, your new grey may be very quiet and extraordinarily controlled or what we think of as 'good'. The overwhelming feeling of the brand-new environment, with all those new sights, sounds, and smells can cause a lot of dogs to go into a very reserved mode, often leading new adopters to think they've hit the jackpot and adopted the most mellow, well behaved dog in the kennel.

The 'real' dog appears later - after he's relaxed and figured out the house rules, the routine of his days, and the character of his new family.

Your goal in the upcoming weeks is to reduce the confusion and fear and get him to relax and to be calm and show him how to be good and follow your house rules. In other words, set him up to succeed.



**The Leash:** With leash on, spend the first 30 minutes walking him around outside along the perimeter of the yard. Walk slowly and let him sniff if he wants to. He is getting to know the 'lay of the land' and all the smells associated it. He will likely relieve himself as a way of making himself at home by adding his mark to the smells of your yard. The excitement of the move and new family will cause him to have to relieve himself more often than normal. You should be prepared to give him plenty of opportunities to do this in the beginning.

If you have other dogs, plan to do your introductions outside (preferably in the front yard) to reduce the urge for them to protect their home. Once introductions are made, move to the back yard for a few minutes more and then into your home.

Go with your new grey and let him explore the house with the leash on. I recommend leaving your new dog on leash in the house for the entire first day. Additionally, don't leave the dog unsupervised at any time. If you can't supervise - put him in his crate. A male may want to mark a door, plant, or chair. This is out of nervousness (or he may smell another dog's marking), which is why it's best to have that leash on.

If he starts to lift his leg or display any of the 'pre-peeing' behavior, give a short jerk on the leash and tell him 'No', that should stop him immediately. Follow up by taking him outside in case he's not just marking! Nerves and excitement can cause uncharacteristic accidents. Do not scold or hit your greyhound for having an accident. Verbally get his attention, grab the leash, and take him right outside to his spot to do his business, and when he does it, praise him! Whenever your new dog is not confined, supervise - set this dog up to win!



**Quiet time:** Even though you are very excited about your new grey, resist inviting friends and family over to visit him for the first week. This will give him time to get used to your immediate family and resident pets.

**Feeding:** Feed your new dog twice a day. If he doesn't eat his food, pick up the bowl until the next mealtime. Don't leave the bowl down all day (grazing). This will encourage your dog to eat less. If you have other dogs, feed your new grey at the same time, but away from them. Be sure to put down your resident dog's bowls first. Ensure that each dog sticks to his own bowl. Keep vigilant over feeding time for a couple of months until the pack positions are established.



**Common 'Spoiling' Mistakes:** Most common mistakes made with new dogs involve what we tend to consider as spoiling, to make up for all their past misfortunes.

**Mistake #1:** The last thing your new greyhound needs is lots of choices of furniture. It starts out as a self-invite to the couch and can lead to other pushy and undesirable behaviors like guarding of valuable spaces like couches or beds. What to do? Calmly remove him using a leash (collar grabs are threatening), and lead him to *his* bed. When he steps on his new bed, praise him and give him treats and lots of love. Inconsistent and unclear boundaries encourage all kinds of unwanted behaviors.

**Mistake #2:** Giving the new grey freedom and free reign of his new home. All dogs need boundaries. New ones need them even more. Too much freedom can be overwhelming and overwhelmed dogs tend to chew or pee. They pee when they are scared...or because they don't know what else they're supposed to do. It's our job to make sure we've set up an environment where a new greyhound can't make a mistake, like chew the couch or the pillows.

An ideal location for your new grey is a centrally located room like the kitchen or living room. Block the room off with a baby gate or use a crate and provide a nice soft dog bed. Crates are wonderful tools. Greyhounds have lived their entire lives in a crate and they appeal to a dog's nesting instinct and most greys consider the crate a safe place to be. When you need to leave your new grey alone the crate is the safest place for him *and* your home. He won't get into trouble. If you are leaving him in a gated room, greyhound-proof the room, removing any tempting-but-forbidden items that might get chewed. When you are at home supervise your dog, make sure he drags a leash so you can lead him outside for potty and remind him to stay off the couch.

Plan on using boundaries for several weeks to several months before allowing full access to your home.



**Mistake #3:** Not starting, and keeping up, some type of daily exercise routine with your new grey. Exercise and mental stimulation encourage relaxation and a calm, relaxed dog is easier to manage indoors. Begin going for a 30-minute leash walk a few times a week and you'll most likely be meeting your new dog's exercise and mental stimulation needs. A big yard to run in is not the same as a leash walk. The walk establishes you as the top dog and promotes bonding with your new grey.

**Mistake #4:** Allowing free access to possessions, like the couch or high-value toys and treats with no rules about access to them. This is one of the most serious problems dog owners deal with...resource, or possession, guarding. Many new adopters can't wait to spoil their dogs and the quickest way to do that is with toys and food and includes the couch. Couch hoarders will settle in and proceed to "defend" their space against other dogs and people who venture near. They will sit like a king on the couch and tell the other dogs, or people, to "go away".

The solution is to not give our new dog free access to the couch or give high-value treats (like bully sticks or marrow bones) until you have established that he will give up the treat, or the space, without defending it.



**Mistake #5:** Allowing invasion of personal space and excessive affection. Your new greyhound is going to bond with you. They often become the 'Velcro dog' we all know about. But they can learn to crowd out your family and other resident dogs as well. Dogs teach each other what line not to cross when it comes to their personal space. They are much better than humans because we give mixed signals. We allow them to "snuggle" on us, invade

our personal space, and even follow us into the bathroom. Then we get annoyed when we trip over them in the kitchen. Well-meaning new adopters think they are offering security to their new dog when they're really nurturing unbalanced and anxious behavior. This is the first step on the road to separation anxiety or onto the path of guarding the human as a valuable resource.

**Let's review...**most of the common mistakes well-meaning adopters make when bringing home their new dogs are because there is a lack of boundaries and structure, or spoiling. Be patient and consistent and keep your eyes focused on the long-term joy of having this wonderful new greyhound living happily, and in concert, with the entire family.

~~ Sandy Strychor, ABCDT

### *Greyhound Pets of America National Business Meeting*

The 2016 national meeting for Greyhound Pets of America was held on September 17<sup>th</sup> in Austin, Texas.

There were 32 of the 36 GPA chapters represented at the meeting. Kyle Catanzarite, GPA Three Rivers Greyhounds Vice-President, and Lisa Paulson, GPA Three Rivers Greyhounds Compliance Officer, attended the meeting. Kyle is the chapter representative to the national organization and Lisa attended as a nominee for election to the office of Executive Secretary.

The meeting included the review of general financial and other business matters in addition to the following highlights:

\*Lisa Paulson, GPA/Three Rivers Greyhounds, was elected by a unanimous vote to serve as the GPA/National Executive Secretary

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### *Greyhounds Head West to School!*

Even in retirement, TRG greyhounds are kept busy with educating our community about what great family members retired racers can be.

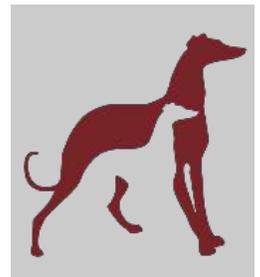
On November 9<sup>th</sup>, greyhounds Ollie, Piper, Bizzie, and Rummy (and their adopters) traveled to the Parkway West Career and Technology Center in Oakdale to give a presentation to approximately 80 veterinary technician assistants in training.

The audience consisted of students in grades 9-12 from various high schools in the area. The greyhounds waited patiently while Louise Evans and Maryann Flot spoke on various topics of interest, including TRG's mission of placing retired racing

\*Ann Bollens, GPA/Central Florida, was re-elected by a unanimous vote to serve as the GPA/National Corresponding Secretary

\*A Committee was appointed by the National Officers to develop an amendment to the Policies and Procedures Manual intended to expand the criteria for approval of new chapter affiliates and chapters.

The next business meeting will be held in conjunction with the 2017 GPA Conference hosted by GPA Minnesota, which is scheduled for September 2017.



greyhounds, differences in greyhound size, physiology, etc. Hound handlers Bill Evans and Vince Flot kept the canines in check. The students watched two short videos of greyhounds moving from the racetrack to couches, and received a brochure and fact sheet.



Then, the fun part began for both students and hounds – a hands-on session with lots of petting and questions about the greyhounds. There was a lunch break between the two sessions where the exhausted hounds took a much-needed rest before another session of being 100% adorable.

At the end of the class, the greyhounds were to say “thank roo” with a special rooing for the students, but apparently the hounds, including roo-master Ollie, became very shy and only the silly humans were left roo-ing for the students.

Special thanks to Suzanne Ezzo of Parkway West Career and Technology Center for inviting TRG to their school.

## *Fall Events Recap*

### *Fall For Animals Festival*

Greyhounds, and other breeds, invaded Crooked Creek Horse Park in Ford City for the Fall for Animals Festival on October 8-9.

It was a successful two-day event to raise awareness about our group and our mission of placing retired racers into forever homes.

Special thanks to Joe Kubiak for taking the lead and organizing TRG’s participation. Over \$700 was raised from this two-day event.

TRG plans to participate in this event next year.



Lynn Sciotti of Plum stops to pet Ms. Daisy Jo, a 2-year-old “retired” greyhound who once raced in Wheeling, W.Va. Ms. Daisy Jo can reach speeds of 45 mph in a few strides but now is a “couch potato,” said owner Tracy Miller (holding leash) of Arnold. Miller was volunteering at the Three Rivers Greyhounds booth.

(Photo & caption from the Tribune Review)



### *Bath-a-Thon*

Greyhounds came by the dozens (well, at least several dozen) to get squeaky clean at TRG’s annual bath-a-thon at TanZar Kennels on Sunday, September 26th.

TRG merchandise enticed the TRG family of adopters, and there were snacks and drinks along with greyhound talk while everyone waited for their hounds to come out looking 99.4% (well, really 100%) clean and refreshed.

A total of \$510 was raised and we thank all who helped as volunteers and those that supported this event. A special thank you to TanZar Kennels for hosting this event.

## *Tailgatin' with the Hounds!*

This new TRG fundraising event for 2016 was held at Domenico's Restaurant in Cranberry Township on Sunday afternoon, October 2<sup>nd</sup>.

A cozy atmosphere, along with adoptable greyhounds Rebel and Ashley, delicious food, greyt raffles and baskets made for a enjoyable time for all in attendance.

Door prizes, Chinese auction baskets, custom-made raised dog feeders, special raffles and a 50/50 helped raise **\$1381** for greyhound adoption.

As usual, the event committee did an outstanding job, soliciting donations of fantastic items, and provided a cookie table of desserts fit for any wedding.

Thank you to all who attended and supported TRG's efforts.

Below are a few pictures from the event.



GPA/Three Rivers Greyhounds Inc. is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Your contribution made to Three Rivers Greyhounds in 2016 will be fully tax deductible and 100% of your donation will be used to benefit the greyhounds.

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 Secretary – Louise Evans

Treasurer -- Sue Yanakos  
 Compliance – Lisa Paulson