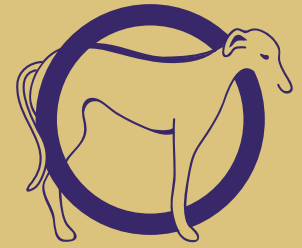


# THE Skinny

on Greyhound Welfare



VOL. 1, EDITION 4, AUTUMN 2009

## There's More to Hiking Than Exercise

BY ALANA GROSHONG

Fall has arrived with a burst of cool air, a bit of rain, the call of migrating birds, and the bright colors that change the hills of the Virginia Piedmont outside my front door into a welcome mat to hit the trails with Axel and Abbey. Hiking with my greyhounds has introduced me to new opportunities to learn about our regional history and local wildlife preservation. I have also enjoyed the opportunity to make many friends out on the trails. Mid-Atlantic adopters and volunteers can join the Yahoo! group, Running Hounds, to join planned hikes in the region led by Greyhound Welfare adopters.



Abbey (left), Axel (right), Alana Groshong (center)

### Getting Ready to Hike with Your Greyhound

There are a few things to keep in mind when hiking with a greyhound. First, it is important to build endurance at home before hitting the trail. Start out with short, easy hikes in the region and commit yourself to extending your walks at home for at least a week before you plan a hike in a new area. I worked with Axel and Abbey for over a month to build their endurance for 7 mile hikes with major changes in elevation. Second, research your destination. Refer to websites and call ahead to make sure leashed dogs are welcome at your destination. Look at trail maps online or grab one when you arrive so you can make a plan of your hike. Third, carry appropriate water, snacks, clothing, and a first aid kit with you. A first aid kit should include alcohol wipes for cleaning any scratches/wounds, antibiotic cream, small bandages, and wound wrap to hold you over until you can reach a vet or doctor. Determine the closest e-vet and urgent care center to your destination and write down directions. Finally, when possible hike with a friend or group, and let someone at home know your hiking plan. Don't be surprised when you are stopped on the trail by greyhound gawkers! I always carry a few

of Greyhound Welfare's business cards with me to share with interested people. You can pick up business cards at any Greyhound Welfare event.

### National Parks & Forests

Mid-Atlantic residents are able to enjoy some of the few National Parks that allow leashed dogs on their trails. Along the Potomac in Maryland, enjoy the **C & O Canal**. An easy hike is to start at the visitor center at Carderock, hike along the upper access road to Anglers' Inn then follow the towpath back to the visitor center. Or, hop across the river to **Great Falls National Park** and enjoy the view of the falls while hiking easy trails under the Fall canopy. Venture out further from the metro area and spend a day along the upper Potomac at **Harpers Ferry National Park**. Either stay in the restored area for easy walking along paved streets or take a more challenging hike to the top of the bluffs that tower over the town. Inside the Beltway, consider taking an easy stroll along the **Tidal Basin** (especially during the Cherry Blossom Festival) or walk along the **National Mall**.

story continues on page 3

## in this edition

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT . . . . .	PG 2
GREY T BITES . . . . .	PG 3
Easy Grain-Free Treats	
TRAINING CORNER . . . . .	PG 4
Crime and Punishment	
BECKETT'S BIG MOVE. . . . .	PG 5
KEEP YOUR PUP SAFE ON HALLOWEEN. . . . .	PG 6
GREYHOUND MEDICAL IDIOSYNCRACIES . . . . .	PG 7
GREYHOUNDS REACH THE BEACH . . . . .	PG 9
PHOTO CONTEST . . . . .	PGS 10-11
Black Dogs	



Contest Winners and Runners-Up, pgs 10-11



Rocky (owner, Cody Williams)  
(photo by Alana Groshong)

## Letter from the President: Farewell to Wonderland

BY MEREDITH DOWELL



Meredith poses with her grey, Turbo  
(photo by Balance Pet Photography)

Seven years ago this week, a big skinny white dog named Sendahl Boss ran his first race at Wonderland Greyhound Park in Revere, Mass. The race was what was known as a maiden and designed to see if he was good enough to run in real races and qualify for the lowest rung at the track, grade D. There were six other dogs in that race, the 11th on the card. Sendahl Boss broke from the 1 box and finished his 550 yard race two lengths behind the winner, Allmuud, and a half length behind the second place finisher, Che Mar Joel. Behind him were Blind River, Brouhaha, KL Dagwood and Clever Outlook. The winning time was 31.10 seconds and Boss' time was 31.25.

Boss didn't better the time of his first race until his last race in June 2003, when he ran the same distance, placing 7th, in 31.24. The track record for that distance, which still stands today, is 29.50 seconds, held by Bacnine, a handsome red brindle boy with a massive chest and a 17 race win streak. In the world of greyhound racing, 1.75 seconds separates an 18 month old puppy from a stakes winning, record holding greyhound who went on to sire 85 of his own puppies (at least two of whom Greyhound Welfare eventually placed). Say it with me, "One-Mississippi, Two-Mississippi..." That's the difference between a stakes winner and puppy maiden.

The winner of that race seven years ago, Allmuud, finished out his career with 109 races, eventually grading off at Caliente in Mexico. Boss ran another

18 races, winning only one and never advancing beyond Grade D, the lowest level at Wonderland. He had a very bad habit in that he always wanted to go wide, costing precious time and distance. He was keen, if not adept. His kennel decided that no matter how much Boss wanted to run, he just wasn't good enough to compete, and so he was sent to Seabrook Greyhound Park in New Hampshire and landed in the REGAP adoption kennel. In July 2003, he was put on a hauler to Maryland and as I write is curled up on my couch while my husband vainly tries to wipe the mud off his paws after a rainy backyard romp.

Boss, now Turbo, returned to Wonderland twice after his retirement. Both times, he was eager to get back on the track, but was hindered by lameness from his corns. He was allowed to be leash walked on the track and as he did, he trembled in excitement, his attention riveted to the rail, looking for Swifty, the lure. This past summer, he was finally able to run on a track again, though he ran at Raynham, a track at which he was never good enough to compete during his short career as a professional athlete. After his fun run sprint, it was nearly impossible to pull him away from the track apron. He planted his legs and pointed back to the gate, insisting on a second turn which he could not have.

After seventy-four years of operation, Wonderland ran its last race card in September. Many great dogs ran there, including hall of famers Rural Rube, OK Troy, and Rooster Cogburn, as well as a skinny white dog named Sendahl Boss. Although Wonderland will continue simulcasting horse and greyhound racing, there will be no more live racing. Bacnine's record will forever stand and I can honestly say that my dog was within 2 seconds of a track record, never mind that he never got out of the lowest racing grade and the closest he ever got to Swifty was 6 years post retirement after Swifty was won in an auction. One Mississippi, Two Mississippi... ■

### Greyhound Welfare Board of Directors

Don Spellmann  
CHAIR

Meredith Dowell  
VICE-CHAIR

Rikki Tate  
TREASURER

Eliza Cioccarei  
SECRETARY

Jen Boyd-Morin  
DIRECTOR

### Officers/Coordinators

Meredith Dowell  
PRESIDENT & MEDICAL COORDINATOR

Jen Boyd-Morin  
FOSTER COORDINATOR

Rikki Tate  
ADOPTION COORDINATOR

Jenny Glenn  
EVENT COORDINATOR

Nichole Zurgable  
SCREENING COORDINATOR

Cynthia Wilber  
TRAINING TEAM COORDINATOR

Ryan Hansen  
FOLLOW-UP COORDINATOR

Vacant  
VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

*The Skinny on Greyhound Welfare is a quarterly publication of Greyhound Welfare.*

**Greyhound Welfare** is a greyhound rescue and placement group serving the metropolitan Washington D.C area (Maryland, Virginia and DC) and parts of New England (Massachusetts, Rhode Island and New Hampshire). Greyhound Welfare is a 100% foster home group, which means that all our greyhounds live in real homes until they are placed. This helps us teach the dogs about their new world, and learn more about the individual dogs. Knowing our dogs well helps us greatly with our placement success.

### Newsletter Staff

Tina Carlsen, MANAGING EDITOR

Paige Davis, GRAPHIC DESIGNER

Brenda Currin, WRITER

Additional contributions by  
GW adopters and friends.

*To submit story and photo ideas, please send an email to [twostickdogs@verizon.net](mailto:twostickdogs@verizon.net)*

*There's More to Hiking, continued from page 1*

**Colonial Estates**

A few colonial estates in our region allow dogs on the grounds and provide a new way to explore our nation's earliest history at a slower pace. **Gunston Hall**, historic home to George Mason, is currently working to restore the gardens and grounds to their original, 18<sup>th</sup> century design. Walk through the formal gardens, explore the archaeological projects uncovering the original support buildings for the plantation, or take a wandering walk towards the banks of the Potomac through the open fields. At **Mount Vernon**, enjoy a leisurely hike through the outbuildings near the manor, stroll along the Potomac from the Grist Mill to the manor, or keep to the gardens and farm animals along the green. **River Farm**, home of the American Horticultural Society, provides over 25 acres of meadows, woodland, and formal gardens for easy strolling. These locations have relatively level hiking areas and are excellent for new or beginner-level hikers.

**Civil War Battlefields**

For more experienced hikers, **Manassas Battlefield** offers two longer-ranging hikes with moderate elevation changes. The trails follow the major points for the first and second battles in the area. Shorter hikes through fields and woods are available starting from the visitors' center. **Antietam Battlefield** offers shorter and easier hikes while learning about the deadliest Civil War battle. Join up with a park ranger for the outdoor portion of the battlefield tour to gain a first-hand



Abbey, Banshee Reeks Nature Preserve (photo by Alana Groshong)

perspective of why this battle turned into such a tragedy for both sides.

**Regional & State Parks**

There are numerous state and regional parks in our area that allow leashed dogs on their trails. In Maryland and Virginia, most state parks are open to leashed dogs with numerous miles of trails. Both states have comprehensive websites for their state park systems. At **Bull Run Regional Park**, a short 2-mile hike along the Blue Bell trail is wonderful in early Spring for the flowers and equally wonderful in the Fall for changing foliage. **Claude Moore Park** is an oasis of calm in

the busy outer suburbs. Walk along the ancient Vestals Gaps trail which has been a migration route for animals and humans for over 10,000 years and explore the archaeological/preservation work of the 17/18<sup>th</sup> century farm. Recently, **Banshee Reeks Nature Preserve** in Loudoun County has opened its grounds on the weekends. With over 20 miles of clearly-marked trails, visitors can enjoy a wide range of hiking through forests and fields. Volunteers at the Preserve provide lectures and activities about preservation efforts on alternating weekends.

**Arboretums**

The **National Arboretum** allows leashed dogs and provides opportunities for hikers to learn about plants while taking easy walks on paved trails. Dogs visiting the National Arboretum are not allowed off the trails. Further west, the **Virginia State Arboretum** is a perfect late Spring destination to enjoy their collection of dogwood trees in full bloom. During the Summer and Fall, explore their wild fields for off-trail hiking.

**Online Resources**

Mid-Atlantic hiking group, Running Hounds: <http://pets.groups.yahoo.com/group/runninghounds/>  
Website with books and hiking lists: <http://www.hikewithyourdog.com/>  
Pet First Aid: <http://www.greatfallsanimalhospital.com/emergencyprep.html>

**Greyt Bites**

BY BONNIE ANDERSEN

**Easy Grain-Free Treats**

*This recipe can be made as-is or you can substitute ground turkey or ground chicken for the ground beef. If you have a dog that doesn't do well with dairy, like Ezzy, try lactose-free cottage cheese, sweet potatoes or pumpkin. A taste-test proved that this yummy treat is enjoyed by both dogs and cats. They also freeze well.*

**Ingredients**

- 1/2 pound ground beef—uncooked
- 1/4 cup chicken broth
- 1/3 cup black beans, cooked—mashed
- 1/3 cup cottage cheese

Mix ground meat and chicken broth in a bowl. Add the black beans and cottage cheese. Mix all of the ingredients together thoroughly. Shape the mixture into bones or squares and place on a cookie sheet. You can make them big or little. Bake for 45 minutes in a 375 degree oven. Let cool.

BY DON SPELLMANN

### Crime and Punishment

We all have a long list of things we don't want our hounds to do. Don't chase the cat, don't steal food off the counter, don't chew up our favorite shoes, don't bark when the delivery person rings the

doorbell, don't jump up on us when we come home from work, don't pee on the Oriental rug. The list goes on and on. As Patricia McConnell observes in *The Other End of the Leash*, "there are an infinite number of things your dog can do wrong."

These undesirable behaviors are instinctive and self-rewarding for the dog—triggering their prey drive, delivering the thrill of the chase, hunting (and scoring) food, chewing and entertainment, receiving human contact and attention, and feeling physical comfort and relief. These behaviors can be difficult to address because, as Jean Donaldson stated in *The Culture Clash*, dogs are amoral (by not distinguishing right vs. wrong, only safe vs. dangerous) and self-interested (having no desire to please us). Compounding things, the cop usually is not walking the beat when these crimes occur, out of the room or away from home, and fails to catch the perpetrator in the act.

How do we stop these unwanted behaviors? Is the best strategy to patiently stake out our hound, out of sight but ready to pounce (and punish) the moment the infraction occurs? Or, if we can't catch them red handed, can we effectively get our message across by correcting the behavior well after the fact? Feeling our wrath of disapproval, is our dog showing guilt and remorse for his bad act when he lowers his head, avoids eye contact, and slinks around the room? Or, as Donaldson and McConnell assert, is the dog simply trying to avoid our wrath?

When it comes to dog behavior, an ounce of prevention is well worth a pound of cure. Undesirable behaviors are much easier to avoid in the first instance. Once our dogs have committed these acts and find them rewarding, their bad behavior is reinforced, they are more likely to repeat them, and the behavior



Topaz (photo by Don Spellmann)

becomes entrenched. Dogs do what works. If they don't get anything out of it, they won't repeat the behavior.

In *Positive Perspectives*, Pat Miller presents a three-part plan to address your dog's undesirable behaviors. Start by rephrasing your list of don't do's into a list of behaviors you want. You want your dog to pee in the yard and on walks. You want your dog to chew on bully sticks. And you want your dog to greet you politely.

Next, manage your dog's actions to prevent him from being rewarded for engaging in undesirable behaviors. Only give your dog free time in the house after he has come back from a walk or trip in the yard. Make sure his walks are long and productive enough so that he won't have any physical need to go in the house. Don't leave food unattended on the counter. When the cat is out and about, keep the dog on leash. When you can't monitor his every move, put him in the crate. When he jumps up on you, immediately turn your back and walk away, denying any attention or contact until he stands calmly.

Last, train your dog by making the behaviors you want more rewarding for her than the unwanted behaviors. When she pees in the yard, celebrate with lots of praise and yummy treats.

When you arrive home, don't greet and pet her until she stands calmly or does a sit or down. Likewise, teach her that her food arrives in front of her only when she sits or goes down. Once your dog consistently performs the behaviors you want, and her bad behavior consistently goes without reward or reinforcement, the need for managing her every move will diminish.

This all sounds simple and straightforward. But, you say, it requires work on your part and it won't produce instant results. Further, it doesn't answer your question about what to do when your dog slips up and commits a crime, particularly when you catch him in the act. In McConnell's experience, "people usually get physical with their dogs when the dogs do something 'wrong.'" She found: "Most of my clients who hit or shook their dogs honestly didn't know what else to do." McConnell analogizes this situation to rapping a child's hand in school when she gives the wrong answer: The physical response "may make the child afraid of making a mistake, but it doesn't do anything to teach her the right answer." Moreover, the dog (and the child) may not even understand the reason for the punishment, particularly if you do not deliver the punishment precisely when the bad

story continues bottom of page 8

## Beckett's Big Move

BY ELIZ PALAIMA

In late August, a week or two before we were set to move from Boston to Minnesota, Beckett had to know something was going on. He had a spiffy new tag collar with his new contact info, and instead of his metal crate he was staying in his travel crate. If that didn't tip him off, there was the fact that **all** of our stuff was gone.

A week before the move, the moving truck was loaded with all of my worldly possessions and most of Beckett's. It wasn't until I had to carry everything down three narrow flights of stairs to the truck, that I realized how much of my stuff was actually dog stuff; dog bed, bowls, food, coats, treats, muzzle, nail clippers, tooth brush, medicine, bathing supplies, not to mention the greyhound-sized metal crate and two boxes of toys.

On move day my Honda CRV was packed with all the essentials: Beckett's favorite toy, soft bedding, a jar of peanut butter, Kongs, veterinary paperwork, treats, water, travel crate, dog waste removal bags, and as many of my things as I could manage to squeeze in. Beckett did surprisingly well for a dog who has done 90 percent of his traveling by train. He settled down surprisingly fast on the road trip, enjoying the ride.

Finding dog-friendly motels wasn't as hard as I had thought. I was glad I had the AAA dog-friendly guide and a travel crate. Even though we made frequent stops and we gave lots of treats, toward the end of each day we resorted to using bribery in the form of a Kong loaded with peanut butter to get Beckett in the car.

Our ride was estimated at 23 hours of driving, but with stops, traffic and construction, it took more like 30. We arrived late at night. I was tired, hungry and grumpy. Beckett was worse. This is when the real adventure began. Beckett was going through a turmoil of emotions that apparently he could only express by non-stop barking. Nothing seemed to hamper his vocalization. Using the same methods suggested when you first adopt, we started crating. A new place needs familiar

rules and nothing is more familiar to a greyhound than a crate.

As heart wrenching as it was to hear him, it was even harder for me to ignore him. Experience has taught me that giving him any attention, including going in the room with him, comforting him, even raising my voice when he is barking, whining, or sounding like he is about to be eaten by fire ants, makes the situation worse. Ignoring him until he is calm and quiet will work, as long as I don't die of heartbreak or sleep deprivation.

Beckett, my lovable big dog, was now Beckett-the-Destroyer-and-Preventer-of-Sleep. Beckett

*story continues on page 6*



Beckett (photo by Eliz Palaima)

### Tips for Being on the Move

#### Before the Move

- ▶ Get tags with your new information. Think in terms of the worst case scenario such as your dog getting loose on the road.
- ▶ Have all your medical needs ready including first aid kit, picture of your pooch, veterinary records and medications. Be sure that all vaccinations are up-to-date.
- ▶ Plan out your route and have a list of pet-friendly motels along the way. Call ahead to check availability and confirm any pet policies. Some places have restrictions based on the time of year, size of the dog, or require that the dog be crated.
- ▶ Re-read the "About your Greyhound" guide and have a plan ready to handle any problems that might arise once you move (house training, vocalization, and/or aggression).

#### On the Road

- ▶ Be especially vigilant about safety. Check that your dog's collars are properly fitted. They can loosen over time.
- ▶ Stop frequently for a quick walk, a drink of water and/or potty break.
- ▶ Treats like bully sticks or Kongs can help them pass the time during longer trips.
- ▶ Be careful about the temperature. In the car it can easily get too hot or too cold.

#### The New Place

- ▶ Don't wait to start work on training. The sooner the better!
- ▶ Use the crate as a transition tool. Not only does it keep your dog from being overwhelmed, but it also keeps them safe in the melee of boxes and moving.
- ▶ Save praise and reinforcement for when he is calm and behaving. Keep some of his food portioned out every day to make sure you're rewarding your pup enough, and reward for any behavior that is simply not wrong. You might want to try associating good things such as kibble, treats and toys with all the new sights, smells and sounds.
- ▶ Keep things slow. Baby gates can help you to introduce your dog to a room at a time.
- ▶ Keep a rigid routine. Incorporating longer walks into your routine can help a dog deal with the stress of being in a new place.
- ▶ Be proactive. Don't wait for a problem to develop. Work on basic training, crate training, walking on a leash, separation anxiety, vocalization, house training and socialization.
- ▶ Don't wait to ask for help. The GW yahoo group is a great resource and is a great place to ask about potential trainers, classes, books, veterinary care and more.

## Keep Your Pup Safe on Halloween

BY TINA CARLSEN

Halloween can be fun for the whole family. However, the night can be filled with many potential dangers and sources of stress for your dog. The following are some tips to beware of.

### Food and Drinks

Candy, especially chocolate, can be toxic to your dog. Keep food wrappers away from your dog. They can cause choking, an upset tummy or a gastrointestinal blockage. Party snacks may contain ingredients that can poison your dog. Alcohol also poses a significant risk of severe illness or even death. Keep all of these out of your dog's reach. Consider confining your pet to another area of your home during a party to avoid accidents.

### Decorations

Your hound is bound to be curious about new objects around the house, including Halloween decorations. Ensure decorations are not in areas where your dog could bump into them or eat them. Power cords can trip your dog or lead to electrical shock if chewed.

### Costumes

Some dogs enjoy getting dressed up in costumes. Other dogs can become scared or uncomfortable. If you want to dress your dog up, start simple and see how your dog handles it. If your dog does not like it, try a Halloween bandanna or collar. If your dog likes getting dressed up, choose a costume that fits comfortably. If it is too tight, it can cut off circulation or cause chaff-



Ruby enjoys getting dressed up for Halloween (photo courtesy of Daniel Black)

ing. Loose-fitting outfits can trip your dog or get caught on objects around the house. Never leave your dog unattended in the costume.

### Trick-or-Treaters

The constant ringing of the doorbell may get your dog over-excited or stressed out. Take extra precautions for Halloween. Though many dogs love visitors, some can become fearful of people in costumes. Keep your dog at a distance when greeting trick-or-treaters by putting up a baby

gate or confining your dog to another area of the home. Consider crating, which can make your dog feel more secure and reduce chances of accidental escape. Provide chew toys, a favorite blanket, a piece of clothing with your scent on it, or whatever comforts your dog. Play soft music or a recording of soothing sounds.

By taking these precautions, your whole family can enjoy this spooky night. ■

### Beckett's Big Move, continued from page 5

decimated his toys, his crate, anything within reach — all without a moment of silence. I needed advice. GW people came through for me. We re-positioned his crate, added a new crate upstairs, played some music, and concentrated on training. Not only separation training, but the usual sit, stay and down. The training helped Beckett to adjust. After interrogating, I mean interviewing, several trainers in the area, as well as asking the GW

people for some advice, we signed Beckett up for a clicker training (a type of positive reinforcement training) class. The difference was amazing. In less than a month, Beckett has almost completely adjusted (although we are still working on his separation training).

Problems like vocalization are never easy to deal with, especially when you are the one going

through it and particularly when you're sleep-deprived. Remember with patience and help from our GW friends, you will get through the tough times and enjoy your life with your furry couch potato. ■

## Greyhound Medical Idiosyncrasies

BY MEREDITH DOWELL

In December 2005, my greyhound, Turbo, came up lame on his back left leg. We couldn't figure out what was wrong and went through three vets, including an orthopedist, a veterinary physical therapist, acupuncturist and chiropractor, several x-rays, and an MRI (and more than \$3,000) with no answers. By December 2006, nearly out of my mind with frustration, I drove four-and-a-half hours to Wheeling, West Virginia to see the wonderful Dr. James Radcliffe who diagnosed Turbo with a corn. A corn.

Leave it to a greyhound to get corns, because no other breed does and most vets have no idea what they look like or what to do with them. Thank goodness I now have a fantastic vet who knows all the little idiosyncrasies greyhounds may present and what to do (or not to do) about them. So what does the average greyhound adopter need to be aware of?

### Corns

See above. According to Dr. Radcliffe, 80 percent of all greyhound lameness originates in the feet. Though Turbo's corn was not visible at the time, Dr. Radcliffe did what few small-animal vets would have thought to do: a nerve block, starting in the suspect toe. Nerve blocks are common in diagnosing lameness in horses, but most small-animal vets would not think to use them to diagnose lameness in a greyhound. Dr. Radcliffe told me that vets should treat greyhounds like horses when looking at lameness – it'll make diagnoses much more simple because the athletic build of greyhounds has much in common with that of athletic horses and they share many of the same sports-related injuries. Dr. Radcliffe, by the way, sees many of the greyhounds who race at Wheeling Island. He is an orthopedic specialist and recognized sighthound expert. It's safe to say, he knows that of which he speaks.

### Blood Values

While greyhounds have most of the same blood values as non-greyhounds, there are several areas in which they differ and of which your vet should be aware. Greyhounds tend to run higher in red blood cells (RBC), packed cell volume (PCV) and hemoglobin concentrations, and lower in white blood cells (WBC) and platelets than non-greyhounds. This is not cause for alarm and most vets are aware of the difference. Markedly low platelets are a cause for concern and may be indicative of a tick-borne disease (see below). According to the Ohio State University Greyhound Health and Wellness program: "It has been recognized for over 3 decades that Greyhounds have higher sodium, chloride, and bilirubin concentrations and higher AST activities than non-Greyhound dogs. Recently, it was also recognized that Greyhounds have higher bicarbonate and creatinine concentrations, and lower protein and globulin concentrations than non-Greyhound dogs." Blood Urea Nitrogen (BUN) may also be slightly increased. OSU is working on publishing in a peer-reviewed journal a summary of greyhound "normals" which should be very valuable for veterinarians with greyhound patients. Since creatinine in particular runs high and BUN may also show some elevation, greyhounds are frequently misdiagnosed with kidney problems. Any time kidney disease is suspected based on blood results, your vet should follow up with a complete urinalysis to ensure that the specific gravity is in the correct range.

### Thyroid

Many greyhounds have been misdiagnosed with hypothyroidism. This is because greyhound T4 ranges are often below measurable amounts. In order to correctly diagnose a suspected low thyroid, a full panel, including TSH, should be run, preferably through dialysis at Michigan State University. Hypothyroidism should be diagnosed based on a full panel with TSH taken into account, not solely based on a low T4 reading, or, as has happened in some cases, based on bald thighs alone. Greyhounds who truly are hypothyroid should present other symptoms, such as bilateral hair loss along the stomach and sides, thighs and throat, poor skin and coat condition



A Corn

and/or lethargy (not to be confused with general greyhound laziness).

### Tick-Borne Diseases

Although less prevalent than in the past, tick-borne diseases (TBDs) are a very real threat to greyhound health. Many vets do not realize how much racing greyhounds may travel, thus increasing their chances for exposure to ticks that are typically found only in certain areas of the country. For example, my dog was whelped in Oklahoma and raced in Massachusetts before settling in Maryland. Many greyhounds are whelped in the Midwest and travel from track to track. Therefore, a vet should test for all potential TBDs, not just TBDs that may be prevalent locally. An excellent source for TBD testing is North Carolina State University (NCSU), generally considered to be the gold standard for TBD testing. A good secondary source is Protatek Labs in Arizona, however, any positive babesia results diagnosed by that lab should be re-tested, preferably through NCSU.

### Cancer

It is well known that greyhounds have a high rate of cancer, second only to Golden Retrievers. Approximately 50 percent of all racing greyhounds will suffer terminal cancer, and of those cases, 80 percent will have osteosarcoma (bone cancer, also known as OSA). Two primary locations where OSA presents in greyhounds are the proximal radius (near the wrist) and the distal femur (the femur bone near the stifle, or knee). One should be wary of any diagnoses of an ACL tear as greyhounds generally have fantastic

*story continues on page 8*

*Idiosyncracies, continued from page 7*

knees and aren't as prone to ACL tears as Labrador Retrievers or German Shepherd Dogs, for example. ACL tears certainly can and do happen in greyhounds, but there has been more than one instance of a greyhound with OSA being misdiagnosed with an ACL tear, thus costing valuable time. It should be noted that while cancer is fairly rampant in the breed, OSA doesn't often attack younger dogs (though it certainly can). If you have a three-year-old dog who comes up lame, cancer should not be the first consideration – it's more likely to be a ligament or tendon sprain, old racing injury or a corn. Still, any lameness and/or swelling, particularly in the wrist or knee, should be investigated thoroughly if it doesn't resolve after rest and treatment with NSAIDs.

**Racing Injuries**

Very often dogs are retired from the racetrack due to injury, such as dropped muscles or broken hocks. The hock is the boney part of the back leg that points backwards. Dropped muscles have a strange appearance, but they are not painful for the dog after the initial swelling and bruising goes away, and they have no long term effect on the dog's quality of life. A dropped muscle is essentially a muscle (commonly, the inner thigh) that has torn away from the ligament and looks like a knot or bunch. Because greyhounds have such a thin hair coat, dropped muscles are easy to spot, but some vets may have never seen one unless they commonly treat athletic or working dogs. Greyhounds may also have old bowed ten-

dons and knocked-up and dropped toes. Generally, keeping your dog fit and at a good weight with well-trimmed nails will ensure that you do not further exacerbate or re-aggravate these old injuries. Broken hocks may have been surgically repaired and the dog may have hardware in place. This is usually a plate with screws that was inserted to stabilize the bones until they healed. Occasionally, a dog may reject the hardware and the hardware will have to be removed. It's best to go to an orthopedic specialist for this type of surgery, should it be necessary.

**Resources for you and your vet**

Your relationship with your vet should be a partnership in your pets' care. If you have a vet who is already greyhound savvy, then great! However, if there is not a greyhound-savvy vet near you, you can provide your vet with some really wonderful resources. Greyhounds are a fortunate breed in that they have a dedicated group of owners and veterinarians and assistance is always available when diagnosing and dealing with some of their little quirks.

- ▶ OSU – any time your vet is uncertain of a diagnosis, he or she should feel free to contact the Greyhound Health & Wellness Program at the Ohio State University. They offer free telephone/email consults with greyhound owners and vets. <http://www.vet.ohiostate.edu/1871.htm>
- ▶ Greyvets Yahoo! Group – There is a Yahoo!

Listserve for greyhound vets (Greyvets). Encourage your vet to join. Email traffic on the listserve is not particularly heavy, but your vet can share experiences and get assistance and consultation from other vets experienced in greyhounds.

- ▶ Care of the Racing and Retired Greyhound – A wonderful book by Drs. Linda Blythe, James Gannon, Morrie Craig and Desmond Fegan which includes tons on information about greyhound health and medical issues, including common racing injuries and how to treat them and what to expect as your hound ages. Available from the American Greyhound Council and the National Greyhound Association as well as through some greyhound adoption groups such as Greyhounds of Eastern Michigan (GEM).
- ▶ North Carolina State University – For tick-borne-disease testing, including PCR tests, NCSU is the gold standard. <http://www.cvm.ncsu.edu/vth/ticklab.html>
- ▶ Michigan State University – The gold standard in thyroid testing. <http://www.animalhealth.msu.edu>
- ▶ If you have a vet who has never treated corns before, Grassmere Animal Hospital has a great pictorial guide, as well as lots of other useful greyhound medical info: <http://www.grassmere-animal-hospital.com/greyhounds.htm>

*Crime and Punishment, continued from page 4*

act occurs. Finally, using physical punishment will only harm your relationship, cause your dog to fear you, and increase the likelihood of your dog responding aggressively towards you.

So, what if when you see your dog grab your slipper and run for the bedroom, you scream "no, bad dog" and run after her? The problem, McConnell notes, is that "saying no doesn't tell a dog what to do." Moreover, running after her only reinforces her bad behavior, by turning the theft into a fun game of chase. And your dog's payback for relinquishing the slipper is the cessation of play. When your dog barks at the door and you respond by yelling "shut up," the dog simply thinks you are joining in the barking with him, a sure sign of ap-

proval. And, as much as you want to scream and yell when you spot your girl squatting on your imported rug, doing so unintentionally will teach her that it's dangerous to eliminate in the house when you are home, but safe when you are out.

Instead of resorting to physical or verbal punishment, the next time your dog does something wrong, McConnell (and Donaldson and Miller) recommend interrupting the undesirable behavior and redirecting your dog to do what you want instead. When she grabs your shoe, snatch up her favorite (and loudest) squeaky toy, squeal in delight, and run the other direction, squeaking the whole way. When she comes to you, be sure she knows she won the jackpot, showering her with

her favorite treats. And, if you catch him peeing in the house, say "uh, oh," hitch on his leash, and lead him outside. Once he goes outside, immediately deliver excited delight and extra special treats. Failure to mark her successes only will reduce the odds of you redirecting her the next time. In sum, if you make the desired behavior highly rewarding for your dog, and combine that with your new policy that crime doesn't pay, both you and your dog will be much happier. As for that rolled-up newspaper you had at the ready, Miller suggests you use it "to smack yourself in the head three times, while repeating, 'I will supervise the [dog] more closely.'" ■

## Spotlight on Greyhounds Reach the Beach at Dewey, 2009

What did you/your dog enjoy most about the Greyhounds Reach the Beach gathering at Dewey this year?



Jasper (photo by Paige Clulow)



Breeze stretches her toes in the sand.



Gary Decker escorts four GW dogs onto the beach. Tehya (brindle girl on left), Breeze (grey brindle girl adopted by Jim and Kathy Owens), Cian (black boy in back) and Kiaba (brindle boy laying down) enjoy the sun and sand.

"Our trip from Baltimore to Dewey was Jasper's first EVER beach experience! Although the crowds of Grey aficionados and herds of hounds were a delightful spectacle, our fondest memory occurred when we literally reached the beach. When Jasper's paws touched the surf, he glanced across the ocean for the first time, and his tail began wagging in the most gargantuan circles. He glanced back at us with that "special look" we've learned means "I'm about to freak." Sure enough, he proceeded to execute the most graceful gazelle-like maneuvers and 360 spins we've yet to witness in the nearly three months we've had him! It was a joy to see him so happy and free, inspired by the natural elements." — Paige Clulow

"The dogs enjoy meeting other dogs, walking on the beach, sleeping at the restaurants while we eat and drink, getting all of the attention of all of the people, getting new toys, treats, coats, collars (well the collar and coat thing is more for us humans) and mainly sleeping! All that excitement wears them out. Many like the water and surf too." — Nichole Zurgable



Breeze and Kiaba enjoy the sunshine.



GW dogs enjoy being roomies.



Cian enjoys the cool sand in the hole he dug at Que Pasa.



Trixie, adopted by Eliza, enjoys the surf. (photo by Nichole Zurgable)

## Fall 2009 Photo Contest Winners: Black Dogs

Thanks to everyone who emailed or posted photos as part of our photo contest. For all of the photo contest entries, visit Yahoo! Groups GW Adopter site. Look in the photos folder, *Newsletter Fall 2009*. Get out those cameras and watch your email for announcements about upcoming photo contests!



**First Place Winner:** Tobin (photo courtesy of Lauren Ulm)



**Third Place Winner:**  
Xander (photo courtesy of Rebekah Cain)



**Second Place Winner:** Zuni (photo courtesy of PJ Anderer)



**Honorable Mention:**  
Inky (photo courtesy of Elizabeth Palma)

## Fall 2009 Photo Contest Outtakes



Onyx (photo courtesy of Kim Morrow and Cindy Fox)



Boca (photo courtesy of Carla Boucher)



Cian (photo courtesy of Nichole Zurgable)



Cian (photo courtesy of Nichole Zurgable)



Enza (photo courtesy of Nichole W.)