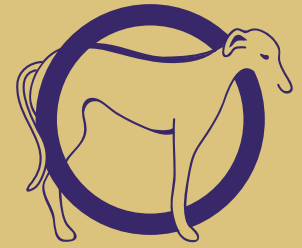


# THE Skinny

on Greyhound Welfare



VOL. 1, EDITION 3, SUMMER 2009

## GW Dog Races to Stardom

BY BRENDA CURRIN

If you have the 2009 BrownTrout Greyhounds calendar (the one sold at stores like PetsMart and Petco), you had one of Greyhound Welfare's own gracing your wall all through the month of March. Roxy (UMR Dolly), the pretty brindle featured in the calendar, was adopted through GW in October 2005 by Meiyee Apple Tam, now an aspiring actress in sunny southern California.

Roxy went from the typical retirement life of napping, toys and treats to the bright lights of the camera shortly after moving to Los Angeles in 2007. Meiyee had seen a show on Oxygen about Le Paws, a dog talent agency, and within two months of the move, Roxy had an agent.

"I wanted to be an actor, and figured she could do the same thing. She got an agent before I did," Meiyee said.

Already Roxy has appeared along with Meiyee as an extra on ABC-TV's "Ugly Betty," in music videos and student films and recently was featured in



Calendar girl, Roxy, strikes a pose.  
(photo by Paw Prince)



Roxy got an agent before Meiyee did.  
(photo by Paw Prince)

a print ad for World Floor Covering Association. She's also auditioned for several dog food commercials and for the TV show "America's Top Dog."

"Just like any actor, you audition for lots and lots of things and you only actually book a few of them," Meiyee explained.

By now you might be thinking – 'hey, my hound is adorable and should be famous too.' So how do you turn a retired racing greyhound into a star? First you need to ask yourself whether or not your dog is patient and pays attention to commands.

"They want really obedient dogs that can do their job, just like a human," Meiyee said. "As long as your dog is well trained, can put up with flashing lights, is patient, pretty, and can do commands off leash and outside, then any dog can be on camera."

Then, your dog will need headshots and training for his/her new career. Roxy's photos were taken by a specialty dog photographer in California, and she went through seven weeks of "set training" to learn the tricks and commands that she needs to know in front of the camera. She had

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to learn to stop at her "mark" (a spot on the floor), to bark on command, and to put her head up or down, as well as all the other basic dog commands.

And of course it doesn't hurt if your dog is attractive. "Roxy, to me, is the ideal looking female greyhound. She's perfectly proportioned, and even though we know it's common, lots of other people don't know that brindle is a normal coloring for dogs, so it's unique to others," Meiyee said.

So the next time you see a greyhound on TV, in a magazine or in a movie, take a second look – it might be someone you know. ■

## Letter from the President: Dog Days of Summer

BY MEREDITH DOWELL



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

Given the heat and humidity lately, it's fair to say that summer has fallen upon the Mid-Atlantic region. I have even heard rumors of sun sightings in New England, so warm weather may arrive there soon. As the temperature and humidity rise, we have to be wary of its effect on our greyhounds.

You may say, my dog raced in Florida, he's fine with the heat. The truth is, your dog spent approximately five minutes at a time outside in the heat: three while being led out of an air conditioned kennel to a starting box, one while waiting to run, running for 32 seconds, and then rounded up and led back to a cooling area where he was hosed off and cooled down before returning to the air conditioned kennel. Five minutes of heat exposure does not a heat-acclimated greyhound make.

Heat can be brutal on our muscle-packed friends. Their physique does not allow them to cool off quickly and it doesn't take long to overheat, even in temperatures we may find moderate. Some greyhounds can be even more prone than others to overheating, so we must be particularly diligent. If your dog does have an incident of hyperthermia, he will be more susceptible to future episodes. Here's what to look for and what to do if your dog does overheat.

### Signs of heat exhaustion/hyperthermia include:

- ▶ Excessive panting sometimes accompanied with gasping for air and excessive salivation (at the heat stroke stage, however, the mouth will be dry)
- ▶ Dizziness or weaving when walking

- ▶ Will not rise after collapsing or lying down
- ▶ Unconsciousness
- ▶ Elevated internal temperature (a dog's normal temperature is between 100 and 101 degrees, temperatures of 104 or above are very serious).
- ▶ Dark pink or red flush in the ear flaps
- ▶ Elevated pulse
- ▶ Bloody vomit or diarrhea

### What you should do, according to the American Red Cross Pet First Aid manual:

- ▶ Immediately get the dog into air conditioning and check for signs of shock
- ▶ Cool the dog by rinsing with cool water then placing in front of a fan, if possible. You may also use cold compresses or water soaked towels to the head, throat, belly and between the thighs against the femoral arteries.
- ▶ Give the dog cool (but not iced) water to drink
- ▶ Once internal temperature has been reduced to 104 F or below, get your dog to the vet

Untreated heat exhaustion can lead to heat stroke and death. It can also cause disseminated intravascular coagulation (DIC), which often leads to death. The heat is nothing to play with when it comes to greyhounds, so it's best to avoid any possibility of heat exhaustion.

### Some simple measures will keep your dog safe:

- ▶ Do not exercise in the heat of the day
- ▶ Keep walks short on hot and humid days
- ▶ Wet your pup down if he looks hot (you can carry a little spray bottle with you on walks)
- ▶ Never leave your dog in a parked car; cracked windows won't cut it

Finally, something that many folks forget about during the hot months is that pavement can really get hot and actually burn your dog's feet. Put your bare foot on the pavement – if it's too hot for you, it's too hot for your dog.

Happy summer everyone and stay cool! ■

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*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.

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CORNER

BY DON SPELLMANN  
CHAIR, GREYHOUND WELFARE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**What's a Hound to Do?  
Life Outside the Crate**

A common objective for adopters is to quickly reduce the time their new hound spends in the crate. We may see putting the crate away for good as an early goal and an important

rite of passage, much like our parents taking the training wheels off of our first bike. But, just like the child who may have been in too much of a hurry to remove the training wheels and now finds herself on a suddenly unstable bike, your hound can be nervous, uncomfortable, and frequently fail if you allow her to roam freely in your home without first providing her the necessary guidance and structure of those training wheels.

The crate is an effective tool to manage your greyhound's time and behavior. It is a very safe, secure, and familiar den. Activity is constrained, decisions and choices are few, and he knows the risks and rewards of his behavior. For example, eliminating provides immediate physical relief, but long-term discomfort from a soiled bed. Crating also gives the adopter peace of mind. You know the chocolate chip cookies can rest safely on the counter, and the heirloom rug will not be used as a chew toy. The crate is the ultimate baby sitter; it does all the work, and it's always there whenever you need it. At the same time, the crate can become a crutch, in that it allows you to manage your hound without any training or guidance.

So, what happens when you let your hound out of the crate? What choices and decisions will he make? Will the rewards he anticipates align with your desired behaviors? That depends on whether you let him decide on his own rules and boundaries, or whether you proactively provide him with the structure, boundaries, and guidance that the crate had provided before.

When your hound is out of the crate, the choices for her are limitless, the physical boundaries are few, and so many enticing pleasures present themselves. The chair leg is ever present for gnawing, pooping in the upstairs bedroom provides immediate relief without fouling her dog



Journey asks what he's supposed to do outside of the crate. (photo by Don Spellmann)

bed downstairs, and those chocolate chip cookies are hers for the taking. She could choose to howl like a Banshee because she's anxious from searching the whole house for you. Or, serendipity, if you're lucky, she could just decide to sleep the day away quietly on her dog bed.

So, what can you do to make sure your hound behaves outside the crate the way you want and expect? Designate her spot to settle, provide direction, establish boundaries, provide structured interaction, and, in all cases, make all the decisions for her. Only then can she succeed at living outside of the crate without falling off the behavioral bicycle.

**Designate Her Spot.** Establish the one spot in your home where you want her to settle when she is out of the crate. Lead her to her assigned place (like a dog bed in the family room), ask for a down, praise when she responds and give her a treat. If she doesn't know commands yet, sit on a chair or couch next to her spot, use the leash to keep her from wandering, and wait for her to go down on the bed, then praise and reward her when she does so. With repetition and consistency, she soon will learn on her own that this is where she goes to settle. Stay with her at first, then work up to leaving the room for longer periods of time. If she follows you or drifts off, lead her right back to her designated spot.

**Direction.** Use the leash to direct your hound

where you want him to go. If it's time for a walk, hitch him up and lead him straight to the door. When you return from the walk, lead him to the water bowl and then back to his bed (or crate). If you are doing things about the house, use a tether to hitch him to your waist, requiring him to go wherever you go (instead of where he might want to go).

**Boundaries.** Make a slow transition from the tight dimensions of the crate to the open expanses of your home. Too much freedom too fast will make him anxious and provide him opportunities to eliminate inside your home or otherwise get into trouble. Thus, in the beginning, contain him to smaller areas of the home, like a family room or living room, by closing off rooms and using baby gates. Teach him which rooms are off-limits by directing him out of that room whenever he tries to enter. Give him time (allow weeks or months) to become comfortable in this space before expanding his horizons.

**Structured interaction.** Use your hound's time out of the crate for structured interaction with you. Do a series of training exercises, like sit, down, stay, come, and wait. Play games with your hound, like tossing squeaky toys. Keep him on the leash while you sit in the family room watching TV or in the study working on the computer. And, when you need him to entertain himself, give him challenging toys, like Tricky Treat Balls, that require him to work for the food to be dispensed.

**No Decisions.** If you make all the decisions for your hound, he will never make a wrong decision or engage in unwanted activities. When he knows you will make all the decisions for him all the time, he will be more content, freed of the anxiety of trying to figure out on his own what he should be doing outside the crate. Once he has shown consistently and reliably that he knows how to behave outside of the crate, he is ready for you to take the training wheels off. But before you put that crate away for good, remember that it's still his safe, secure and familiar den, one that both of you can continue to benefit from having around, even if he only uses it occasionally. ■

## Greyhound Adoption Expo Goes Out with a Bang

STORY AND PHOTOS BY MEREDITH DOWELL



Turbo remembers the jenny pit drill and poses in a race blanket.

Last November, when the voters of Massachusetts passed Question 3 banning greyhound racing in the Commonwealth effective January 1, 2010, Linda Jensen was livid.

It made no sense, she reasoned, to continue with the Greyhound Adoption Expo at the Massachusetts tracks when there would soon be no tracks. In the past, the event had been a three day celebration of retired racers and an opportunity for adopters to see what their dogs' lives were like before they earned their couches. Linda's group, Racing Owners Assisting Racers (ROAR), had always partnered with track management and racing owners and kennels for the free extravaganza, featuring seminars, dinner, lunch, vendors, auctions, raffles, fun runs and track tours. Racing owners and track management had always put the event on with their own money, and even paid for catering for the attendees (one lunch and one dinner). They would even provide breakfast treats (pastries, coffee and juice) for an adoption group to sell with all proceeds going to the group (Greyhound Welfare was the beneficiary at Expo one year). Alas, with the ban on racing set, it seemed Expos were a thing of the past.

When Linda made the announcement on the Greytalk message board, she was met with many

pleading responses, urging her to reconsider and hold one last Expo. Linda relented, consulted with the tracks and racing owners, and, with what must have been non-stop planning, put on one heck of a show that ran from Thursday, June 11 through Sunday, June 14, 2009. This year's Expo took place in three states and included a tour of a working greyhound farm in Connecticut on Thursday (complete with raffles and cook-out dinner); fun run and dinner at Raynham-Taunton Greyhound Park in Massachusetts on Friday; paddock tour, lunch, Back on Track/Blessing of the Hounds and a seminar by Dr. Guillermo Couto at Raynham on Saturday; and trainer talk, vet and behaviorist seminar, track tour, lunch and money cube at Seabrook Greyhound Park in New Hampshire. Each day also included vendors, silent

auctions and raffles. Greyhound Welfare had a booth at Raynham on Saturday and Seabrook on Sunday. The event was not free for attendees this year, but most would agree that it was certainly worth every penny of admission.

### PUPPIES!

One of the biggest highlights of the event was the greyhound farm. On Thursday evening, Fred Fulchino of Regall Kennels opened his greyhound farm to visitors for a tour and cookout. Fred owns about 14 acres and currently has approximately 75 greyhounds at his farm. Aside from the brood mamas, most of the dogs on the farm were puppies, ranging in age from two days to a little over a year old. (Stud dogs are not always present at greyhound farms since artificial insemination by select sires is so widely used.) The puppies stay at the farm sharing the kennels and runs with their littermates until they are ready to go to training, typically between 12 and 14 months old. The roomy, spotless kennels lead out to runs that are about 100-200 yards long. The young dogs build up muscle by playfully racing each other up and down the runs. As some visitors found out, they are equally happy to race humans.

Entering the kennel building, visitors were greeted by a cacophony of excited puppy barking and anyone who dared to put a hand through the fencing was immediately rushed by a gang of pups, eager to lick and nibble on fingers. They

*story continues on page 5*



A mama dog cares for her week-old pups.

*continued from page 4*

were absolutely thrilled with their visitors and enthusiastically rushed up to anyone who approached. A few shy dogs hung back or simply went outside through their dog door to avoid the melee. One of the new mothers took turns between nursing her week old pups and soliciting the public for petting.

#### **RAYNHAM**

The following two days of Expo were spent at Raynham-Taunton Greyhound Park in Raynham, Mass. On Friday, the main attraction was the Fun Run. In previous years, the Fun Run was held at Wonderland in Revere and retired racers were allowed to break from the traps and run to the first turn. Raynham used lead-outs to deck the dogs out in race blankets and hand slip them. The dogs were then allowed to run the 100 or so yards to the finish line and be caught at the curtain which had been drawn across the track a few yards past the line. Though the curtain is designed to stop dogs from running, one slipped past it and managed nearly a full lap around the track before he was caught. A light rain persisted throughout the first several races, but that didn't slow the dogs down at all. Mid-way through the "race card" the rain stopped, allowing the owners to stay relatively dry while watching their dogs make the short sprint.

Saturday featured tours of the paddock area (also known as the jenny pit) where the day's race dogs are kept until they race, dressed for the races and led out. After the race, they are taken to the cooling room where they are cooled down and checked over by their trainers or handlers before returning to their kennels. During the afternoon tour, attendees were able to see dogs who had just run schooling races taken to the cooling room. Handlers rinsed the dogs' eyes with saline, cleaned their ears and hosed them down. The dogs were then given a check over for any minor injuries. There was live racing at the track both days at Raynham and many of the retired dogs were pulling their owners out to the track apron, trying to get their feet back on the track. The hounds got their wish when they were allowed to walk on the track during the Back on Track event, during which they also received a blessing from an ordained minister.



A greyhound puppy.

The main event on Saturday, however, was undoubtedly Dr. Couto's seminar. Dr. Couto is head of oncology and hematology at The Ohio State University's College of Veterinary Medicine and he also runs the OSU Greyhound Health and Wellness Program. He is one of this country's premier experts on Greyhound medicine and health and wellness issues.

#### **SEABROOK**

If you adopted a dog from Greyhound Welfare prior to 2006, you almost certainly have a dog that raced at Seabrook Greyhound Park and came to GW through Chris Makepeace's REGAP kennel, located at the track. Even if you adopted a greyhound through GW after 2006, you may have one of Chris' dogs as her hauls still occasionally make it down to Maryland. Also, until Massachusetts put in place laws regarding the import of dogs into the Commonwealth, Greyhound Welfare also placed Chris' dogs in its New England chapter (after those laws took effect, GW began placing dogs from Linda Jensen in the New England

chapter). Chris conducted a walking tour of the track, including the track's veterinary office, the paddock and REGAP kennel. Kenny Carpenter, a former greyhound trainer and current jack-of-all-trades track employee at Seabrook, conducted an ask-the-trainer session and showed how trainers "bench" dogs to check for injuries.

The kennel tour was followed by lunch and a health and behavior seminar by Dr. Jim McKiernan and Brian Kilcommons, hosts from the Great Pets Radio Show on the air every Sunday in New Hampshire. Kilcommons is the author of several pet behavior and training books, including *Child Proofing Your Dog* and *Good Owners, Great Dogs*.

The day at Seabrook finished with a raffle for a chance to enter the Money Cube, a clear acrylic phone booth-sized box in which \$5,000 in cash was blown around. Participants had to grab money out of the air and push it through a tiny slot. Any money that was pushed out the slot was won by the participant. Greyhound Welfare managed to net \$247, thanks to a few volunteers who bought tickets and won a turn.

Regardless of one's opinion on greyhound racing, the Greyhound Adoption Expo has always been a wonderful chance to really understand a greyhound's life before retirement. This year, Linda pulled out all the stops, from non-stop activities, to an opportunity to see newly born greyhound puppies, to a seminar by the highly revered Dr. Couto. This Expo was probably the best yet. It is an event that is sure to be greatly missed by the greyhound community. ■



Turbo and Alina Predescu's Aruba participate in the fun run.

## Fireworks Can Be a Nightmare for Dogs

BY TINA CARLSEN

Fireworks fill the sky with color and sound. Crowds love them. Dogs don't.

A dog's sense of hearing is much better than ours. An animal can feel and hear the loud noises that a fireworks display puts out from miles away.

Here are some tips that can help keep your dog safe during these holidays.

- ▶ Be extra vigilant on walks in the evenings leading up to a firework-friendly holiday such as July 4th or New Years Eve. People tend to test out fireworks before the holiday. Hold tightly onto the leash and ensure your pet is wearing current identification tags.
  - ▶ Never take a dog with you to a fireworks show. Each year dogs are lost after they become startled by the noise.
  - ▶ Consider crating your dog or having the crate available for your dog's use during the fireworks display. This safe place can be comforting. Mine seem to like when I drape a light blanket over the top to make it extra cozy.
- ▶ Keep windows and curtains closed during fireworks displays. This will make the noise less noticeable.
  - ▶ Don't cuddle a scared dog. Distract him. Turn on the television or play music at a regular level. Coddling a scared dog reinforces fearful behaviors. Be a pack leader. Act confident and unbothered by the noise.
  - ▶ If you need to go out during the display, don't make a big deal out of leaving them. If you act different than normal, they will know that something is up and get stressed.
  - ▶ There are medications available that can help overly anxious pets. Talk to your vet about options right for your animal. A few drops of a natural remedy, such as Bach's Rescue Remedy for Pets, can be put onto a treat before the noise begins to help calm him. Aromatherapy and massage are other options you may want to try. ■



Giving your dog a treat in his crate can help distract him during the frightening sounds of fireworks.

### Greyt Bites

BY TINA CARLSEN



#### Not Your Mother's Peanut Butter Cookie

*My mom used to make peanut butter cookies when I was young. With a little redo, this cookie has the greyhound stamp of approval.*

##### Ingredients

2 ½ cups whole wheat flour  
1 cup peanut butter  
2 eggs  
¾ cup milk  
1 cup shortening

*Makes approximately 50 cookies*

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
- Mix all ingredients together.
- Shape into 1 inch balls and place on an ungreased cookie sheet.
- Dip fork into flour so it doesn't stick, then press criss cross pattern into each ball.
- Bake for 20 minutes.
- Let cool completely before serving to very happy dogs.

## When outside with your dogs, always keep ticks in mind

BY TINA CARLSEN

With summer here, more people are outside enjoying the weather with their dogs, but we need to be aware that there are some unwanted creepy crawlies out there looking for their own picnic – ticks!

Here are some things that can help with this problem.

- ▶ Apply a monthly or bi-monthly application of tick preventative.
- ▶ After walks, run your hands thoroughly over your dog. Check the little places too such as between each toe, in ears, under arms and around neck.
- ▶ Avoid high grass and woods.

Even after taking these preventative steps, you may still find a tick on your dog. If you do, follow these steps.

- ▶ Soak cotton ball or gauze in alcohol then gently press it on the tick's body.
- ▶ Next, put small tweezers as close to the tick's mouth/head and the dog's skin as possible, pull gently away from skin. Do not squeeze or remove the body from the head, leaving part of the pest in your pet. Ticks attach with its claw-like mouth.
- ▶ Place the tick in a small container of alcohol to ensure it is dead before disposal.

It's hard to talk about ticks without thinking about tick-borne diseases. These are fairly common in ex-racing greyhounds and can cause serious illness or death if left untreated.

Almost every ex-racer has been exposed, but not all develop the disease. Greyhounds can carry it for years, and only show signs when a stressful event such as surgery occurs, or when the disease has broken down their immune system.

If your dog has an unexplained illness, watch for these signs.

- High fever
- Depression or lethargy
- Anorexia
- Anemia
- Diarrhea or constipation
- Loss of appetite or body weight
- Vomiting
- Nose bleeds, skin hemorrhage, or any other unusual bleeding
- Swollen legs or lymph nodes
- Nervous system disorders, such as stiff gait, head tilt, seizures or twitching
- Limping, particularly alternating between limbs
- Pale gums and/or inner eye membranes
- Seizures
- Dark urine and excessive thirst, when combined with one or more of the above

Greyhound Welfare highly recommends that your newly adopted greyhound be tested for tick-borne disease through North Carolina State University, currently considered by many greyhound experts to be the gold standard in tick disease testing. The IDEXX SNAP-3 or SNAP-4 test used by most vets does not test for babesia, which, together with erlichia, is the most common TBD seen in racing greyhounds. Thus, it is preferable to run a full panel. NC State has also pioneered polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests that look specifically for organism DNA and may be useful in confirming an active infection rather than mere exposure. A full tick panel through NC State runs approximately \$95, plus shipping and anything your vet may charge to perform the blood draw. There is a separate cost and protocol for PCR testing.

For instructions on sending samples to NC State, visit [www.cvm.ncsu.edu/vth/ticklab.html](http://www.cvm.ncsu.edu/vth/ticklab.html). Click on the link on the right side of the page entitled "Request Form with Instructions." Print that form and give it to your vet. ■



PJ's Zuni enjoys time outdoors. (photo by PJ Anderer)

## Summer 2009 Photo Contest Winners: The Great Outdoors

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 Summer 2009*. Get out those cameras and watch your email for announcements about upcoming photo contests!



**First Place Winner:** Tovah (photo courtesy of Fawn Friedman)



**Second Place Winner:** Axel (photo courtesy of Alana Groshong & Jacob Rosenberg)



**Third Place Winner:**  
Breeze  
(photo courtesy of Kathy Owens)

## Summer 2009 Photo Contest Outtakes



Journey (photo courtesy of Diane Wetjen)



Trixie (photo courtesy of Eliza Cioccarì)



Dannie & Hope  
(photo courtesy of Cynthia Wilber)



Butter & Molson  
(photo courtesy of Brenda Currin)



Fugazi (photo courtesy of Shawna Madison)



Onyx (photo courtesy of Kim Morrow and Cindy Fox)



Journey, Topaz & Hampton  
(photo courtesy of Don Spellmann)

### Greyt photo tips

- ▶ Capture them relaxed and happy with their ears up. Dogs look happier and more active when they are outside.
- ▶ Get an extra long lead or loop two together, so that you can get some distance between you and the dog.
- ▶ Throw out a treat, back away and then get their attention with a whistle, treat or squeak so they look your way and perk up their ears.
- ▶ Bring a helper. One of you can work with the props and hold the dog, while the other takes the photo.
- ▶ Take the photo at the dog's level.
- ▶ Fill the frame. Make sure that the photo is all about the dog, and not the ugly parking lot.
- ▶ Think light. The more light the better. Light is most complimentary when the sun is low in the sky (morning and near dusk). Try to keep your shadow out of the picture.
- ▶ Think contrast. Find a background that is the opposite color or lightness from the dog's coat. For brindle or multi-color dogs, find a solid-color background – bushes and leaves can make them disappear.
- ▶ Think background. Try and find some strong colors. Colors bring out colors. Green grass is great. Even a red brick wall is better than whitish gray concrete.