



NEEDLE-NEWS

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Welcome to Needle-Nose!



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Did you know that there are many deserving retired racing greyhounds out there in need of loving homes? Did you also know that in the metropolitan Hamilton and Toronto areas and environs there are a substantial amount of suitable homes looking to adopt a gentle animal for a family pet?

In 2006, four friends who share in the love of these gentle dogs decided to help in the cause of joining former racing greyhounds with would-be adopters and Needle-Nose Greyhound Adoption was born! Needle-Nose Greyhound Adoption is a not-for-profit retired racing greyhound adoption group who matches profiles of approved adoptive homes with a retired racing greyhound dog awaiting adoption.

We are thrilled to report since our first adoption on November 1, 2006 (just slightly more than one year ago) that we have paired 25 retired racing greyhounds with a loving home of their very own! Please visit our website at www.needlenose.ca to learn more about our group, greyhound adoption and to see more "greyt" photos of the greyhounds in our midst!

Needle-Nose 1st Annual Family Picnic

The first annual Needle-Nose Greyhound Adoption Family Picnic was held Sunday, September 16th at the home of Needle-Nose members Geoff and Brenda Aston. There were approximately 45 Needle-Nose members and guests in attendance. Picnic participants were asked to bring salad or dessert to share and there was more than an ample supply of good food to go around. Meat for the barbeque and beverages were provided by Needle-Nose. Muzzled greyhounds were permitted to run in the fenced-in area. The picnic was indeed a great opportunity for fellow members and guests to meet and share their unique greyhound experience with each other.



Becky bobs for hot dogs

Vendors attending this year's picnic were Critter Cozies with a wide array of greyhound outerwear and toys and Dog Attired which featured hand-made greyhound collars. Musical guests Franco and Zippy entertained picnic goers with a few songs and there were games and prizes for the greyhound with the longest tail, most stinky breath and for the person(s) who traveled the farthest.

Needle-Nose wishes to thank those who donated items for prizes and to all those who attended. It was truly a wonderful way for members and guests to share in their joy and love of the greyhound(s) in their lives.

We plan on making the family picnic an annual event. We have a few new games in mind and will also have a badminton net up for anyone who wants to play. Please visit the gallery section of our website to see pictures from this year's picnic. Our web address is www.needlenose.ca. We hope to see even more of you at next year's picnic!

Back to my Roots

by Suzie Q

Hill! I'm Suzie, a five-year-old brindle greyhound, who hails from Daytona Beach. On my way to my adoptive parents last winter, I got to meet Kathy and Jeff Bowman at their kennel in Liberty, West Virginia. They looked after me for a few weeks until May when Brenda Aston of Needle-Nose Greyhound Adoption arranged for my trip to my new home in Georgetown, Ontario.

Boy was I excited when I found out that my parents, Pat and Mary Ann Mannell, were taking me along with my friends Brenda and Geoff to West Virginia in our motor home! We were going to visit the dog track at Cross Lanes, West Virginia and meet many of the greyhound people Needle-Nose deals with, including Kathy and Jeff who had looked after me so well.

It was a long drive on that Thursday, and after a stop at Grove City Pennsylvania outlet plaza, we spent the night in an RV park on the border between Pennsylvania and West Virginia. Shopping at an outlet plaza confuses me! My people usually leave me alone in the motor home while they trudge across the parking lot and into the buildings, bringing bags and bags of I don't know what (never food or toys) back with them. When they do take me out of the motor home, I find acres and acres of asphalt and buildings that I cannot go into and just scraps of grass. Hardly enough for a grey to do business on - strange!

On the Friday, we drove off the Interstate and into the mountains to visit with Dean and Sandy Clark, in their lovely new home in Elkins, West Virginia. Dean used to work with the greyhounds at Patrick McMillon's kennel as well as having greyhounds in his home. It is always fun to visit people in houses who have or have had greys – you can expect almost unending affection (the retired grey's due, by the way) and you get free run of the place. All afternoon Dean told nice stories of his years working with my kind.

In the late afternoon we went on to Tri-State just outside Charleston (I could tell when we got there by the smells and the noise of the dogs) and parked in the lot with other RVs. During my morning walk the next day, I watched the track's greys getting their morning exercise in the long runs that I remember so well. For a minute or so, I felt pretty happy listening to the sounds of their excited chatter and watching them chase each other along the dirt track. But then I remembered how great my life is now, and I quickly lost interest and put my efforts back into pleasing my adoptive parents and their greyhound loving friends.

Kathy stopped by later that morning and took my people to visit her farm where she has the greyhound kennels that I once stayed in. When I heard Kathy's voice as she called my name, I recognized her right away and boy was I happy to see her! When my people arrived home later, they went on endlessly about the greys, cats, Boston bull puppies, goats, horses, rabbits, etc. they saw at Kathy and Jeff's farm. They seemed pretty impressed with the wonderful group of greys in her kennel that are just waiting for new parents.

They also went on and on about Harvey Maupin's puppy farm that they visited next. They said that these puppies, from the tiny little guys to year old pups, were so well cared for and loved. I could have told them that – I loved being a racer – racing is so much fun! I remember what it was like being a puppy - the seemingly endless days playing with my brothers and sisters in the pen and then, when we were a year old, the trip off to boarding school to learn how to race like pros.

If you paid attention, worked hard, and ignored the cuts, pains and bruises, you eventually got assigned to a trainer who schooled you in the fine points of racing and then you got three tries to be accepted as a full time racer. There is no greater calling for a grey! Boy, does it make you feel great out there in the lead, doing your best, with the crowd cheering and, at the end, receiving the rewarding gratitude of the trainer and the handlers. Later in the exercise pen, you hold your head high as the other greys congratulate you - but it is always balanced by the calls of, "I'll beat you next time!"

Saturday evening my people all went to the track for dinner and the races. I am now barred from such outings as I no longer belong to that racing world. I know they had fun as they came back laughing and talking in the way happy people do. My mom related how Patrick McMillon, the trainer that the Astons know well, had felt that one of his dogs had a good chance in the seventh race, so she had bet on her. As the dogs broke from the gate, Patrick said that there was no chance that his dog would win and he was correct; it finished dead last. My mom was astounded that he could tell so early, but in the replay of the race she could see how the dog had left the gate with her head up – I could have told her how that first step out of the gate is the most important one! Get out fast or get behind and you've lost it! I could hear them talking about how well all my friends in the racing world are treated and how much they are loved by Patrick and the other trainers and breeders. What did they expect? To do your best in the racing world you have to be fed well, played with, hugged, talked to nicely and made to feel important. That's why we all make such good family members now!

On Sunday morning Kathy came back to our motor home and brought three other greys with her. Apparently we were taking them back to their new homes. Kathy put the two big boys in kennels on the bed in the back and a tiny little girl in a kennel in the dinette. I of course, as a retired grey, was free and had the run of the motor home. But I felt a big responsibility for these new friends. They were so frightened as this was a new experience for them and I made it my job to make them feel more comfortable.

It was a long trip back (twelve hours on the road) but I love traveling in the motor home and slept, as usual, on my bed on the floor between the front seats. I got up every half hour or so to check on my new friends; visiting each cage in turn, telling them that they would be all right, and that they were going to new homes where their new families would care for them and love them forever. It is very traumatic, you know, to leave the life you have known since birth and to start all over again with new people and new rules in a strange, never-seen-before environment. It made me very proud to have an active part in this retirement run – bringing three more greys on to their just reward after their working careers. Racing was fun – but living in a home with a loving family is the best!



Needle-Nose Hounds Elroy, Josie, Fiona & Lacey

Needle-Nose
Fostering

The Modern Language Association defines the word foster as follows: 1. to promote the growth or development of, further, encourage; 2. to bring up or raise; and 3. to care for or cherish. Our foster families do all that and more for Needle-Nose Greyhound adoption.

Our foster volunteers are the very reason our group is able to do the marvelous work of placing retired racing greyhounds with loving homes. A heart-felt thank you goes out to Wendy and Serge Lauzon, Cheri and Ryan

Worth, Tara Waddick and Shane Wilson, Geoff and Brenda Aston, Tricia Sholer, Cara-Lea Suttie, Earl Harroun and Suzanne Meade for a job well done.

Fostering is possibly the most difficult yet the most rewarding part to retired racing greyhound adoption. Families who foster usually find it difficult not to bond with their foster dog while they help the dog make the transition from being a working track dog to becoming a beloved family pet. Keeping in mind that there is an excited family waiting makes it easier. If you are up to the challenge and reward fostering, please contact Cara-Lea Suttie at 905-545-2147 or via email at foster@needlenose.ca.

Volunteers
Needed

Would you like to get involved and help us continue to make Needle-Nose successful? There are many ways you can make a difference. You could open your home to a foster dog or volunteer to transport and bathe the new dogs. You could even write an article for the newsletter! If you want to help out, please contact Brenda Aston at 905-659-7624 or via email at adopt@needlenose.ca.

Greyt Hounds 2008
Calendar

Needle-Nose is proud to report favorable sales of its very own 2008 calendar featuring greyhounds belonging to Needle-Nose members. Our thanks to Needle-Nose member Lesley Cadham for designing a beautiful calendar!

There are still a limited number of calendars available for \$18 each. Please contact Geoff or Brenda Aston at 905-659-7624 or via e-mail at adopt@needlenose.ca if you are interested in purchasing one.

In Loving Memory

We wish to express our deepest condolences to Needle-Nose families who have lost greyhounds this year.

Geoff, Brenda and Tim Aston

Lexi (BC's Sweet Thing) / September 1, 1994 to May 9, 2007



Cara-Lea Suttie, Earl Harroun and Suzanne Meade

Quinn (Lee Hawes) / June 12, 1993 to September 2, 2007



Tricia Sholer

Finnula (Do Shockall) / February 12, 2003 to October 25, 2007



Lexi



Quinn



Finnula