



# NEEDLE-NEWS

Volume 2 / Issue 1 / April 2008

## WELCOME TO NEEDLE-NOSE

Welcome to the April, 2008 edition of Needle-News. This newsletter features stories from around our group, information on heartworm disease and prevention, and a sneak peek what's involved in arranging a cross-country shipment of retired greyhounds. For more information about Needle-Nose Greyhound Adoption, I encourage you visit our website at [www.needlenose.ca](http://www.needlenose.ca).

If you have photos or a short story of interest about your greyhound that you would like to share with Needle-Nose for possible inclusion in a future newsletter, please send them to me at [bethhunt@sympatico.ca](mailto:bethhunt@sympatico.ca). I hope you enjoy reading this edition of Needle-News.

*Elizabeth Hunt, Editor*



## GREYS HORSING AROUND IN OSHAWA

We all know how much our hounds love to socialize and enjoy a good fast romp together. When winter arrived and snow and ice began to cover the usual parks and walkways she would frequent, Renee Cotton, owner of two retired greyhounds, began to notice the great need for a suitable and reasonably safe place to exercise her hounds.

On her mission to find such a place, it wasn't long before she and one of her greyhounds pulled up to the office at Windfield's Farm in Oshawa, a thoroughbred race horse facility. By the end of the visit, the Windfield's staff had generously donated two hours a week of arena time for the purpose of greyhound exercise, thus the Galloping Greyhounds Play Group (GGPG) was born. GGPG is an Oshawa-based play group of retired racers and their owners who get together to socialize. Each Sunday since the beginning of January, Ms. Cotton's greyhounds and up to 30 other greyhounds have gathered in one of the huge arenas generally used for training Windfield's renowned thoroughbred race horses.

GGPG began with a handful of greyhounds, but the numbers rose considerably after publication of an article about the play group, in two east-end community newspapers and on the web. The number of greyhounds wanting to participate grew so much in fact, that the group had to be split into two time slots. Each week, the greyhounds meet up with old and new friends, getting the golden opportunity to run together and enjoy some well-deserved play time.

The sand-covered surface is an ideal medium for the ex-racers to horse around with minimal risk of injury, and away from the elements. There are rules designed to ensure the hounds' safety and each participant is required to sign a "hold harmless" form. Every dog must be muzzled at all times, with no exceptions.

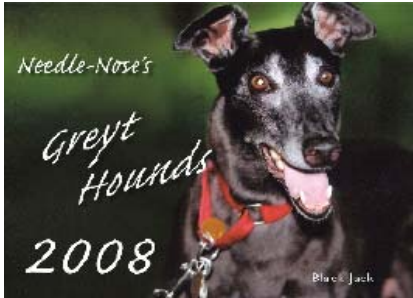


***Needle-Nose Grey Solitary Becky and her best pal Morgan high-stepping at Windfield's Farm***

For more information about the Galloping Greyhounds Play Group, e-mail Ms. Cotton at [renee\\_cotton@rogers.com](mailto:renee_cotton@rogers.com).

Editor's Note: For west-enders, there is a greyhound only hour every Sunday from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. at Prospect Park in Acton. For more information, see our website at [www.needlenose.ca](http://www.needlenose.ca)





## Photos needed for 2009 Needle-Nose Calendar

The 2008 Calendars Needle-Nose created were a great success, so we plan to put another calendar together for 2009. If you would like to submit your greyhound's photo for possible

inclusion in the next calendar, please submit two high quality photos for each dog to Brenda Aston at [adopt@needlenose.ca](mailto:adopt@needlenose.ca).

## ANATOMY OF A MELBOURNE SHIPMENT

By Claire Tyler (2003)  
Reprinted with permission

The following article was written by Claire Tyler, the wife of Dennis Tyler, President of Greyhound Pets of America, Central Florida. Dennis and Claire are responsible for transporting ex-racing greyhounds from Melbourne, Florida to various points north all along Interstate – 95 as far north as Buffalo, New York several times a year. The article gives us a glimpse of what it is like for Dennis and Claire and other volunteers who arrange for and carry out these shipments of greyhounds who are then adopted out to loving homes by various adoption groups located along the way.



What exactly does it take to put together a shipment? It's easy to look at the numbers and see our group relies heavily on the ability to transport. GPA Central Florida does 14-15 shipments each year. Our shipment on June 25, marks the 95th shipment we have done. Loading the greys on the trailer and waving goodbye to the driver is the culmination of a lot of hard work. The real relief comes when all of the greyhounds have made it to their destination without incident.

Each shipment actually starts out approximately 2 months prior. E-mails are sent out to groups along a designated route. This is usually



***GPA Central Florida trailer obtained through the donations of the Greyhound Community***

a heads-up to as many as a dozen groups. The groups are informed of our target dates for a transport and a request to see if they can keep us in mind for taking greys. Dates may have to be changed if groups are having a special event on our planned date. This can get rather tricky, when dealing with so many groups. It can take up to as many as 2 e-mails for each dog. With luck, requests come in and then the "Match-maker skills" are put into effect. Selecting the right grey for the right home environment can be a challenge. Let's face it, it can be really tough to find a calm but slightly playful, outgoing tuxedo greyhound who is cat friendly and gets along with small children. Several groups

give a synopsis of requirements. It's a blessing when we get a request that comes in for 4 greys, 2 male, 2 female, not color specific and two greyhounds can be "no cat" greys. It usually takes at least 2 e-mails or phone calls per greyhound.

A large majority of groups want all the Veterinary work done up front. Three to four weeks prior to shipment greyhound transport candidates are taken to local vets for spay/neuter, teeth clean, shots and heartworm testing. When you are talking about a 40-44 grey shipment and 38 greys needing vet care, it becomes a huge undertaking. In one week, there can be up to 4 vet runs.

**ANATOMY OF A MELBOURNE SHIPMENT (cont'd from previous page)**

Prior to shipment the trailer needs to be checked out and prepared for shipment. Even though we have a new trailer, we ran into trouble on the May 10th haul. It returned with only three of the four wheels. There was a major problem with a modification to the axles on the trailer made when the trailer was built. The manufacturer shipped new axles, bearings, brakes and the missing wheel. It became a marathon work effort to get the rig ready for a haul on May 17th. Work was completed on May 16th at 8 PM.

During the week before a shipment, our days are spent going over the greys. Stitches need to be removed, ears cleaned and sometimes a reapply of Frontline. Since greys are loaded 2 to a compartment, traveling companions are often tested out just to help insure a safer transport. A trailer-loading chart is put together. The loading chart helps organize compartment placement in such a way that as deliveries are made, greys are singled out. By the time the trailer reaches its last stop, all greyhounds on board will be in separate compartments. Each grey gets a color-coded flag put on their collar. This flag identifies the group the grey will be going to and the compartment on the trailer that they will occupy. Color-coded tape is also put above each compartment on the trailer that coincides with the greyhound. The rig is washed, AC filters are changed, tires checked and generators are tested and checked for fuel and oil. The day before shipment fresh hay is put in each compartment. The morning of the shipment each compartment also gets a bucket of water with stress-dex added (gator aid for greyhounds). During hot months, ice can also be put into the buckets. A few hours before transport

the 2 AC units are turned on to get the temperature down and plugged into shore power. A half-hour before loading, the generators are started and all four AC's turned on.

Packets are also made up for each Adoption Group. The packets contain a listing of greys that they will be receiving and all of the vet records. We also require a release that the groups sign to indicate that they are accepting transfer of the grey. Canadian groups also need a letter for crossing the boarder stating the greys are of no monetary value.


When the trailer leaves, each group is given a courtesy call to let them know the shipment has left the compound and the time of departure. Incidentally shipments usually leave in the evening and proceed driving throughout the night. Drivers alternate shifts and only stop for fuel. A shipment to Maryland would mean 15 hours on the road one way (weather permitting). A shipment to Buffalo, New York means 24 hours. When the trailer is returned the hay & buckets must be removed and the inside must be sanitized with soap and bleach and the rig inspected. So as you can see, it may be just a number on a report or part of a heading on a newsletter. The bottom line however is that it represents a lot of hard work.

Editor's Note: Greyhound Pets of America (GPA) is a tax-exempt, non-profit corporation founded in 1987 for the purpose of rescuing ex-racing greyhounds. As of 2007, Greyhound Pets of America has 54 chapters and sub-chapters in the United States. In 2007, GPA as a whole placed approximately 3,500 dogs; more than any single organization. As this article was written in 2003 and is being reprinted with Claire's



**Dennis gives a courtesy call to groups before departure**

permission, here are some updates to the statistics contained herein: At the end of 2007 Greyhound Pets of America, Central Florida transported 5,680 greyhounds; 563 of which in 2007.

Needle-Nose is grateful to Dennis and Claire for all the time and energy they have dedicated to these wonderful dogs. Look for a behind-the-scenes look at how Needle-Nose Greyhound Adoption prepares for a "run" (new group of retired greyhounds) in the next newsletter. 

## Get Involved in Needle-Nose

Needle-Nose is actively searching for volunteers to help make our adoption group successful. You can write an article for the newsletter, help bathe or transport new dogs, donate used items to our yard sale or open your home to a foster dog. Let Brenda Aston know how you can help by contacting her at 905-659-7624 or via e-mail at [adopt@needlenose.ca](mailto:adopt@needlenose.ca). You can make a difference!



# RETIRED AND LIVING IT!

Ever wonder what a retired racing greyhound does in his free time? Here are some prime examples of some of our Needle-Nose hounds' favourite activities!



**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Nelson and Simon Ambridge relaxing on their soft beds.; Solitary Homie enjoying a leisurely ride in the back seat of the car; Sam (Don L Lissy Sam) peering out at a -20C winter day; Lacey (Fuzz Face Gail) says cockroaching is good!; Kelsos Skeeter keeping vigil for squirrels in his backyard; Solitary Becky tryin' hard to chill around her 1,500 lb. bovine pals; Wendell (Fuzz Face Windy) says walks are fun when you spot a squirrel; CENTER: Miss Tiny plays with Noah.**

# Canine Heartworm; A Preventable Disease

By Dr. Stephen Ball  
Brookville Veterinary Clinic

Canine heartworm (*Dirofilaria immitis*) is a worm that looks like a round worm which lives in the pulmonary arteries and the right side of the heart. Immature larvae circulate in the blood stream and enter into a mosquito vector when it bites an infected canine. When this vector bites another, these larvae pass through the mouthparts into the new host. Here they undergo changes in 90 to 100 days that result in a reaction in the dog's body. As arteries thicken and the heart dilates signs of congestive heart failure develop.

Symptoms may include coughing, shortness of breath, exercise intolerance and fainting.

If an adult infestation develops, it can be treated; however serious health problems may occur as a result of dead and dying worms in the circulatory system. Infestation is easily prevented with a variety of monthly medications.

In Canada the incidence of positive heartworm tests overall is on the decline. This may be the result of an effective monitoring and prevention program. We can never eliminate the incidence of the parasite in the wildlife reservoir. Southern Ontario is still the

highest incidence area in the country. Pets who travel to the USA, spend lots of time outdoors, live in a rural area or have missed some preventative treatment should be tested and placed on preventative medication. In our area the season for prophylaxis is from June to November. Side benefits of these products may include flea, tick and intestinal parasite control.

For more information, please visit these relevant websites.

[www.vitatech.com/home](http://www.vitatech.com/home)

[www.dirofilariaimmitis.ca](http://www.dirofilariaimmitis.ca)

[www.heartwormsociety.org](http://www.heartwormsociety.org)



# The Ecstasy and the Heartbreak

written by Rebecca Ambridge  
as told by Nelson

I tell you! I've been through a lot since last May! I was sitting in my kennel being my beautiful brindle self down in West Virginia, just minding my own business, when along came this lady. These people called her Brenda. She got me out of that kennel and took me all over the place. First she took me to this place where I got these needles when I wasn't even sick, then to all of these other places. It seemed that just when I was getting comfortable, we would leave. Finally I got to this place called "house" and saw awkward stuff. I saw these things that looked like a slanted wall with an uneven surface, they called them "stairs", and a soft flooring that was very comfortable under my feet. I got so comfortable and then I was taken away. I came to another "house" where that Brenda lady and another man took me. That is where I got my forever family. This family is called "the Ambridge family"

I was treated like a king! I got soft beds, lots of love, tasty meals and lots of company but something was missing. They left me locked in a crate. Still debating on a name for me. My racing name was "Authentic Blaze", but they didn't want my name to be "Authentic" or "Blazer." They came up with "Nelson" and so that was my name. Every day they locked me away for hours. Then the youngest member of the family, Rebecca, would come home and let me out. I was unhappy alone every day. After we moved houses, they got the message.



**Nelson and Rebecca Ambridge**

Then one day, another dog arrived. He was a black boy with little white paws and his name was "Sol Friction." His new name was "Oliver." Oliver and I were great pals. I think he was really confused when he got here. Not that I could blame him, though. He calmed down eventually.

Oliver seemed to be with us for just a little while. After about three months, he passed away. Janet, David and Rebecca were devastated. Oliver came in from outside whining. He went upstairs and lay down. His pupils were dilated, he was unresponsive and when he walked he would wobble and fall. David and Janet knew that something was wrong and took



The Ecstasy and the Heartbreak (cont'd from Page 5)

Oliver to the emergency hospital for animals. Meanwhile, Rebecca and I stayed home. Rebecca hugged me and prayed that everything would be alright. It wasn't. David and Janet came back with no Oliver and explained that he was dead and that the vet thought that he died of a tumor eruption which caused him massive internal bleeding.

To keep me company, we wanted a new dog. A man named Dennis tried to get us a special dog. He is not the same person who found me. That was Kathy. Dennis found one now called "Simon." Simon, although his racing name was "Izz Our Chance", was called hugs in the kennel because he gives hugs. That is weird. He is a beautiful dog. A tan and red combined. When he first came he couldn't do the stairs but he is finally getting the hang of it. It did not take me that long to do the stairs but we were fostering him ourselves. Now we are buds although he is no Oliver. I hope that he stays with me as my buddy forever.



Top - Nelson; Left - Nelson and Oliver; This Photo - Simon and Nelson

# Upcoming Greyhound Events

**Canine Cancer Speaker In Guelph - May 3, 2008**

Dr. Guillermo Couto, DVM Diplomate ACVIM, and professor at the Department of Veterinary Clinical Sciences of the Ohio State University will be coming to the Ramada Inn in Guelph for a speaking engagement, which you and your greyhounds are invited to attend. Topics addressed include canine cancer, current cancer-related research projects and on-going canine cancer treatments. This event is sponsored by the Greyhound Supporters of the National Capital Region. For more information visit their website at [www.gsncr.ca](http://www.gsncr.ca).

**Needle-Nose Spring Yard Sale**

Cleaning out your garage or basement? Please save your stuff! Needle-Nose plans to have a yard sale this spring as a fund-raiser for the group. Date to be announced but will likely take place in late May or early June. If you have gently-used household items, toys, sporting goods, books, dvds etcetera, please put them aside for our event. No clothing, please. Contact Brenda Aston by phone at 905-659-7624 or via e-mail at [adopt@needlenose.ca](mailto:adopt@needlenose.ca) to arrange for drop-off or pick up of your items.

**Annual Needle-Nose Picnic**

Our first annual picnic was held last fall and was a great success, so we plan to do it all again with our second annual picnic this fall. The grill will be going with hot dogs and burgers and we will also have a potluck of salads and desserts. Various vendors will also be there featuring their unique greyhound items for sale. Date to be announced, but keep an eye on our website [www.needlenose.ca](http://www.needlenose.ca) for more details.



# In Memoriam

**We wish to express our heart-felt sympathy to the Ambridge family.**

**The Ambridge Family  
Oliver (Sol Friction) / Oliver:  
March 12, 2004 - January 16, 2008**

