



The GREATvine

Greyhound Rescue & Adoptions of Tampa Bay, Inc.

Funding Our Mission *by Kelly R. Faircloth*

The year 2009 was a rough year for everyone, when the economy tanked and people were losing jobs, homes and everything they had. While there has been some recovery, it has been slow, slow, slow, and naturally, during rough times, everyone cuts back to spending only what they can afford for what is necessary.

GREAT, like other nonprofit organizations, has certainly been hit hard. Over the last five years, our income from donations (the bulk of our support) has decreased by 42.7%. Yep, you read that right - almost forty-three percent!

We have taken measures to decrease expenses: from 2007 through 2011, our expenses have decreased by 35%. This is good news, but it is not good enough, because while we are spending less, our decrease in expenses is out measured by decrease in donations. Also, there is only so much we can do to trim our expenses while still providing proper care for the dogs, while our potential for decreasing (or increasing) donations is unlimited. And veterinary care is not getting any cheaper.

When we get to the point where we fear we may not have enough ready cash to handle our current foster dogs' expenses or any emergencies that might crop up (like the recent \$3000 expense for dental specialist surgery for Shiloh, and abdominal obstruction surgery for Henna!) that's when we have to make the decision to halt intake, until we can afford to bring in more dogs. We are not at that point yet, but we likely will be in another couple of months, unless we can do something about our fundraising stall-out. Turning away dogs who need us because we have no room is hard enough. Turning them away because we can't afford them just plain stinks.

The old ideas of holding a picnic or selling merchandise don't work well for us anymore. With the increase in venue fees and supplies, we actually barely make enough money to make the amount of work worthwhile. We are not the only group to experience this - Greyhound Adoptions of Florida already halted their picnics two years ago, and other groups in the area are taking measures to decrease the number of picnics, or share their picnic with another group. Regarding merchandise sales, GREAT long ago trimmed out the excess inventory we were carrying, because we found we were actually LOSING money on merchandise, due to how long it took to sell it all and how much we had to cut prices in order to sell.

So, what do we do? We need to come up with new ways to raise money that people aren't sick of hearing about! We need ideas that don't rely solely on our membership to fund. Picnics were fun and we did raise some money, but our own members and volunteers were hit up for the lion's share; people who are already supporting us as best they can, all year long! And lastly, we need more volunteer help in pulling off these new efforts.

I'm asking you all to think about how we can accomplish this goal, and if you have an idea that is feasible, inexpensive, and will help us target new audiences, please let me know. If you can research and then coordinate your idea, so much the better, because many of our more active volunteers cannot take on new efforts, and finding someone to coordinate events or projects is always one of the hardest parts! We may not be able to do everything right away, so please don't be hurt if we can't do your suggestion right away, and don't let that stop you from making suggestions at all!

I look forward to hearing from you all, and thank you for your continued dedication to the greyhounds!



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Special points of interest:

- Decoupling bills
- Sandy Paws recap
- Yappy Hour at Joia's
- Tributes to much-loved hounds

Sandy Paws 2012	2
Greyhounds Save	3
Meet & Greet	3
De-Coupling Bill	4
Adoptions	5
Yappy Hour	6
Tributes	7
Mountain Hounds	8



Sandy Paws 2012 *by Cyndi Rennick*



From Left: Laura Calci with Capri; Jaime Garcia & Eva Sosnoska with Pani; Joyce McCarthy; Cyndi Rennick with Dodd, Taylor & Joe; Karen Powers; Jordena & Ron Backnick with Plum & Kona; and Connie & Brent Worreell With Big John & Demon

Some GREAT volunteers recently met up at Jekyll Island, Georgia for the annual Sandy Paws Greyhound Gathering. There were ten GREAT members in attendance. We got together for Yappy Hour, dinner, shopping, a greyhound parade through the historic district, a live auction, sight-seeing and taking pictures of ourselves and the hounds at the beach. We all volunteered our time at the Rootique as well, which is always fun. The Rootique sells t-shirts and other items to benefit Greyhound Guardian Charities, a non-profit organization that distributes net proceeds from the event to various greyhound adoption groups, including GREAT. It was a nice trip and a good time was had by all. This was my sixth year and for once the weather could not have been better! It was warm and sunny the whole week with no rain and only one windy day... much nicer than in previous years!

Next year will be the 10th Anniversary, or "Birthday" of the event and the organizers have already started thinking of ways to make it extra special. I can't wait! The Sandy Paws event is very near and dear to my heart. I have met many good friends over the years at Sandy Paws, and although the dogs who go with me now are not the dogs I started with, my time on the island always brings back memories of my time there with Bandit and Sweetie Pie and Steffie and others. The Circle of Grey group holds a memorial service each year at Sandy Paws to remember those we have lost, and although sad, it's also cathartic.

This is a greyt event. It's so much fun to be able to spend time with other greyhound lovers and to have our dogs with us at the same time! It's the best of both worlds; a nice relaxing break for myself in an absolutely stunning locale, and lots of walkies, mommy-time and greyhound socializing for the kids, er, dogs! Oh... and some very pooped greyhounds after it's all over! What could be better!?

For more information about next year's Sandy Paws event, check out www.sandypaws.org. Hope to see you all there!



Greyhounds Save the Day *by Mary Postma*

We first saw the greyhounds at a couple of pet stores while getting supplies for our boxer and chihuahua. We mentioned that we someday would like to have a greyhound and picked up a brochure.

Our boxer (11yrs old) and chihuahua (14 yrs old), both passed away in 2010. We decided "no more pets." Lo and behold, we got lonesome. We checked out the GREAT website from the brochure, and decided to go to the Palm Harbor meet & greet, just to "look". There were two very nice ladies there that explained what wonderful companions greyhounds are. We went right home and processed our application to adopt.

We now have found our quest in life... to help anyway we can to get as many of these wonderful greyhounds adopted as possible. We have adopted Dory & Elvin (both black) and foster another.

My husband Walt has had another passion since he was a young boy: raising homing pigeons. About 20+ years ago, he started providing the dove (which is a white homing pigeon) for the Tarpon Springs Epiphany ceremony that is held each year on January 6th. One year, a raccoon got into his loft and killed all but the Epiphany bird. This bird died six months later, so he got new stock and started over again.

This past January, Walt took the pigeon to Tarpon for the Epiphany at 7:00am, as usual, then returned home to wait for its return. The dove bearer released the bird at 1:00pm. Walt was waiting outside with our greyhounds for the bird to come home, which it did at 2:00pm. As the bird was flying into the coup, a hawk was chasing it... right on its rear end. Walt opened the screen door and the greyhounds bolted out in front of him and scared the hawk away. So, ALL IS WELL... the bird will be ready to fly again next year.

Our greyhounds came to our rescue, in more ways than one.



Walt & Mary, with Dory (red collar) and Elvin!

Monthly Meet & Greet

MUVICO – NEW TAMPA

Jean Mauser 813.971.5772
JoAnn Copertino 813.994.9825

PETCO - BRANDON

Susan O'Hara 813.643.7709

PETCO - ODESSA

BJ Vosburgh 813.920.6477

PETCO - PORT RICHEY

Burke Barnaby 727.697.2394

PETCO - WESLEY CHAPEL

JoAnn Copertino 813.994.9825

PETCO - WEST SHORE

Tony & Bobbie Kovach 813.475.6343
Cyndi Rennick 727.417.0913

PETSMART - CITRUS PARK

Jodi Frazier 813.969.1310
Fred Freshcorn 813.891.1861

PETCO - PALM HARBOR

Karen Powers 727.786.4398

PET SUPERMARKET - LAKELAND

Norma Rogers 813.754.4301
Pamela Wiseman 863.324.6286

See our event calendar at www.great-greyhound.org.



If At First You Don't Succeed... *by Kelly R. Faircloth*

Don't be alarmed - you haven't suddenly jumped back in time to the January issue of the GREATvine! Yes, the article title is the same, but the content is different, because the legislative session is over and again, we did not prevail. The bills to decouple greyhound racing in Florida did not pass.

The situation this year was different from the situation last year. Last year our bills passed in BOTH houses, with minor differences between, and we simply ran out of time to reconcile those differences and take one final vote. This year, our bills never got off the ground, largely due to things beyond our control, like a casino bill that consumed everyone's attention, and political fighting about the legislative map.

It's disheartening, when we KNOW we have the support, to still not get anywhere with these bills. Every delay means more dogs being bred for an industry that continues to grasp at straws to revitalize their glory days, but those days are gone forever.

Looking on the bright side, every delay also means more time for us to prepare for the next fight and more time for the public to learn the truth. It also gives Florida the opportunity to see other states fight to pass these same bills, hopefully with more success. It would have been nice for Florida to lead the effort to decouple greyhound racing, but perhaps we need to see other states do it successfully first!

The next article was written by Joyce Carta, a member of Greyhound Adoptions of Florida, home of Grey Haven. The article was posted on Grey Haven's site on March 8, the evening before the session ended. Joyce is a longtime greyhound advocate and a passionate supporter of the bills, and she went to Tallahassee last year and this year to talk to legislators. As you can see, she is not defeated, and we are not defeated either!

Next year will be our third attempt to pass bills to decouple greyhound racing in the state of Florida, and you know what they say - third time is a charm!

We Will Fight This Fight Until We Win *by Joyce Carta*

Tomorrow, 9 March, is the last day of the Florida Legislative Session. And it looks likely that the Greyhound Decoupling Bill will not succeed this year. There was a "perfect storm" of reasons for this: including the big destination casino bill that would have brought huge scale resort gambling to South Florida (this bill was actually withdrawn), the post-Census redistricting battles and the flurry of Legislative back & forths on issues vital and otherwise that simply ate up the allotted time. So...again...we will be back next year. And every year until we see this passed.

Our efforts have drawn national attention; yes, of course in greyhound circles, but this morning we hit the big time. The New York Times today published a very fair summary of the declining state of greyhound racing along with an array of photos which speak forcefully to the economic case for dog racing's abolition. If you have never been to a greyhound race track, do read the article and take a look at these pictures...dogs parading before empty stands, desultory patrons doing their solitary betting calculations, the whole scene empty and depressing and downright grimy...like a musty holdover from a bygone age that nobody regrets ending (yes, I'm biased here).

Here is the link:

www.nytimes.com/2012/03/09/us/greyhound-races-fade-with-many-track-owners-eager-to-get-out.html

And if you have been to a greyhound track you'll be pleased to get even more confirmation that these days are numbered. We will fight this fight until we win.





Adoptions

GREAT congratulates the following adopters on their new four-legged family members!

Gus Adler
 Cara Bragg & Michael Hilley
 Del & Robin Del Guidice
 James Doyle
 Rita & Eugene Giampa
 Cate & Steve Infanti
 Dana & Russ Laggan
 Virginia Rice
 Lisa Sanford & Todd White
 John & Candi Sprenkle

Hallo Cajun Hoss
 Atascocita Henna
 Atascocita Manny
 Breezin Tom
 Atascocita Bronx
 Atascocita Rabon
 Crafty Callie
 Hot Foot Annie
 Atascocita Trix
 Atascocitashiloh

Cooper
 Olive
 Greydie
 Tom
 Bronx
 Ray
 Callie
 Annie
 Riley
 Shiloh



Yappy Hour at Joia's Fabulous Pizza & Martini Bar! *by Karen Laurence*

Circle your calendars for Thursday, April 26th, from 6pm-9pm. Four Paws Animal Clinic, owned by Dr. Kimberly Tyson, is once again sponsoring a Yappy Hour at Joia's Fabulous Pizza and Martini Bar!

Joia's is located at 10475 Gibsonton Drive, Riverview, in a shopping center near Interstate 75, Highway 301, and 41. There is ample parking.

There will be a raffle held to benefit GREAT, consisting of beautiful gift baskets and donated items.

So bring the hounds and come on down to Joia's for terrific food and GREAT company!





Forever in Our Hearts...

With Greyt sadness, we say goodbye to the following beloved pets, canine, feline and equine:

Carole Dann & Leighton Klevana
 Del & Robin Del Guidice
 Jean & Augie Mauser
 Laura & Ed Moseley
 Rachel & Doug Rubottom
 Betsy Swisher
 Kristen & Brent Thomas
 Sally & Ted Trenta
 Deneen & Tony Ward
 Cindy Wiehrs & Hank Orr
 Joanie & Charlie Wiehrs

Dante
 Sam
 Olive
 Rosie
 Ellie
 Emma
 Grace
 Rooftop
 Cody
 Chief
 Molly



Sam by Del & Robin Del Guidice

He was our first. He was our teacher. He was our beautiful boy. He wasn't the fawn female, we thought we wanted. He certainly was never full of energy. He had done his running and he was finished with that. He was just the perfect dog for us and we fell in love the moment we saw him. Always a gentle, gentle soul, he did whatever we asked. Whether it was giving his blood so other dogs could live or appearing on stage for an opera production or greeting troops returning from war or helping kids at the library practice their reading, he was simply Sam. Always regal, always gracious, Sam tolerated all of the foster dogs that we brought into the house as well as several "siblings" who came and went before him. Named after Sambuca, the Italian liqueur, he was sweet, black and intoxicating and he became an ambassador for his breed wherever he went whether at home in Tampa or traveling through the US and Canada.

At home Sam spent most days holding court among the pillows in "his" bed. At night he allowed us to sleep there, sometimes sleeping with us, giving us as little space as he could get away with. Other nights it was just too much trouble to push us over, so he condescended to sleep in one of the many dog beds scattered around the house. Most times, he shared everything he had, his squeaky toys, his beds, even his food but, most importantly he shared his heart.

Sam passed quietly, at home, and in the arms of the two people who have loved him most. He has left us with unspeakable holes in our hearts and an unfillable emptiness in our home.

God speed, Sam. We love you.



Sam, 10/1/01 - 2/24/12





A Mom's Tribute *by Betsy Swisher*

Emma and I came together in a rather unusual way. Emma was not the dog I was going to adopt. In 2005 I lost my best friend Laura. She was the first dog I ever had and I had not experienced the loss of a best friend before. When she went to the Rainbow Bridge in May of 2005 the only way I thought I could deal with it was to find and adopt one of her puppies. Within a month I did just that and with the help of GREAT and Marilyn at Grey Haven, Noelle was brought down from Massachusetts. On a rainy Sunday in July, Kelly, Melinda, Carol and I went to Sparr to pick her up. On the way Kelly got a call and was asked if we would bring another dog back as well.

There was only one deal breaker for me and I thought we had that dealt with. With 2 cats at home, Noelle had to be cat friendly, and so we asked the group up north to cat-test her. While she passed their test, she did not pass ours, and went after the cat. Since I couldn't keep her, and we had the other dog with us, who was then called Goldie, I had to keep Goldie at least until they could find a foster home for her. Of course within the day, I decided to adopt Goldie who became Emma and the rest, as they say, is history.

She was my best friend for 7 years. She started on her way to becoming my hero in November of 2011 when she was diagnosed with Laryngeal Paralysis at 11 years old. She had surgery on her throat to open the passage way so she could breathe easier. Everything was great and she was such a trooper, never complained. From January 25th 2012 through March 25th, 2012, she really showed what she was made of. She was diagnosed with Osteosarcoma in January and I took her to the University of Florida to have Stereotactic Radio Surgery; a high dose radiation therapy. It was successful and of course, she never complained. Every doctor and nurse she saw commented on what a great dog she was. The radiation was followed up with chemotherapy, and again, she just seemed to plow right through it.

On Sunday morning, March 25th, at 12 years old, it all became just too much for her and she had to go. She is the strongest dog I've ever known. I love her and I will miss her for the rest of my life until we are together again.

Ellie *by Doug & Rachel Rubottom*

Our precious Ellie crossed the Rainbow Bridge this morning. She was 15 years old and we had shared 10 wonderful years together. She was our first Greyhound and will never be forgotten.



Emma, 2/15/00 - 3/25/12



Ellie, 1/19/97 - 3/22/12

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Jordena Backnick
Brenda Hodges
Liz Lynch
Karen Powers



Mountain Hounds *by Kelly R. Faircloth*

A few intrepid travelers from GREAT will again be making the trek to Gatlinburg for the 8th annual Mountain Hounds event! The event starts on Thursday, May 31st and ends on Sunday, June 3rd. Many people make a whole week of it, however, traveling up on Memorial Day and staying through until Sunday. Gatlinburg has a lot to offer for visitors, and we always manage to stay busy and enjoy ourselves!

The event takes place at the Sidney James Mountain Lodge, just a short (but uphill!) walk from the main street. There are tons of places to eat and to shop, and we always make several visits to the renowned Pancake Pantry for breakfast, or even lunch!



Carol Chilton, Laura Calci, Jean Miller, Karen Powers & Cyndi Rennick, finishing a delicious meal at the Pancake Pantry during Mountain Hounds 2011!

There will be vendors galore, a nature walk (watch out for bears!), a photographer, and the always popular Charity Walk where greyhounds in their donation jackets walk along the tourist-filled main drag, then stop for ice cream! There will be contests and games, including a costume contest!

Some of the fun activities in Gatlinburg include a skyline above the city, the artist's loop, the Aquarium, the Guinness World of Records Museum, the Hollywood Star Cars Museum, and lots of cheesy stuff like Ripley's Believe It or Not! Dollywood is just a few miles away, and one can always enjoy the Great Smokey Mountains National Park.

Mountain Hounds offers so much - a fun time, the company of your greyhounds, and the fellowship of greyhound lovers just like you. We hope you will consider making the trip with us!

For more information about Mountain Hounds, go to <http://gfnmountainhounds.com>. And if you'd like to see more of what is available in Gatlinburg, check out <http://www.gatlinburg.com>.
