



GREATvine



A newsletter for Greyhounds and the people who love them

Volume 11, Issue 2

April 2006



Rescuing from the Rescuers by Kelly Faircloth

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Whenever we hear about an animal rescue/adoption organization, we think “How wonderful... those animals are so lucky because they’ll get another chance at life.” But sometimes it doesn’t work out that way. In fact, sometimes the animals would have been better off if they hadn’t been rescued at all. Sadly, it’s happened again, this time in Athens, Alabama, where an adoption organization has been exposed for taking in greyhounds from the local track and housing them in horrific conditions. Greyhound Adoptions of Florida, led by Marilyn and Bob Varnberg, was given a tip that an organization in Alabama had greyhounds in critical condition and something must be done immediately. Some of their wonderful volunteers went to Alabama and posed as adopters, and what they found made them physically ill: more than 50 greyhounds living in crates inside a house, emaciated and covered in filth and open wounds, wallowing in urine and feces. They were able to get pictures and rushed off to the local authorities, asking them to intervene. They were also able to get 8 of the most critical dogs out of the house, and those dogs were brought back to Grey Haven, in Sparr, Florida, for much needed treatment and care. 19 more dogs went to a wonderful facility in Charlotte, North Carolina, but while the owner originally agreed to release all of the dogs, he soon changed his mind and approximately 20 dogs remain with him.

The laws in Alabama are different than they are here in Florida, and so far, the owner of the house has prevailed. Local authorities can’t help, so GAF volunteers are working with 2 attorneys from the Animal Defense League to get the rest of the dogs out of the house and bring criminal charges against the owner. In addition, the track has been notified and they have informed the owner of the house that they will no longer release greyhounds to him for his “adoption” program.

Why does this happen? Why do people start out with the best of intentions, only to have it go horribly wrong? And why can’t they see that they are causing harm? In some cases, the people are simply criminals who never should be allowed around animals (or people). And in some cases, the people are in the midst of a syndrome known as animal hoarding. Some of you that have been members of GREAT for a number of years may remember GREAT’s own journey into the disturbed world of animal hoarding, where we went to pick up a greyhound who was ready to be adopted out, and found a variety of small animals, including Italian greyhounds, Pekingese and Yorkshire Terriers living in the same conditions as those we are describing here. For more information on this condition, please see the following web sites, which do a good job explaining this baffling disorder:

www.tufts.edu/vet/cfa/hoarding/

www.hsus.org/pets/issues_affecting_our_pets/behind_closed_doors_the_horrors_of_animal_hoarding.html

Both sites will give information about the disorder and what you can do if you suspect that this is happening in your own community. Sadly, we see stories in the news all the time about situations like this.

We will keep you posted as to what is happening in the Alabama case. In the meantime, we extend our gratitude and our support to Greyhound Adoptions of Florida, for taking in the worst cases and working around the clock to help these sad greyhounds. We will be running one or more raffle fundraisers to aid their efforts as well as our own, so please keep checking our website for more

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Alabama Rescue continued

(Continued from page 1)

information on those fundraisers. In the meantime, we'd like to introduce you to Ziggy, Ernie and Daisy:

Ziggy is 8 years old (will be 9 in June) and was in frightening shape when GAF volunteers first saw him, but after just a few weeks of regular meals and veterinary care, he has shown amazing improvement.

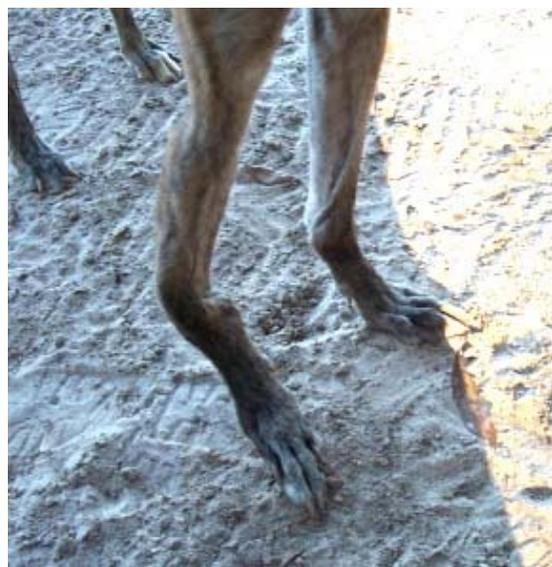


Ziggy - too weak to walk normally



Ziggy - leisurely stretching in the Varnberg kitchen

Ernie will be 5 in September and has an old injury that probably took place at birth or shortly afterward. Nothing can be done to make this leg normal again, but he doesn't let it bother him and in fact, he has no idea he isn't a puppy with four functioning legs. On a recent visit, he took great delight in zooming up behind me and jumping on me when I least expected it, and almost knocked me down a few times!



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Alabama Rescue, continued

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Four year old Daisy looked at least three times her age when the volunteers first laid eyes on her. The picture on the left shows her resting after having the filth bathed from her raw hairless skin, while the one on the right was taken a few weeks later, looking like the beautiful young girl that she really is! She has spots... who knew?



There are many more stories than we have room to share here, and the dogs pictured here still require a lot more care to bring them to full health. Nearly all are positive for tick borne disease and due to the severe malnutrition they experienced, their initial blood-work will need to be repeated to insure that they are healthy. In addition, some still need dentals and to be spayed or neutered. Their health upon intake was too precarious to risk anesthesia at that time.

We will keep you posted on what is happening with the efforts to remove the rest of the dogs from this individual in Alabama. In the meantime, if you'd like to make a donation to aid in the care of the dogs that Greyhound Adoptions of Florida has taken in, you can do so by visiting their website at www.ahome4greys.org/ and clicking on "Donations." The website has not been updated yet to tell the story of the Alabama hounds, since for a time, the attorneys needed to keep the information quiet while building a case. In fact, this article is one of the first stories being made available to the public.

While we do not have a kennel or the facilities to take these dogs in, we will continue to provide as much support as we can to our hardworking and much respected friends at Greyhound Adoptions of Florida. On behalf of the Alabama dogs and GAF, we extend our thanks to you for YOUR support, which makes it possible for any of us to continue to aid greyhounds.

A few years ago, Marilyn and Bob Varnberg, founders of Greyhound Adoptions of Florida, purchased an actual greyhound farm in Sparr, Florida for the purpose of establishing Grey Haven, a greyhound sanctuary and stopping place on the road from track to couch. For the last few years, GREAT has been helping with projects such as cleaning and painting the old kennel building, tearing down old wooden crates and replacing them with metal crates that are much easier to keep clean, hauling away years and years worth of junk, tearing down old fencing to build new, clean areas for the greyhounds to run, fundraising for the new kennel building built especially for the old broods as they await their chance for a home, etc. This relationship between GREAT and GAF is beneficial to both - it gives our members an opportunity to see a greyhound farm and help in ways that they cannot help with GREAT because we don't have a kennel, and gives us a resource to turn to when we have emergency intakes but no room for them. And it provides GAF with additional volunteer resources - important since they are way out in the country! Lastly, it provides both groups with understanding, camaraderie and lifelong friendships as we all work together to help greyhounds.

Our next project "work day" at Grey Haven is 4/30/06... please let me know if you would like to join us! Just call (813) 971-4732.



Sandy Paws 2006 - Greyt Fun in the Sun *by Carol Chilton*

The third annual Sandy Paws Greyt Fun in the Sun greyhound gathering provided a wonderful mini-vacation for GREAT volunteers, members and their hounds (plus a few non-greyhound pups). In attendance were greyhounds and their families from many states, some as far away as Arkansas and Michigan. Jekyll Island, Georgia was the site of the activities and the host hotel property was the Jekyll Inn, a Clarion resort.

Attendees from GREAT were Vivian Affrey & Beau; Laura Calci & Capri; Kelli Chickos & Arnie, Elfie, Heather & Shamu & friend Tami Orr; Carol Chilton with Angel, Bette, Merlin & Sir Guy; JoAnn Copertino & Barney; Kelly & Melinda Faircloth with Bitsy, BonBon, Bumper, Cindy, Clifford, Kaden, Kumba & Luke; Betsy Freeman & Cruiser & friend Ginny Montgomery; Kay & Mike Futrell with kids Alex, Glen & Rhaven & pups Bizzy, Emily & Nini; Leslie & Dave Hardy with BeBe; Lynn & Scott Henderson with Brighton; Judy & Carl Ilse with Kayla & Scarlet; Lois Koleff; Liz Lynch with Bernie & Bonnet; Joyce McCarthy with Julie; Karen Powers & Steffie; Norma Rogers with Abby & Pepper; Doug & Rachel Rubottom with Ellie & Jasmine; Kathryn Rubottom & Eric Farber with Chuchi; Debra Smith; Peggy Toomey & Shannon; Cindy Wiehrs with Chief & Sophie; Joanie & Charlie Wiehrs with Molly; and Pamela Wiseman & Kaleb with friend Mary Adams.

Several folks lengthened the vacation by arriving on Wednesday in order to see the Island and surrounding scenic areas. Many more arrived on Thursday and the official activities began on Friday. Some of the many vendors were Fast Jack, Feathered Gems Jewelry, The Golden Hound, Greyhound Protection League, Greyhounds of Eastern Michigan, Greyt Art, Neena's Greyt Collars, Wayside Gear and 2 Hounds Design. The official Sandy Paws merchandise was sold at the Rootique, staffed by GREAT volunteers.

There is a DVD available with photos taken by a professional photographer. There are over 150 photos set to music, and all proceeds go to Greyhound Guardians of Florida, a 501(c)(3) charity and the organizer of Sandy Paws. To order this DVD, please go to www.gdhughesphotography.com/DVDSlideshows.html. You may see your own hounds' pictures!

The weather was beautiful, the company enjoyable, and it was fun to renew old friendships with greyhounds and their families whom we had met at earlier Sandy Paws events or on other occasions. Won't you join this gathering next year?

Reservations for 2007 are being accepted by the Jekyll Inn at (800) 736-1046. The Inn's website is www.jekyllinn.com. There is also a campground on Jekyll Island; for reservations call toll-free (866) 658-3021. Their website is www.jekyllisland.com/where/camping.html. The "official" dates are Friday, March 2 through Sunday, March 4, 2007. From the Tampa Bay area the drive will be about 5 hours. For more information about Sandy Paws, please see www.sandypaws.org.



GREAT, Inc., making a strong showing at the 2006 Sandy Paws event!



In Loving Memory...

It is with deepest sympathy that we say goodbye to the following beloved pets, canine and feline:

Vivian Affrey	Pepsi
Stella & Tim Alterio	Christina
Carol Baker & David Lichtenfels	Duchess
Danny Cangemi	Fawn
Connie & Jim Carrier	Sid
Terry & Roger Feiler	Annie
Lynn & Scott Henderson	Gypsy
Kathy & Greg Hoffman	Oprah
Eric Ballard & Jodi Frazier	Kelly
Jean & Augie Mauser	Thunder
Jean Miller & Gary Cepin	Sonny
Carolyn Ramaika	Sally
Joan Ray	Andy
Amy & Eric Scheffler	Maggie
Susan Shanahan & Bill Sinnott	Eva
Chris & Debbie Tilley	Tender & Chaz
Randall, Amanda & Jackson Trent	Spicey
Betty Trueblood	Danielle & Sneakers
Marilyn & Bob Varnberg	Boggles
Gail, Joe & Joey Zeman	Streak



*Sunlight streams through window pane
unto a spot on the floor....
then I remember,
it's where you used to lie,
but now you are no more.*

*Our feet walk down a hall of carpet,
and muted echoes sound....
then I remember,
It's where your paws would joyously abound.*

*A voice is heard along the road,
and up beyond the hill,
then I remember it can't be yours....
your golden voice is still.*

*But I'll take that vacant spot of floor
and empty muted hall
and lay them with the absent voice
and unused dish along the wall.*

*I'll wrap these treasured memorials
in a blanket of my love
and keep them for my best friend
until we meet above.*

Author Unknown

*They say memories are golden
well maybe that is true.
I never wanted memories,
I only wanted you.*

*A million times I needed you,
a million times I cried.
If love alone could have saved you
you never would have died.*

*In life I loved you dearly,
In death I love you still.
In my heart you hold a place
no one could ever fill.*

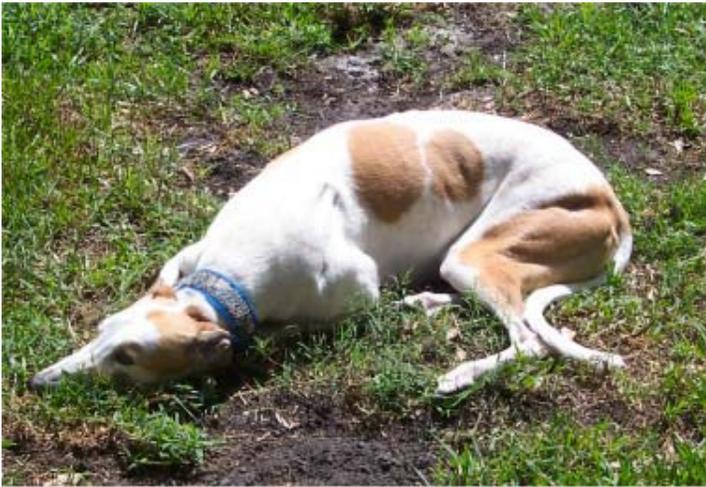
*If tears could build a stairway
and heartache make a lane,
I'd walk the path to heaven
and bring you back again.*

*Our family chain is broken,
and nothing seems the same.
But as God calls us one by one,
the chain will link again.*

Author Unknown



Kelly Frazier-Ballard by Jodi Frazier



Kelly relaxing in the sun

Those who knew Kelly described her as charming, elegant, a lady, a princess. She was all those things, and she was the best greyhound companion we could have asked for. Losing Kelly has been difficult, but as painful as it is, I wouldn't trade our time with her, however short, for anything. Love is stronger than grief, and I know in time I'll only remember the great moments we had. I'll remember how much she loved meet 'n greets; how she loved the attention, the oohs and ahs she so often received. I'll remember how much she loved to eat and how she started "reminding" us, in her gentle way, that it was time to eat well in advance of meal time. I'll remember how much her brother Dusty adored her and followed her every cue. And I'll especially remember how she always, until the very last day, greeted us warmly, tail wagging, when we arrived home.

In her final moments, the vet told us Kelly had a strong heart. But we already knew that about her. She was so very brave until the bitter end in her fight against osteosarcoma.

I like to think that Kelly is up there running in a big open field with no fences, and that when she gets tired, she finds a sunny spot to rest, just like the one in this picture. And I like to think that someday she'll greet me there,

Streak Zeman by Gail Zeman

Every Greyhound owner sincerely believes their grey is the best one to ever walk the face of this planet, and the Zeman family is certainly no exception. Streak was our very first greyhound and we completely fell in love with the wonderful breed all because of his quirky, quiet, sweet, and laid-back personality. He was a ham, an incredibly affectionate 82-pound-wanna-be lap dog, and our dear friend. We brought our beautiful, four-year old brindle boy home to live with us on July 4, 2003. What an appropriate date for a retired racer to go home with his forever family! Streak changed our lives in more ways than we would have ever dreamed – all of it good.

It is still very distressing to tell people that we lost Streak suddenly and unexpectedly on January 18, 2006. He was just three months shy of his 7th birthday. We were overwhelmed with feelings of heartbreak, loss and devastation – and guilt, wondering if there were signs that something was wrong with him that we did not pick up on. His annual checkup in June 2005 had provided him with a clean bill of health for the next year, and he had not acted as if he felt bad in the days or weeks preceding his death. We had our long-time vet examine Streak after he died and take some tissue samples for lab analysis. We wanted to know without a doubt what had happened to our sweet boy. Waiting for the call from the vet with those tissue results was the longest week-and-a-half we'd ever experienced. As it turned out, Streak died of congestive heart failure.

We would like to encourage other pet owners to consider our experience with Streak and ask your veterinarian to pay a little extra attention to your pet's ticker when you take him or her in for checkups. There is also a wealth of information about congestive heart failure on the Internet, which includes symptoms to watch for. "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" could not be a more appropriate adage when it comes to the hearts of our beloved pets.



Streak Zeman



Forever Families

Wishing much happiness to these greyhound homes and their new 4-legged family members!

Burke Barnaby
 Nathan Bittel
 Caroline & Ralph Carter
 Marina & Chuck Cawley
 JoAnn Copertino
 Bob Elsner
 Kelly & Melinda Faircloth
 Jodie Frazier & Eric Ballard
 Joan & Jerry Gebhardt
 Julie Guida
 Catherine & Kevin Hammer
 Leslie & Dave Hardy
 Lynn & Scott Henderson
 Nyda & Chuck Johnson
 Patricia & Donald Kandalec
 Chris Kennedy & Steven Gross
 Donna Lettierio & Bob Moro
 Julie & Alan Martinez
 Jean & Augie Mauser
 Marge & Jerry Middaugh
 Jean Miller & Gary Cegin
 Kristen & Aaron Pawlowski
 Carolyn Ramaika
 Becky Razaire & Greg Case
 Penny & Bill Stevens

Forbes Skiers
 Justa Buddy
 Breezin Sky
 Forbes Onix
 Mohican Too
 JT's Sundown
 Kaias Snead
 Kaias Sarazen
 Kerryhill Noel
 Forbes Cylinder
 In My Stars

 Atascocita Dee
 Forbes Duffodil
 WB Bulls Eye
 Hi Accord
 Conch Saladdaddy
 Kiowa Hix Hyrax
 Atascocita Foxy
 Pinnacle Point
 Bulldozin
 Atascocita Emma
 Forbes Outlaw
 Mesa Zeke
 Sabertooth

Barnaby
 Buddy
 Skye
 Onix
 Barney
 Sundown
 Clifford
 Klondike
 Noelle
 Susie
 Stars
 Pretty Girl
 Brighton
 Buffy
 Tillie
 Soccer
 Killian
 Sweetie
 Olive
 Strider
 Levi
 Emma
 Gale
 Zeke
 Sabre



GREAT Store Coordinators

DOG LOVERS - TAMPA
 Joyce McCarthy 813.962.7115

PETCO - BRANDON
 Susan O'Hara 813.643.7709

PET SUPERMARKET - LAKELAND
 Norma Rogers 813.754.4301
 Pamela Wiseman 863.324.6286

PETSMART - CITRUS PARK
 Fred Freshcorn 813.891.1861

PETSMART - CLEARWATER
 Karen Powers 727.786.4398

PETCO - WESLEY CHAPEL
 JoAnn Copertino 813.994.9825

PETCO - WEST SHORE
 Cindy Wiehrs 813.289.4386

MUVICO – NEW TAMPA
 Jean Mauser 813.971.5772 (Friday Nights)
 JoAnn Copertino 813.994.9825 (Saturday Nights)

PETSMART - DALE MABRY
 Peggy Toomey 813.968.1445

Please see our Event Calendar at www.great-greyhound.org for information on other appearances!

If you wish to volunteer at any of the above meet & greets, please phone the Store Coordinator to offer your assistance. If you wish to attend a volunteer orientation, please call the GREATline 813.971.4732 and leave a message. Volunteers are always needed!



Lessons Learned *by Bob Elsner*

It was certainly a great moment when I adopted Sundown (previously known as Blackie). It was a Thursday evening when I signed the adoption papers and brought Sundown home to meet my little Dachshund. Everything went better than I would have expected and my little Maxi received him with open paws. Since that time Sundown has become adjusted to the routine at the Elsner household and the three of us enjoy good times. My pup has quite a personality and the first several nights he would get up from his bed and check to see if I was still in my bed. He has tried a couple of times to join Max and me in bed. One night about 2:30 a.m. I heard his tags jingling and looked up to see Sundown standing in the doorway of my master bedroom. And before I could say, "what are you doing," I beheld an eighty pound object mid air heading for me and little Maxi who was buried under the bed covers. He landed dead center and yours truly almost fell off the side of the bed and I believe Maxi was panicked. Maxi made his way from under the covers, cocked his head, and as if to say, "What went on here"?

I could share many other tales about my two boys, but there's one in particular that may help other greyhound owners. On a Friday afternoon I was in the house cleaning and had the vacuum on and didn't hear my yard service open the gate and come into the back yard. Maxi and Sundown were outside. My dachshund knew to come in the porch; however Sundown decided to go strolling in the neighborhood. Upon turning off the vacuum I heard the workers and my heart just sunk as I went tearing out the back to discover Sundown missing. I drove around to find him and ultimately contacted Kelly and she alerted other owners in the area and volunteers to assist in the search. We drove around, looking in yards and fields and talking to anyone we encountered who may have seen him, asking that they notify us if he was spotted. Finally after more than a couple of hours, I received a call informing us that someone in the neighborhood had him and we raced to the house to find Sundown enjoying the company of a dear lady and her children. She called the number on his rabies tag and was able to get my information from Hillsborough County Animal Services.



Bob & Sundown on Adoption Day

Only the day before I had taken off his personal tag with the name of Blackie and my personal information because I had ordered a new one with the name of Sundown. Ironically, the new tag arrived the very next day.

I have learned three valuable lessons.

1. It is extremely important to have your pet properly tagged at all times, including an up-to-date rabies tag. A micro-chip is a good idea as well.
2. Have your back yard gates locked at all times.
3. NEVER leave your dogs in the back yard without supervision. Even with the gates locked, things can happen – someone can break in, the dogs can dig underneath, or passersby can throw harmful things in your yard.
4. If your dog does get out and is lost, call GREAT immediately. They have a network of people who can help.

A deep sigh of relief and a hearty thank you to all who assisted in bringing Sundown back home!

Editor's Note: Many thanks to Carol Chilton and Del & Robin Del Guidice who dropped everything and rushed to the area to begin the search. Also, if you are interested in a GREAT tag for your pet, to provide another resource for people to call should you not be available if your dog is lost, please check our website store at www.great-greyhound.org/store.htm. For only \$4, you can have extra peace of mind... not a bad deal!

For those who dislike the jingling of tags, you can order items specifically made to prevent that. For more information, check out the stylish "tag bags" at www.longdogleather.com. You can also google the words "tag bags" for other vendors, and in the meantime, you can simply wrap a rubber band around your dog's tags to keep them from jingling!

