

Deployments Challenge Soldiers and Greyhounds

Thad Byers, GPA-CT member

Swanee is a gorgeous, dark brindle, 9-year-old, big boy with a silky-long coat. Late this fall, Swanee got some really bad news. You see, Swanee's forever family since 2001, Capt. Sylvan Smith, a communication specialist at Fort Hood—4th Infantry Division, and Lt. Hunter Smith, a security specialist, also a member of 4ID, were going to a place far away called Baghdad; at the same time!

This happened once before when both Sylvan and Hunter had to go. But this time, the situation dictated that staying with Sylvan's or Hunter's family wasn't going to be an option. Swanee was worried. Fifteen months was going to be a very long time to go without going outside to be a "good boy." Then there was the whole food and water thing. Frankly, Sylvan and Hunter were more than a bit concerned as well. Swanee, just like all of our greys, is a member of the family.

That's when Sylvan contacted Sally McIntosh of GPA-Central Texas to ask if she had any suggestions. A few emails and about an hour later, she had one.

Thad and Sharon Byers, owners of greyhounds Dallas and Daisy, have lived in Killeen for two decades. Many of the soldiers at Fort Hood are more than just fellow Killeenites. They are special friends. And that's why Thad couldn't respond to Sally's email fast enough. Of course, Swanee had a temporary home with them!

"For us, this was a no-brainer," said Sharon. "These folks offer up their lives to serve our country. This was the very least we could do."

That's when the email exchanges between the Smiths and Byers started. Then came a couple of overnights for Swanee with Dallas and Daisy. They got along surprisingly well as did the humans.

Sylvan left for Iraq on November 3; Hunter followed the day after Thanksgiving. It was difficult to say goodbye, no doubt. The Smiths, obviously, were going to miss Swanee. The dogs helped forge a bond between the adults. Being men gave neither Hunter nor Thad any immunity from the emotions and tears when the final goodbyes were said.

Swanee is several weeks into his 15-month visit with the Byers, and seems to be enjoying his greyhound friends, family, couch,

backyard and home. The jury is still out on just how much he enjoys the pesky birds that live in the house, far out of reach, however. Dallas and Daisy, who have never known a stranger, couldn't be happier. The convenience of emailed pictures to the Smiths several times a week helps to keep Swanee near to their hearts.

Aside from the Byers enjoying their time with Swanee, all that is left for the next 14 months is anticipation for the return of Sylvan and Hunter, and reuniting Swanee with his forever family.

We send all our prayers that Capt. Sylvan Smith and Lt. Hunter Smith will return to Central Texas safely. After all, in a way, we're all family now.



A final group photo – humans (left to right) Sharon Byers, Capt. Sylvan Smith, Lt. Hunter Smith and Thad Byers, with greyhounds (left to right) Daisy, Swanee and Dallas.

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Donations

Simply stated, without your generous donations GPA-Central Texas wouldn't exist. Donations listed here are since the publication of the last newsletter issue. While intended to be a comprehensive list, please forgive us if we overlook any contributions. It is by no means intentional.

Real Ransom III DVM Emergency Medical Fund contributions

Bonnie Lockhart

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- Stan Adams, for Dash
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- Kerry M. O'Brien-McMullen, from No Nude Hounds
- Michele Pancher
- Dorothy Sheehan
- Glenda Speck
- Robert and Lucinda Stinson, in memory of Korbel
- Ben Walker
- Thanks to Glen Bridge and Carla Barron for taking donations of warm coats and money to the Amigos de los Galgos refuge on their recent trip to Spain.

- Thanks to Angie Smith for sewing the coats for the Amigos de los Galgos refuge in Spain.
- Thanks to Vicky Stephens for sewing three, quilted-denim coats and a big "poofy" bed for GPA-CT's foster greyhounds.
- Thanks to Ellen Simmons for the "Adopt Me" scarves, and for the lovely gift items for the Georgetown Stroll.
- Thanks to Barbara Clark for the hand-painted tile coasters that sold like hotcakes at the Georgetown Stroll.
- Thanks to Debbie White of Afghan Rescue and to Evanger's Pet Food for the donations of dry and canned food.
- Thanks to Buddy's Chance Dog Training and Behavior for consulting services.
- Thanks to all GPA-CT foster families, without whom our work isn't possible.
- Thanks to everyone who adds something to the donation boxes at the GPA-CT Meet & Greets.
- Thanks to everyone who so generously purchases GPA-CT merchandise.
- Thanks to everyone who volunteers their time at various GPA-CT events.
- Thanks to everyone who uses their Randall's/Safeway Good Neighbor Program card and has designated GPA-CT as a beneficiary.
- Thanks to everyone who donates through Soup Peddler's Soup Sharing program.

Adoptions

Iza (Iza Looker) and **Fiona**, adopted by Brian and Marty Bibler – November 11

Graycie (Wam Lilybean), adopted by Gordon and Susan Bower, and two chihuahuas – November 29

Prima (Wam Primetime), adopted by William and Judith Munyon, and greyhound Biscuit – December 4

Stan (Solas Stan), adopted by Brad and Tobi Walker, Drake, Felicia, and Logan – December 4

Paco (Kickin Pacolito), adopted by Dan and Diana Marcotte, Matthew and Thomas – December 26



Message From the President

Pam Cook, GPA-CT President

How Many Greyhounds Does It Take to Change a Lightbulb?

According to an email my sister sent, the answer is, "If it isn't moving, who cares?" Well, who among us keeps greyhounds around to help with the household chores, anyway? If what I'd wanted was a canine electrician, I'd have adopted a border collie ("...and while I'm at it, I'll bring the wiring up to code and install that new ceiling fan") or a lab ("Me! Me! Oh pleeeeeease let me change the light bulb!"). But, no. We have greyhounds because... well, what's your reason?

Mine is Sera. Serendipity – AKA Sera-Sera-Bo-Beara, Sugar Bear, and Sweetness – was my first hound, literally the first greyhound I'd ever met. She never washed a dish, vacuumed a carpet, or ran to the store for bananas, although she did once run to the park on her own, apparently for a play date she'd neglected to share with me before hand.

I already loved dogs; still do. And I already had dogs; still do. But when I met Sera, I met a creature altogether unique. Apart from a handful of top show champions, a far too large number of caged puppy producers, and a tragically abused cadre of fighting pit bulls, dogs are not generally

high wage earners for their "guardians." Something about that experience changes a dog.

Sera had been a rabbit runner. Those who knew her, know that she lived with and loved kittens. She was fooled almost daily by a very poorly made, green, cast resin statue of a raccoon. The sight of it caused spiking her ear-and-a-half to attention each time we passed it on our walks. She was scarred, sick, starved, and no longer young when found and taken in by GPA-CT. She was, bar none, the most joyful creature I had ever met. Sera's death from cancer at 11 or 12 left me bereft, and it had nothing to do with lightbulb changing. It had to do with changes in my heart.

In December 2007, Sera welcomed a GPA-CT foster hound to dog heaven. Last fall Chrissy went from the mean streets of Austin, to the pound, to Great Oaks Animal Hospital, and to the Cook house. She entered snarling and snapping at the other Cook critters, when she wasn't collapsed with exhaustion, painful kidney disease, and anemia. Slowly, she began to make friends and feel better. By week three, Chrissy greeted her humans at the door with play bows and tail wags and great toothy grins. For a happy while, her kidney disease was held at bay with food, meds, and fluids. On December 28, we let her go,

held in loving arms on our big-comfy bed, with our dear friends Dr. Erin Homburg and her gentle tech Elizabeth. Our hearts were full.

As Valentine's Day and our first-ever Have a Heart 'Grey'la approach (at warp speed), my mind is on both lights and hearts. We'll have strings of tiny white sparkling lights and candles illuminating the Zilker Clubhouse. Valentines will be inscribed with the names of dogs GPA-CT has placed in loving homes, and the names of dogs yet to find their place at the foot of a bed or sprawled on a sofa.

Wines, chocolates, rich desserts and exotically flavored sweets will vie for

attention with an array of silent auction and raffle gifts. The gifts range from romantic B&B overnights, to restaurant crawls, and to airline tickets. Each gift purchase is destined to support a hound, or three, or fifteen that come into our group needing treatment, surgery, medicine, training, foster care, and – more than anything – love. Join us at the Have a Heart 'Grey'la, where we'll open our hearts to the adoptable hounds we already have, and the hounds waiting in the queue. This is the real race, the one that lands greyhounds in homes where they are adored and cherished.

This morning I'm watching Faith, who will turn 13 on March 1, dream of running. Her feet kick out in a regular rhythm, her eyelids wrinkle, and she emits yorkie-sized woofs. I'm sure the dream rabbits are terrified. Her great-hound heart beats hard, and she puffs with the effort of the chase. Far in the distance, Sera, Chrissy, Koa, Rex, Simon, Concho, Mattie, and a thousand, thousand friends feel their own hearts keeping time.

Each autumn, on Greyhound Planet Day, we remember the hounds who have moved on. At the Have a Heart 'Grey'la, our focus is on those greyhounds whose lives are in our hands today. Have a heart. Join us February 9, and all year long, to celebrate and support the creatures whose love is like no other.

In Memoriam

Ernie, beloved greyhound of Kerry Little – October 22. He goes to join his pal, Stryker, who left during the summer.

Oreo, beloved greyhound of Jim and Holly Treadway – November 1

Mattie, beloved greyhound of John and Lou Ann Anderson, Alex, and greyhound Shelby – November 27

Bullet, beloved greyhound of Steve and Bobbie Wier – December

Chrissy, precious greyhound – December 28

Emma, beloved greyhound of Evelyn Reisser – January 12

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and Individuals for
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Barak Benaryeh, DVM
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512/306-1121

Acknowledgments

Greyhound Pets of
America-Central Texas is
hosting its first-ever Have
a Heart 'Grey'la (rhymes
with gala) fundraiser on
Saturday, February 9,
2008, at Zilker Clubhouse.

GPA-CT's goal is to
have 200 people at this
fundraiser, paying a minimum of
\$25/person or \$40/couple to attend. We
will have live music, hors d'oeuvres,
delicious desserts and wines, door prizes,
and a silent auction.

GPA-CT is inviting interested friends,
family and community members to
attend and to help raise funds to support
GPA-CT's mission to find forever homes
for retired racing greyhounds.

Invitations to the Have a Heart 'Grey'la
were mailed on Saturday, January 19. Watch
your mailbox! If you haven't received an
invitation, it means we don't have a current
snail-mail address for you. Send an email
to gpect@gpacentraltexas.org with your
mailing address and we'll drop one in the
mail to you.

Visit the official Have a Heart 'Grey'la web
page at www.gpacentraltexas.org for more
information.

Many thanks to Lara Gale of the Austin
Humane Society for her guidance, hand-
holding, enthusiasm and never-ending
ideas. Without her, we wouldn't have had
the courage to hold this event.

Silent Auction and Door Prize Donations

GPA-CT thanks these businesses for their
silent auction and door prize donations. Be
sure to bid on the fabulous silent auction
items the night of the Have a Heart 'Grey'la
and patronize these establishments in
recognition of their support to the mission
of GPA-CT.

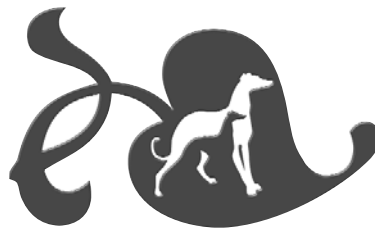
Arbor Car Wash – Ben's Special car washes

Amy's Ice Creams – gift certificates for
small ice cream with one crush'n

Bark for Peace! – gift box filled with
yummy Bark for Peace! treats, dog soap
and other goodies; snack packs for Bark
for Peace! treats

Barton Springs Nursery – hot retro circles
wind chime

Bodhi Yoga & Boutique – one-month
unlimited yoga classes



Have a Heart 'Grey'la

Chuy's Restaurants –
dinner-for-two
gift certificate
Coldwater Creek –
earrings, necklaces and
watches (donated by
Ana Jackson)

George D. Eitt IV – gift
certificate for pedicure

JoyMoves – one-month unlimited Yoga,
Nia and Pilates classes

The Maids Home Services – housecleaning
with team of four maids

Joseph P. Mallon photograph – "Olympic
Hopeful" matted, framed and signed by
photographer

Lee Mannix Center for Canine Behavior –
one private lesson with Lee Mannix

Mansion at Judges Hill – one night stay in
best available room

Myo Massage – gift certificate for
massage services

No Nude Hounds – storm coat with
water-repellant fabric and fleece lining

Paul's Pet Food Delivery – 50 lb. bag
of super premium dog food, dog toy
and treats

Rockin' R River Rides – raft trip for four
on the Guadalupe River

Southwest Airlines – two round trip tickets

Uchi – gift card

University of Texas Athletics –
Rick Barnes and Gail Goestenkors
autographed basketball

Water 2 Wine – wine tasting party for 10

Yogagroove – 10 yoga classes

More donations are coming in daily, so
check the Have a Heart 'Grey'la web page
often for updates.

In-Kind Donations

Batteries Plus

Upper Crust Bakery

Volunteers

We couldn't have done this without you!

Marc Boucher

Glen Bridge, Jr.

Barbara Clark

Pam Cook

Lara Gale

Emily Hutson

Ana Jackson

John Koonz

Nedra Low

Sally McIntosh

Molly May

Rebecca Rice

Alicia Rivas

Donna Seago

Ellen Simmons

Kelly Simmons

Angie Smith

Michele Truhlik

Sara Young



Available for Adoption

Cracker – Male, brindle, 3 years old, unknown if cat or small dog friendly. Cracker is a very shy, timid boy. Although



he would rather spend time in his crate, he has learned that it is okay to lay on the big floor pillows. Cracker loves to play with toys and loves to be outside, whether it is exploring the backyard or going for long walks. Cracker is a love bug, hidden in a shy shell, who needs a family to help break down his wall!

Harley – Male, white with red, 4 years old, not cat or small dog friendly. Harley will look lovingly into your eyes, make you smile, laugh and feel totally adored. He is curious and confident, loves his squeaky toys and sleeps quietly through the night. He likes both men and women, and loves to play with children (best if over 7 years old).



Havana – Female, dark brindle, 5 years old, cat friendly. Havana has come a long way



from her fearful and timid younger days. She has matured into a confident, affectionate, sweet and playful girl. Havana enjoys lots of exercise, walks well on lead, and rides well in the car. She enjoys the company of another dog, loves to run, and play keep away with toys. Havana is an outstanding example of the racing greyhound's beautiful appearance.

Kay – Female, white with red ticking, 6 years old, not cat or small dog friendly. Kay is a very



sweet female that loves attention. It took a little while, but now she gets along great with her foster siblings. Kay is somewhat bossy and would do well as an only dog. She has mastered the doggie door and the stairs off the deck. She's learning about toys, loves to go on walks around the neighborhood and for rides in the car. She's very friendly and loves meeting new people.

Kingsley – Male, red, 6 years old, not cat friendly. Kingsley is a gorgeous red boy with a petite face.



He loves attention any way he can get it – hugs, kisses, scratches, pats, sweet talking – you name it, he eats it all up! He especially loves to snuggle in bed with his foster parents, and gets along well with the other dogs in his foster home.

Lady Rose

(Rosie) – Female, black with white, 5 years old, not cat safe, okay with calm, over 25 lb. dogs. Beautiful Rosie came to us after a cruelty investigation. Initially, she was frightened of everything, but Rosie is now exceptionally loving and comfortable with her foster parents, home, and yard. Rosie gets along beautifully with her greyhound foster brother, and is the perfect, playful dog at home. Rosie's sleek black coat, delicate white toes, and gorgeous brown eyes make her one of our most elegant hounds!



Lenny – Male, brindle, 3 years old. Lenny is a love. He thoroughly enjoys living in a home! He is a true lounge hound, and will



lay quietly wherever you are. He is good on a leash, is well behaved, and likes going out for walks. He loves toys, and is playful and animated. He loves his food and dances at feeding time! He gets along great with other dogs. At night, Lenny sleeps quietly on a pet bed. He is very observant and learns quickly. Lenny will capture your heart and be a great companion!

Mason – Male, brindle, 10 years old, has lived with cats. Handsome, quiet, and potty perfect; this big guy stays off furniture and comes when called. Mason thrives on routine, dearly loves a walk, despises a car ride, and wants to share a daily banana with his people. He takes a low dose of clorazepate for anxiety, although, thunderstorms and gunfire still unsettle him. Mason is in good health and would dearly love a forever home in which to enjoy his golden years.

Radley – Male, brindle, 3 years old, special needs, and has personality to burn! He is a smart, enthusiastic boy with two weeks of in-residence training with Barbara Perry at Stay 'N Play Pet Ranch. He knows basic commands – sit, down, come, wait – walks well on a leash, and is an eager learner. Radley gets along well with the other two greyhounds in his foster home, although he favors his foster parents. He would probably do well as an only dog and would prefer a home where his guardian was home with him most of the time.



Rafa – Male, 3 years old, not small animal friendly. Rafa loves attention and makes sure you are always within his reach for some lovin'. He walks perfectly on lead and loves a ride in the car. He is very physical and does lean into anyone near him. Rafa has a tendency to jump when excited, is great with other medium to large dogs, but does fancy himself as an alpha. If you have room on your sofa and in your heart for this loverboy, you will be worshipped by a hound unlike any other.



Raj – Male, white with black/ticking, 6 years old, not cat or small dog friendly. Oh, if only our regal Raj could talk! We're sure he'd tell us how he ended up living out of dumpsters in Manor. All we know for certain is that when he landed in the pound, this boy was 20 lbs. underweight, heartworm positive, anemic, and full of hookworms. GFKABES (the Greyhound Formerly Known As Black Eyed Spot) – a registered but never-raced doggy – Raj is handsome and healthy, parasite free, easy going, and oh so eager to move from a kennel into a home. Raj simply adores people, walks, and – predictably – mealtimes.



(Continued on page 6)

Available for Adoption

(Continued from page 5)

Taibo – Male, red, 7 years old, greyhound/saluki mix, cat friendly. Taibo is a sweet, loving dog who gets along well with other dogs, both large and small, as well as cats. He is quietly affectionate and, if you're willing to sit on the floor with him, he'll climb into your lap for a snooze. He's not very interested in toys but does appreciate a good chew bone.



Information coming soon on:

Account
Gretta
Lexi
Nell
Suki

These dogs have not yet been small-animal tested and are being evaluated in their foster homes. Contact us if you want more info!

GPA-CT Meet & Greets

First Saturdays, Town Lake stroll

Second Saturdays, Noon-3 pm
Tomlinson's Westlake, 3300 Bee Cave Rd.

Third Saturdays, Noon-2 pm
Petco Temple, 2112 SW H.K. Dodgen Loop, Temple

Fourth Saturdays, Noon-3 pm
Petco Austin-North, Arboretum
9828 Great Hills Trail

Please check the email announcement list and website for Meet & Greet cancellations and special Meet & Greet opportunities.

GPA-CT Email List

GPA-CT relies heavily on the Yahoo! email list to inform our members of current events and last-minute opportunities. Please take a minute to join this informative list. Visit our website at www.gpacentraltexas.org and follow the instructions to join. Or send a blank email to gpa-subscribe@yahoo.com. It's a grey way to stay informed.

Santa Paws

Santa Paws sounded more like "Father Christmas" but the greyhounds who attended the GPA/CT holiday party didn't care a bit! They happily posed with him for the camera, in hopes that he would bring bones and toys – not lumps of coal. Well, for the most part they posed happily. A few had to be lured with treats to "watch the birdie." Flash Garcia, accompanied by his mom, Amy, needed no such encouragement.

The GPA-CT holiday party took on a slightly new flavor in 2007, as Cara Vacchiano opened up Buddy's Chance Training Center for the celebration, and Santa's helper, Michael Gale, listened to each hound's deepest wishes. The boy dogs seemed to engage in a marking contest, which kept cleaning implements in constant motion. Belly bands became the designated attire for the afternoon. Again, Flash was the standout.

A wonderful spread for people and pooches was set out behind a barrier of x-pens, and everyone welcomed the holiday, even though the temperature and the humidity were more like September than December.

After the festivities, a brief quarterly membership meeting was held. Members were encouraged to volunteer for and become involved in helping with the Have a Heart 'Grey'la, which will take place February 9.



Michael Gale was Santa Paws to Amy Garcia and her little elf Flash, at the GPA-CT Holiday Party on December 8, 2007.

Soup Sharing Program

Slurp soup and raise money for greyhounds at the same time!

A unique Austin business, the Soup Peddler, will donate to GPA-CT 5% of every purchase we make! Several GPA-CT members are already regular "soupiers." We've been enjoying not just soup but also salads, main dishes, vegetables, and desserts that are delivered to our front porches once a week. With vegetarian dishes, choices for carnivores, and a wealth of kid-friendly selections, it's hard to choose without maxing out the credit card. To learn more and to place a secure order, please go to the Soup Peddler's special GPA-CT website, www.souppeddler.com/?Click=7017.



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Francesca's Perspective

Hey, Dogs! It's me, Francesca!

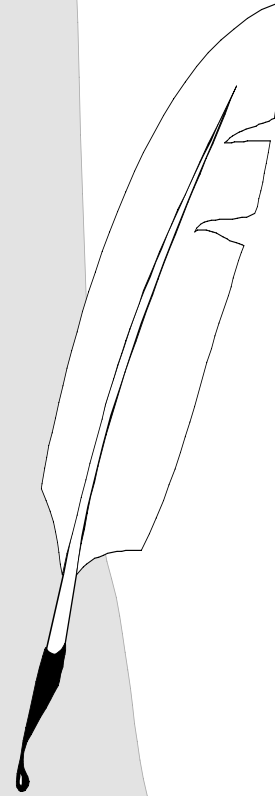
February is the month of love you know, so, in the tradition of Oprah and David Letterman, I thought I'd make a list of the things I love. Sorry David, there are more than ten of them.

I love sleeping under a blanket, especially when Wylie leaves it alone. I love taking walks, we get two per day, and if we don't my mom hears about it. I love going for rides in cars! When we didn't go very often, you could be sure that it was a ride to the vet but now we go other places too so it's not so scary. I love seeing my friends at parties and Meet & Greets! I love cookies, Greenies, Heartgard (it's really good, believe it or not), and chicken! I love looking out the front window and greeting passers by with my friendly bark. I love when my mom's friends come over. I've gotten pretty good at getting maximum petting, you just have to be insistent. I love Wylie. Even though he's a big dork, having him around makes it less lonely when my mom's at work. I love listening to KUT. My mom leaves it on when she's gone and sometimes they talk, sometimes they play music, and it just makes me calmer to hear people chattering or singing. It also keeps me abreast of current events. I love lying in the sun on a cool day. I love lying in the closet during a rainstorm. (But I do NOT love rainstorms!) Most of all, I love waking up every morning in my very own house on my very own bed, knowing that I am loved.

We have a lot to love, my fellow former racers! I hope your Valentine's Day finds you happy, healthy and adored, and I'm STILL trying to figure out how I'll stow away to go to the Have a Heart 'Grey'la! I'm not at all pleased that dogs aren't allowed at the Zilker Clubhouse, think of the bling I could be adorned with! I'll keep thinking, and if anyone comes up with an idea on how to get there, use the bark network. Yes, humans, when you hear all that barking in the neighborhood, it's not dumb, random dogs barking, we have a communication network. Haven't you seen *101 Dalmatians*? Hug your humans!

Kisses,

Francesca



Greyhound Pets of America —
Central Texas
PO Box 10069
Austin, TX 78766

www.gpacentraltexas.org

To join the email announcement list, send a blank email to: gpact-subscribe@yahoo.com

Submissions to PAWS & Reflect are due the 10th of the month. Send your story or photos to newsletter@gpacentraltexas.org. GPA-CT reserves the right to edit all submissions.

Newsletter Services – Thank You:

To Mike Spann and Horizon Graphics for donating copying services. To Christine Sherrod for design and typography of the newsletter.

Letters to the editor are accepted for publication in PAWS & Reflect. Letters must contain your name, address and phone number for verification purposes. Letters will be printed on a space-available basis (300 word limit). GPA-CT reserves the right to edit all letters for length, clarity and potentially libelous statements, and may reject publication of any letter for any reason. Letters published in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the position of GPA-CT.

GPA-CT in Your Will

You may not think you have enough of an estate to worry about having a will, but if you own a house, you need a will giving directions to those left behind as to how you'd like your property divided.

Please don't forget GPA-CT when you make your will or the next time you update your will (which should be done periodically – things change!). Your gift of \$500, \$1000, \$5000 or more would make a huge difference to the chapter as we try to meet our mission of finding responsible loving homes for greyhounds which fail to qualify for the racetrack or no longer qualify for the racetrack, to acquaint the public with the desirability of greyhounds as pets, and to inform the public of the availability of these dogs for adoption.

What greater gift than to continue making an impact for the good after you're no longer alive to do so? The greyhounds we will meet and endeavor to help in the future will thank you.





Greyhound Pets of America–Central Texas
 P.O. Box 10069
 Austin, TX 78766
 512/301-8236



Greyhound Pets of America–Central Texas

Mail your donations to P.O. Box 10069, Austin TX 78766

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home phone _____ Office phone _____ Cell phone _____

Name(s) of greyhound(s) _____

Email address _____ Please add me to the GPA-CT email announcement list.

Donation \$ _____

- Membership (\$25 yearly per household; payable Feb. 14)
- Donation to GPA-CT general operating fund
- Donation to The Real Ransom III DVM Emergency Medical Fund

Greyhound Pets of America – Central Texas is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation.
 Donations to GPA-CT are tax deductible to the full extent allowable by law.

