

The President's Notebook

Sally Rau McIntosh, GPA-CT President

“Brother, can you spare a dime?”

We've been hearing the strains of this Depression-era song more and more of late, as people get increasingly nervous about what lies ahead. Here in central Texas we are so far relatively unscathed by the economic downturn that has swept the world over the last few months, but there are signs that our “high on the hog” way of life will be undergoing some moderation.

What does that have to do with greyhound adoption? Well, maybe nothing. But maybe something.

There have been reports from around the country of people losing their homes and leaving their dogs behind when they go. A greyhound was abandoned in a situation like this in another state. Fortunately, he came to the attention of GPA-CT and was quickly moved into a new family. Reputable adoption groups always have the policy of taking back “failed adoptions,” no matter the cause of the failure. The impact of growing numbers of surrendered dogs to

a group can be significant, putting stress on available resources which are never quite adequate to meet the needs.

Potential adopters may begin to think more carefully about the financial responsibility of a new dog. Those of us who are greyhound guardians know that the cost of care for our friends can sometimes be a shock—sudden vet bills, medications, special foods, training, boarding. GPA-CT encourages people to be realistic in their expectations of costs involved with adopting. The dark side of that realism is that economic stress may impact the number of applications for adoption that we receive over the next few months.

Of course another area in which a lifeless economy can affect us as a group is in donations. Nonprofit groups of all kinds are reporting fewer donations at this time while people assess their situations, deciding if they have as much money to give to charity as in the past. Greyhound adoption groups won't be any less affected.

Panic isn't going to help. We need to remember things are always changing.

Bad times don't last forever, either for groups or for individuals. Now is the time you can begin to think about ways in which you can help GPA-CT weather this storm. Can you volunteer the next time a request comes out on the e-list? If a dog needs to make a trip to the vet, maybe you could chauffeur him. If a foster family needs respite care for a weekend, maybe you have some temporary space in your home. Can you set up a \$5 a month donation schedule? Small amounts add up and are easier to part with than a lump sum. Most important is not losing sight of our mission: doing everything we can to promote forever homes for greyhounds in need of a couch to lie on. Join us at Meet & Greet, chat to the public about the joys of being owned by a greyhound.

My parents told me that people survived The Depression by working together and making do with less. I hope our challenges will not be as large as they were in the 1930s. We are as strong and as resourceful as our parents were. The greyhounds are depending on everyone of us!

Foster of The Quarter

Pam Cook's specialty is dogs with “rough edges.” Since she and her family began fostering for GPA-CT several years back, more than a few spooks have come through the Cook house. Among the most memorable were Peaches (now Isobel), Oliver (now Oscar), Izzy, and the one and only Joey, who was terrified of helicopters, balloons, and ceiling fans. Bringing fearful greyhounds around takes time, consistency, and patience; it helps that Pam and Jeff have a few dogs of their own who seem to let the new kids know that they're in a safe and predictable environment, with safe and predictable people. “I don't think I can name my favorite part of fostering,” says Pam, “but what's great is that we get to know so many wonderful greyhounds. I love the bonding process, and I love seeing their personalities emerge over time.”

Their first foster greyhound was Ranger, who arrived as a gangly, goofy, outgoing puppy of about nine months. Beth Underwood asked the Cooks to take him right away, Pam says, “because if we didn't, she was afraid that she and Jon would adopt him.” A fuzzy-

red forty pounder who liked to sit on laps, Ranger frequently came running proudly into the living room with items in his mouth.

A favorite foster story involves Zuni, who arrived from an abandoned kennel in Arizona at age 2. “Having Zuni in the house was like having a toddler,” Pam recalls. “No object was safe. She was especially drawn to full coffee mugs and would grab them by the handle, fling them across the carpet, and lap up what she could in the 15 seconds it took me to reach her.” To Pam's amazement, when Zuni was adopted into a wonderful home with a four-month-old rescued Doberman, she rose to the occasion beautifully and became a bossy big sister who did everything right.

Challenges have included greyhounds who were so afraid of people the family could not come into the house unless Pam, Jeff and daughter Ally turned their backs; dogs with peculiar obsessions; too many counter surfers to name; and one little greyhound who initiated a backyard digging-to-China project. “Our dogs were

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(Year) = date term expires

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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:

Carla Barron, in memory of the perfect dog Flirty

Brian and Michelle Borgeson

Barbara Ellington

Judy Ransom

Chuck Renshaw (Merry Christmas from Harley, Munchkin, and Trevor: The Gentle Giant, The Boss, and The Mischief-maker)

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Matching fund donations:

Dell—Kelli Gowan, Brian York

National Instruments—Shari Gray

Donations at-large:

- Stan and Debbie Adams, for Dash
- James and Rachel Brush, in memory of Daphne
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- William and Judith Munyon, in honor of Kara Elizabeth Scott
- Barbara Pospisil and Roy Schuetze, in memory of Searchlight who ran in England in WWII
- Rangel Kennels, for Mystic Trey
- Matthew Ray
- Ira and Linda Royals
- Gary Ruzek
- Elizabeth Sonier, in memory of Daphne Brush
- Alicia Stadler
- Vicky and Jon Stephens (Happy Hanukkah, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all the hounds and humans)
- Robert and Lucinda Stinson
- Wayne, Judith and Pamela Thorburn, in memory of Tippy (Top Speed Tip), Turbine (River Turbine), and Mon Amie
- Chip and Sara Young
- Thanks to Dripping Springs Animal Hospital for boarding several GPA-CT foster greyhounds.
- 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 volunteers their time at 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.

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 gpact-subscribe@yahoo.com. It's a greyt way to stay informed.



Like a Kid In a Candy Store

At Christmas time you expect excited children of all ages. Toss in some excited parents and relatives and the excitement mounts. Toss in a greyhound and it is amazing what you get.

Consider the case of Raj, our newest addition to the Stone Herd. For the better part of 20 years we have adopted greyhounds. We started like most with our eyes on a youngster. Deke's Hooter was a two-year-old brindle female that started all this Herd stuff. She was renamed Micah and ruled over the Herd until she was 12½.

Since that first "we do" we have had six that have lived or are living out their lives in our forever home. There has been Samson, who never ever grew up yet lived to almost 15; Lucky, who after running wild was lucky to find us (she was 12 when she passed over this year); Breezy, who strolled into our lives and stole our hearts but also lost the battle with cancer this year; Lyle "Which way did they go?" Stone, who came along to make our Herd an even three; followed by Gracie, who, just like Breezy, was a multi-time loser; and that makes six.

Except for our first two, the other four all had common traits and histories of being returns, seniors, or special needs, but all came with a lot of love and a sense that each day with us was all they wanted. They didn't care if they had one year or seven more to live. They were going to live each day like it was their last and best.

We decided long, long ago to adopt the difficult-to-place greyhounds. We had been in geriatric mode for so long it just made sense. We lost Lucky in September and Breezy in December of this year. Gracie, a graceful nine-year-old, came to love us and bring structure back into the herd. With Lyle and Breezy running amok the Herd needed some structure. Come December, Breezy lost a sudden and aggressive bout with cancer and left us.

Now that you have some historical perspective, I want to remind you that for many years a nine-year-old was a youngster in our Herd with 10 or 11 being the average age at any given time. That gets us to Christmas and Raj.

We adopted Raj on December 20. Raj is a 6½-year-old, black and white, 60-lb. male. He was found running from dumpster to dumpster in Manor by Animal Control. Raj weighed around 40 pounds and had every parasite known to man and was also plagued with heartworms. He was a tough luck story and he was one sick pup.



Thankfully he found GPA-CT and over a long period of time has been brought back to good health but will always have issues and special needs to deal with. We are lucky to now have the joy of fulfilling those needs for him. He is a lover and pleaser.

After a week we are learning more about him and find that some of his behavior even makes sense. Imagine living off the land and dumpsters. He approaches each meal as his last and is a more deliberate counter surfer than Sam was and he was outstanding. Do not leave anything out. Nothing.

Yesterday was the awakening for me as to why Raj LOVES to go in the backyard. He runs like the wind with the Herd, barks at the neighbor dogs, chases squirrels because Gracie has taught him to, and blows past the bird feeders leading into turn #2. The garden becomes a blur as he races past to keep up with Gracie. I found Raj eating the bottom end of a butternut squash the other day. Curious. He had a mango yesterday. Then it finally (duh) dawned on me that our compost pile by the garden was so much more than what we thought it was. This greyhound that lived by scrounging off the land and in the trash has his "OWN DUMPSTER!"

Not only did Raj come home for Christmas and make our Herd complete, he found that Santa really does have a sense of humor. Raj also showed us once again that love comes in all shapes, sizes, needs and ages. If your heart ever leads you to adopt an older greyhound listen to it. Yes, our seventh greyhound is full of mischief and energy (it has been YEARS since we had a 6½ year old) but he has made us all a little younger and a whole lot more appreciative of life and the opportunity to love.

Happy New Year to all!

Sherman and the Herd
(December 29, 2008)

GPA-CT Meet & Greets

February 2009

Saturday, February 14
Tomlinson's Westlake, noon-3 pm

Saturday, February 21
Petco Temple, noon-2 pm

Saturday, February 28
Petco Austin-North (Arboretum),
noon-3 pm

March 2009

Saturday, March 14
Tomlinson's Westlake, noon-3 pm

Saturday, March 21
Petco Temple, noon-2 pm

Saturday, March 28
Petco Austin-North (Arboretum),
noon-3 pm

April 2009

Saturday, April 11
Tomlinson's Westlake, noon-3 pm

Saturday, April 18
Petco Temple, noon-2 pm

Saturday, April 25
Petco Austin-North (Arboretum),
noon-3 pm

May 2009

Saturday, May 9
Tomlinson's Westlake, noon-3 pm

Saturday, May 16
Petco Temple, noon-2 pm

Saturday, May 23
Petco Austin-North (Arboretum),
noon-3 pm

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

Warning: Dog Toy Causes Injury

Email brings us many warnings of many dangers. Not all of them prove to be true. This one is apparently a real danger of which dog owners should be aware. A toy produced by Four Paws, Inc., Pimple Ball with bell (#20227-001), has caused serious injuries in dogs, large and small. If you have this toy in your home you should dispose of it safely. You can find verification that this is true as well as details of the danger at <http://www.snopes.com/critters/crusader/pimpleball.asp>.



Thanks to These Businesses
and Individuals for
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Allison Healy, DVM
Erin Homburg, DVM
Jacob Mireles, DVM
Kristina Schmalz, DVM
512/454-3833

**Buddy's Chance
Dog Training and Behavior**
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512/636-3793

Camp Bow Wow
512/670-2275

Dog Camp
512/858-9227

**Emergency Animal Clinic of
Northwest Austin**
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512/331-6121

Great Oaks Animal Hospital
Lisa Willis, DVM
512/388-4551

The Grey Zone Houndsitting
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**Lee Mannix Center for
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North Austin Animal Hospital
512/459-7676

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Soup Peddler
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Spicewood Springs Animal Hospital
Barak Benaryeh, DVM
512/345-2727

Tomlinson's Westlake
512/306-1121

Available for Adoption



Account – Female, brindle, not cat or small dog friendly. The joy and exuberance of this sweet girl are contagious. She smiles and

prances, plays with toys and gazes adoringly at any person who takes a moment to pet her. Account would love to have a greyhound buddy to hang around with, so if you need a second dog, give this precious girl a look.

Buzz and Lucy –

No, you're not seeing double but you are seeing littermates. Buzz (left) and Lucy are brother and sister—tightly



bonded and devoted to one another. Both are incredibly well-mannered. Lucy (Lrc Lucy) sets the standard for being a gently affectionate, people-oriented lady. Buzz (HM Buzzer) is a happy and loving soul. GPA-CT would prefer to keep this pair together.



Kay – (Y Knot Blazinkay) Female, white with red ticking, 6 years old, not cat or small dog friendly. Kay is very sweet with people but somewhat bossy with other dogs. It

took a little while, but now she gets along great with her foster siblings. She loves to go on walks around the neighborhood and for rides in the car.



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.

Kramer – Male, 4 years old, brindle, probably not cat friendly. Kramer is a total love bug; he loves to receive hugs and kisses — and is pretty generous with the kisses! Kramer does love to spend time in the great outdoors, preferably on a nice walk. If you are looking for a handsome boy with gorgeous eyes, a loving personality, and a laid-back attitude, Kramer is definitely for you!



Rafa – Male, 3 years old, not small animal friendly. Rafa is one of the most affectionate hounds his foster mom has ever met.

He loves attention and he makes sure that you are always within his reach for some lovin'. He's not a velcro dog, he's a super-glue dog! He walks perfectly on lead and loves a ride in the car. If you have room on your sofa and in your heart for this lover-boy, you will be worshipped by a hound unlike any other.

Information coming soon on: Belle, Buck, Cher (U Too Cher), Hobo, Nell and Wheeler.

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

Adoptions

Mystic (Mystic Trey), adopted November 18, by Jeff and Pam Cook, greyhound Faith, wannabe Karma, and kitties

Lulu (Thumper), adopted December 20, by David Valeys and Julita Zaborowsky, greyhounds Cricket and Opie, two whippets, and kitty

Raj (Black Eyed Spot), adopted December 20, by Sherman and Kathy Stone, and Ashley, greyhounds Lyle and Gracie

Hawk (GJ's Black Hawk), adopted December 20, by Chip and Sara Young, and greyhound Sophie

Old and Grey: Caring for Your Senior Hound

Pam Cook, GPA-CT Member

You know that greyhound you adopted at age two? The one with a big heart, strong bones, perfect kidneys, and superb vision? If you're fortunate, she'll be with you for years and years. She'll love you, you'll love her, and she will—if you're blessed with a decade or so together—develop the problems that plague old dogs, old people, old everything.

It's hard to imagine a future that involves any level of infirmity when you watch your pointy-nosed speed demon roar around the backyard or leap with joy when you come home from work. It may be even harder to see that challenging period of old age as a gift, but it is: Ask anyone who's lost a four-year-old to osteosarcoma or a six-year-old to kidney failure. What would they give to be mopping up puddles after an incontinent senior grey or boosting an old dog into the car?

What challenges are we likely to face as our greyhounds age? It's important to know, before you adopt a canine pal, that there will be higher vet bills and more work to keep your senior pet happy and in good health. Annual bloodwork screening becomes more critical as dogs age. Count on running a "senior panel" that includes a complete blood count as well as kidney and liver function tests. The results can give you advance warning of manageable illnesses like diabetes and liver problems, guide your choice of food, treats, and supplements, and alert you to hidden conditions that are treatable if caught early. Treatment costs are not negligible and will include time, medications, and more frequent vet visits. Although after age ten or so, you may choose not to vaccinate yearly (instead checking blood titers for resistance to illnesses like distemper and parvovirus), your dog still needs a regular once-over by the vet.

Physical changes are not always easy to spot because they may occur gradually, just as in humans. Over time, you may observe decreasing stamina, stiffness upon rising, and reluctance to climb stairs (hey, this sounds like ME!) that signal anything from a pulled muscle to bone cancer. No matter what the cause, your hound can almost always be made more comfortable with medication or other treatments. Changes in your dog's coat may be a sign of thyroid problems, Cushing's disease, folliculitis, or allergy. Limping can mean corns, fracture, arthritis, herniated discs, or a host of other problems. Have your vet check it out. X-rays, ultrasound images,

and even exploratory surgery are sometimes needed to diagnose a problem. And remember that, just like with humans, recovery for an older dog is slower than it is for a pup. Be patient, provide physical, emotional, and medical support, and have a mop handy.

Behavioral changes are also likely in the aging hound. If your 45-mile-an-hour couch potato napped for hours every day, he may nap twice as much or, alternatively, become restless and spend much of his time pacing. The hound that slept soundly all night may need a midnight potty break. Appetites can become unpredictable; water drinking may increase or decrease, signaling—or even causing—illnesses. Decreased vision or hearing can mean that people or animals that seem to appear without warning now startle your dog. Cognitive canine dysfunction (CCD), an Alzheimer's-like condition, may appear, disorienting both your greyhound and the people who love him. As with Alzheimer's, medications can often slow but not cure CCD.

Given that a fairly recent Ohio State University study found that 25% of adopted greyhounds will die not just of cancer but of the very specific bone cancer called osteosarcoma, each of us should be aware that we have a 1 in 4 chance of hearing that diagnosis. Although greyhounds are less likely to suffer from genetically-caused diseases than almost any other pure breeds, it is not yet clear whether osteosarcoma is inherited, a result of lifestyle, or some combination of these. Research continues, but in the meantime, too many hounds are lost to this vicious, fast-moving, incurable disease. It, and other cancers (mast cell, squamous cell, hemangioma), is more common as dogs age. Kidneys, livers, eyes and ears, even absent the ravages of cancer, all begin to wear out at some point.

My rule of thumb (mine—not necessarily yours) is that if we can treat a condition and have a happy dog, we'll treat. This is not always possible. Over the decades, most of the Cook dogs and cats have gently but pointedly let me know when they were ready to move on from this world. It's a tough call, and I try hard to listen to my critters. I happen to be especially fond of old animals, including stinky, cranky ones that aren't mine, but even those not partial to elderly canines treasure the 13-year-old hound they've loved since early retirement. To the extent that we can, we prepare ourselves for the additional work, patience, and cost that come with golden oldies. We struggle to find the clarity and balance that allows us to let them go when they're ready, because otherwise we may try too hard to hang on. We also take the actions we can to make their years with us as long, as comfortable, and as joyful as possible. And, we love them start to finish.

We're greyhound people, and that's what we do.

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 "soupies." 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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Top 10 Human Medications That Poison Our Pets

Although pet parents are well aware of poisons lurking around their home, many don't realize that some of the biggest culprits are sitting right on their own nightstands. In 2007, the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center received 89,000 calls related to pets ingesting over-the-counter and prescription medications. To help you prevent an accident from happening, our experts have created a list of the top 10 human medications that most often poison our furry friends.

If you suspect your pet has ingested any of the following items, please call your veterinarian or the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center's 24-hour hotline at (888) 426-4435. And remember to keep all medications tucked away in bathroom cabinets—and far from curious cats and dogs.

NSAIDs

NSAIDs (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) like ibuprofen or naproxen are the most common cause of pet poisoning in small animals, and can cause serious problems even in minimal doses. Pets are extremely sensitive to their effects, and may experience stomach and intestinal ulcers and—in the case of cats—kidney damage.

In Memoriam

Ranger (Ranger Kit Parker), precious greyhound, October 24

Slinky, beloved greyhound of H.D. and Kathy Shallenbarger, October 27

Jack, beloved greyhound of Diane Lee, October 29

Heaven, beloved sighthound of Kathy Wall, October 31

Morocco, beloved greyhound of Mike and Holly Waldon, and Connor, November 14

Breezy (Mr. Breeze), beloved greyhound of Sherman and Kathy Stone, and Ashley, December 4

Annie, beloved greyhound of Wayne and Barbara Clark, January 8

Antidepressants

Antidepressants can cause vomiting and lethargy and certain types can lead to serotonin syndrome—a condition marked by agitation, elevated body temperature, heart rate and blood pressure, disorientation, vocalization, tremors and seizures.

Acetaminophen

Cats are especially sensitive to acetaminophen, which can damage red blood cells and interfere with their ability to transport oxygen. In dogs, it can cause liver damage and, at higher doses, red blood cell damage.

Methylphenidate (for ADHD)

Medications used to treat ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) in people act as stimulants in pets and can dangerously elevate heart rates, blood pressure and body temperature, as well as cause seizures.

Fluorouracil

Fluorouracil—an anti-cancer drug—is used topically to treat minor skin cancers and solar keratitis in humans. It has proven to be rapidly fatal to dogs, causing severe vomiting, seizures and cardiac arrest even in those who've chewed on discarded cotton swabs used to apply the medication.

Isoniazid

Often the first line of defense against tuberculosis, isoniazid is particularly toxic for dogs because they don't metabolize it as well as other species. It can cause a rapid onset of severe seizures that may ultimately result in death.

Pseudoephedrine

Pseudoephedrine is a popular decongestant in many cold and sinus products, and acts like a stimulant if accidentally ingested by

pets. In cats and dogs, it causes elevated heart rates, blood pressure and body temperature as well as seizures.

Anti-diabetics

Many oral diabetes treatments—including glipizide and glyburide—can cause a major drop in blood sugar levels of affected pets. Clinical signs of ingestion include disorientation, lack of coordination and seizures.

Vitamin D derivatives

Even small exposures to Vitamin D analogues like calcipotriene and calcitriol can cause life-threatening spikes in blood calcium levels in pets. Clinical signs of exposure—including vomiting, loss of appetite, increased urination and thirst due to kidney failure—often don't occur for more than 24 hours after ingestion.

Baclofen

Baclofen is a muscle relaxant that can impair the central nervous systems of cats and dogs. Some symptoms of ingestion include significant depression, disorientation, vocalization, seizures and coma, which can lead to death.

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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.

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Our Manners classes will have your dog racing to your side when you say "come"! Walking on leash, sit, leave-it, down, and stay are also taught.

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Francesca's Perspective

Hey Dogs! It's me, Francesca!

I have a lot of things I love, I know, and here's one more to add to the list—WALKS!!! I am so fortunate that my mom has it in her head that she's fat! We get two, count 'em: TWO walks per day. When she heads for the coat hooks, I know we're in for our treat. We sometimes walk the long block, but in the morning it's usually just the short block since she's in a hurry to leave the house for a long time. She says she's going to work. Why does she have to stay there so long? Anyway, she waits for Wylie and me to quit jumping and then slips our collars with those leashes over our heads and out we go. On Wylie's leash, she has this little black bone that bags come out of so she can pick up what we're trying to leave for people in their grass. Why does she have to pick it up? There's plenty for her in the back yard if she wants it! She also knows a lot of people that live in the houses on the sides of our walks. Sometimes she sees a lot of friends, sometimes no one is outside, but whenever she talks to people, we get petted and I am complimented on my extreme beauty. We even have some dog friends who we see and although most are on leashes like us, some are just out running around. They stay away from us mostly, but in case an unleashed dog does come up to us, she scares them away by

yelling "No!" and it usually works alright. She says it as loudly and as low as her voice goes so that she sounds pretty frightening. If we're meeting a dog on a leash for the first time, she holds our leash a little closer than usual but not too close, I guess so we don't get the message that she's tense. Most of our new dog friends are fine, but if she sees any funny business, she asks the other person to back up a little. A boxer who lives in the neighborhood really, really likes me, but for a snack I think. She figured that out when he stood very tall and stiff and started to wag his tail super quick so she got me away from his big drooly mouth before it was too late. There are definitely perils out on our daily walks but I think that if we didn't have our pedestrian expeditions, Wylie would eat way more of the house and I would pout. Walks are exercise for our bodies AND our brains and I'm pretty sure they help to keep us mentally healthy. Hounds who get in trouble at home should try getting their people to go with them around the neighborhood. We are instinctive travelers so what better way to occupy our exquisite minds than by doing what comes naturally?

See you all outside!

Licks,

Francesca



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Foster of the Quarter—(Continued from page 1)

delighted to help. As many times as we've filled it, I still find our old girl Faith with her head in the hole and the dirt flying," Pam says.

Pam's husband and daughter were 100% on board in 2007 when she brought home Chrissy, terminally ill with kidney failure and beset with a dozen other health problems. "In a week, Chrissy went from growly, snarly, and almost too weak to stand to a smiling charmer," Pam remembers. "We packed a lifetime of love into less than three months. We were with her when she crossed the bridge, and as hard as it was, our family would do it again in a minute. Chrissy was a blessing, start to finish." They faced another painful loss in 2008 when, without warning, a beloved young foster dog they wanted to adopt collapsed while playing and died within seconds from cardiac failure.

Like many foster parents, Pam has failed Fostering 101: in November 2008, Mystic Trey went from foster hound to adopted fur-child in a matter of days. She tried hard to fail with Sevi (now Sophie), but the day before Pam's internal deadline for completing the adoption application, a very special family came to a meet and greet where Sevi was holding court. It was love at first sight, but that wasn't what clinched the deal. The new family had a child with autism, and Pam sensed immediately that they needed each other. Failure was an attractive option once again when Oliver (now

Oscar) stole her heart. Only the perfect home would tear him away, and after six months, along it came.

For some time, the Cook house has been GPA-CT's cat-testing headquarters, and until they lost their elderly terriers in 2008, it served as a small dog testing site as well. "We're incredibly cautious when we small-animal test greyhounds," says Pam, "but our cats know the routine. Eli is bored. Even if a greyhound nips at him through the muzzle, Eli shakes it off and rolls his eyes. Winky hates everybody, so the dogs we test get at least a hiss and at worst, a pop in the snout. Failure to retaliate is a great sign! Noel is our drama queen, shooting around the room with big spooky eyes. If a greyhound has a cat prey drive, it will show when they meet Noel."

Every so often, the Cooks take a break from fostering. Sometimes the needs of their own critters have been so great that bringing in a new dog was out of the question. The complications of remodeling have shut them down twice. But they always come back. Why? "All it takes is seeing a former foster hound with his or her family a year or so down the road," Pam says. "The love is tangible. Who doesn't want to help make those happy endings possible?"





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