



ADOPTION INFORMATION AND APPLICATION

Dear Prospective Adopter:

Thank you for considering adopting a racing Greyhound as a pet. We hope that you will join the growing number of people who report that their adopted Greyhound is one of the nicest and most loving pets they have ever had.

The following information should be helpful to you as you consider adopting a Greyhound. After reading this, if you have any questions, please call 1-505-899-3245 or e-mail us at info@gcnm.org.

Greyhounds placed through the **Greyhound Companions of New Mexico** (GCNM) are usually between two and five years old. They stand between 26 and 29 inches tall at the shoulder and weigh between 50 and 80 pounds, females generally being smaller than males. Greyhounds come in a variety of colors including black, red, blue, fawn, various shades of brindle and all of those colors broken with white.

The Greyhound's devotion to his owner is legendary. Greyhounds are grateful for their new homes and reward their adopters with never-ending affection. During their careers as racers, they are kept in an environment where they get minimal individual attention and because of this, they thrive on being the center of attention in their adoptive homes.

Greyhound adoption is a serious responsibility and our policy is to ensure that anyone who adopts a Greyhound will be capable of and willing to accept that responsibility. You will need to complete an adoption application and agree to a home visit by one of our adoption representatives.

We feel your success as a Greyhound adopter is significantly increased if you prepare yourself with as much information as possible. These dogs are unique in many ways and one should not assume that because they have had other breeds, the retired racer will be similar.

The following are additional requirements:

- The Greyhound is to be kept as a personal or family pet and provided humane treatment and proper care and be a housedog.
- The Greyhound must be vaccinated against rabies and all canine diseases recognized as threats in the area where you live.
- The Greyhound must be licensed as required by the county or city.
- The Greyhound must wear identification at all times. GCNM provides an ID tag to be worn along with your ID tag so that should the dog become lost, there is a back-up number to call.
- The adopter agrees to notify GCNM should the dog become lost so that we can assist you in relocating your Greyhound as quickly as possible.
- The Greyhound must be kept on a leash whenever not in an enclosed area. (Barbed wire or other three or four-wire fencing typically used on rangelands is not considered an enclosed area.)
- The Greyhound must be returned to GCNM should the adopter be, for any reason, unable or unwilling to keep it as a pet.

ADOPTION DONATION

GCNM asks adopters to make a donation of \$175.00 at the time they obtain their pet. This assists us in paying our veterinary bills for the sterilization, microchipping, dental care, heartworm test, and vaccinations for each dog and various other veterinary expenses we incur in rehabilitating some of the dogs with injuries or illness. GCNM is a certified, non-profit organization comprised exclusively of unpaid volunteers and depends entirely upon contributions to continue providing veterinary and foster care and placement services for Greyhounds that would otherwise be destroyed. GCNM is a nationally recognized Greyhound placement program that is eligible for funding through the Greyhound racing industry, however because we feel this is a conflict of interest, we have chosen not to accept any such funding. GCNM has grave concerns for the future health of retired racing Greyhounds and is involved in research to determine causes of disease and illness in retired racers. We also publish a biannual newsletter to keep our adopters and area veterinarians informed.

YOUR REWARD!

After the initial period of adjustment, you will find that your adopted Greyhound has become a loving, faithful companion and an enthusiastic, comical member of the family. You will then have joined the growing number of people who have learned that Greyhounds can become the most wonderful of animal companions!

REQUIRED READING MATERIALS

The ownership of a Greyhound, like any pet, is a serious responsibility that requires a long-term commitment. It is the goal of GCNM to be sure that this responsibility, as well as the financial, psychological, and physical needs of each Greyhound, are met in its new home. This information and application package has been designed to help prospective Greyhound adopters address the issues that would directly affect their home and its suitability for a Greyhound, as well as aid our staff in application evaluation.

Please print out and read all articles in the following pages (Pages 3-20) prior to completing the application to adopt (Page 21). This is a requirement for adopting a Greyhound through GCNM.

This adoption information package contains the following articles:

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TIPS ON ADAPTATION

The First Few Days at Home

Most retired Greyhounds have lived their entire lives in crates at training kennels. They have never been inside cars or homes. They have no idea why they are being taken somewhere in a car, and no idea what is expected of them when they enter a house. They are confused, nervous, and usually a little scared.

The first one or two nights, your Greyhound may not sleep much; don't fret, this is only temporary. They are very confused and curious about this new environment, so please be patient! Greyhounds can be very insecure during this initial adaptation and they are much happier if they can be in the same room where a human is sleeping. They often will check during the night to be sure you are still there, so expect an occasional nudge from a cold nose at the side of the bed!

During the initial adaptation period, stress will almost certainly affect your Greyhound. One of the most common indicators of this is diarrhea. Change in diet will compound this. You may want to feed rice with boiled chicken or hamburger until the diarrhea begins to subside, then you can start to introduce a quality-brand kibble by mixing it with the rice and chicken or hamburger mixture. Chronic, excessive gas is not common in a Greyhound and usually indicates the need to change their food to a better quality, or eliminate certain treats.

Persistent diarrhea, especially if watery or mucousy, is a sign that something else may be wrong with your Greyhound. These dogs are exposed to many different types of parasites while at the racetrack, so there is a good possibility this may be the cause. Taking a stool sample to your veterinarian can help in determining the presence of any parasites, but is not a guaranteed method of diagnosis. **A dog with watery, mucousy, bloody and/or frequent diarrhea needs veterinary attention, especially if accompanied by vomiting.** A dog that loses interest in eating, along with the above symptoms is a sick dog. Do not ever hesitate to get help for a sick Greyhound. If it is after hours, then a trip to an Animal Emergency Clinic may be necessary. **Greyhounds going through the stress of adapting to a new home are particularly susceptible to illness and can rapidly deteriorate to a critical medical status.**

Separation Anxiety

Separation anxiety is fairly common in Greyhounds coming from a track environment. **Although these dogs have been isolated in crates during most of their life at the track, they have been in the company of many other dogs in the same room.** In other words, these dogs have never been alone! **When taken from this environment and put into a home where they may be expected to spend several hours a day alone, they can become extremely agitated and frightened.** This fear can create some very destructive tendencies.

Do not expect a Greyhound to spend all day alone in your home until you have given it the necessary support and reassurance that you are not leaving for good! This reassurance is best accomplished if instilled within the dogs' first few days in your home. **"Practice" leaving the dog for brief periods during the first couple of days.** Start with periods of five to ten minutes where you leave the house (use the door you normally exit from when leaving) and then return. **Don't make a big deal out of your arrival;** just walk in, put the keys down, remove your jacket, etc., and go about your business. Repeat this several times and increase the period you are gone each time by five or ten minutes. If your dog exhibits excessive displays of anxiety by the end of the second or third day of this exercise, you might want to purchase a "Buster Cube" from your local pet supply store. These "toys" can keep a dog occupied for long periods of time during your absence.

Crating can also keep your dog out of trouble while you are gone, but long hours (over six hours at a time) are not recommended. Ideally, a dog should be let out of a crate at least every four hours (unless at night while sleeping).

By far, the most effective tool for relieving separation anxiety is to install a doggie door. This way, the dog has protection from the elements, but can be outside whenever the spirit moves him! Also, this reduces pressure

on the adopter to rush home to let the dog out. If you do not want the dog to have access to the entire house in your absence, put up a baby gate to keep the dog confined to whatever area the doggie door accesses.

Housebreaking

To housebreak Greyhounds effectively, you must take the time to watch every move they make during the first 24 to 48 hours. Males are especially prone to urinating in the house the first day or two, so follow them everywhere they go and at the first sign of an attempt to "lift a leg," a loud "NO!" should be used. You can push the leg down or push the dog away from the object he intends to "mark" while you shout "NO!" but do not strike the dog, as this will only serve to frighten him and make the transition more traumatic for him and you. Keeping the dog on a leash during this period is helpful so you will be sure to be at his side during his explorations of his new home. **Never punish a dog after the fact — discipline is effective only if done at the time of transgression.** For the first few days, you will need to walk or turn out your Greyhound regularly. Again, a dog door simplifies this whole process. Your Greyhound will quickly learn that its new home is the "kennel" that must be kept clean. Also, the dog will quickly associate your fenced yard with its old, familiar turn out pen back at the training kennel.

To decrease the likelihood of the dog roaming the house at night and soiling indoors, either crate the dog or limit his access to the entire house by keeping him isolated in your bedroom with you. If you do not want to close the door to your bedroom, put up a baby gate in the doorway to keep the dog in the room with you. If you choose to crate the dog, be prepared for a fuss! Even though they are used to living in crates at the track, nothing you do will duplicate the environment to which they had grown so accustomed. Do not expect a crate in your home to provide the same sense of security the dog felt in his old, familiar surroundings!

Greyhounds and Kids

If you have children at home, you will be happy to learn that Greyhounds are quite tolerant of and can become very attached to "little people." Unfortunately, **the Greyhound's profound ability to tolerate abuse can give children or adults a false sense of security in thinking the dog has no limit to the amount of physical contact it can endure before warning it has had enough.** Greyhounds need their space, too. It is the adopter's responsibility to respect this need, especially during times of rest, and to disallow violation of this space by curious or overly playful children (or adults). Due to the number of Greyhounds returned to adoption programs after altercations with unsupervised and curious children, we no longer place Greyhounds in homes with children under five years of age. **Excessively noisy environments and raucous behavior easily frighten some Greyhounds, and they can become introverted in homes with a high activity level.** If your dog begins to exhibit this tendency, it is best to notify GCNM so we can consider placing a more extroverted Greyhound in your home and sending the other to a quieter home.

Small children are often curious about dogs and don't always realize what causes pain to a dog. For that reason, the introduction of the Greyhound to children is critical. Kids naturally touch, poke, and taste things that interest them. If a dog's tail interests them, they may try to pull it. **Someone has to define the limits for the kids and the Greyhound, and that someone is you!** Your supervision can lay the foundation for a mutual friendship between the Greyhound and the child that can last for many years.

Children and adults should never approach and touch a dog when it's sleeping. Do not attempt to remove toys or chew bones from a dog. Do not allow anyone to lie on a Greyhound (this not only can scare the dog, but also produce severe injury due to the Greyhound's fine bone structure).

Greyhounds and Other Pets

Greyhounds are a social breed. They usually try hard to get along well with other dogs, but that does not mean they never get into conflicts over turf, status, food, and possessions. **Whenever two strange dogs are first introduced and asked to share what was once the property of only one of them, there will inevitably have**

to be some adjustments. With your help, chances are very good that they will come to enjoy each other's company. **Refer to Behavior Series Part 4 (Page 13).**

Never leave more than one dog unsupervised with a bone or chew.

Sometimes the adopted Greyhound will act like a puppy for a while, as it has never had the freedom and responsibilities that most pet dogs learn to handle when they're puppies. The behavior will pass in time, and your Greyhound will become a mature, responsible adult dog. **Greyhounds don't inherently dislike cats, but they do have an inherent urge to hunt small animals.** The instinct to pursue is what makes Greyhounds such able racers. **Introducing your new Greyhound to your cat out in the open is an invitation to disaster.** The cat's natural reaction is to run away from the strange dog, and the Greyhound's natural reaction is to chase the cat at a speed the cat cannot begin to achieve. Introduce your cat and Greyhound indoors where you can control them, and make them aware of each other's presence before bringing them together. The cat must know the dog is present so it doesn't panic. The Greyhound must know the cat is a member of the family. You might consider having the cat on your lap to reinforce family identification. Greyhounds have a good sense of family and the "pack." GCNM can also loan you a muzzle for your Greyhound to eliminate any risk during the introduction. **Refer to Behavior Series Part 5 (Page 16).**

Feeding Your Greyhound

While at the track, racing greyhounds are accustomed to eating raw, ground meat mixed with kibble and often one or more of the following: pasta, rice, barley or cooked vegetables. Occasionally, if an appetite needs stimulated, canned fish or baby food will be used. We recommend feeding your Greyhound a quality dry kibble, perhaps a little water added at first to avoid choking on rapidly ingested kernels of food. **If your Greyhound tends to gulp down food and coughs it up, try spreading the kibble over the bottom of a large pan so that large mouthfuls cannot be taken at once.** Most adopters start their Greyhounds on about two cups of kibble twice a day, although this may vary according to the brand of food. It is wise to weigh your Greyhound when you first adopt it, and every month thereafter for a few months. You can then adjust the amount of food to maintain an even, optimum weight. Of course Greyhounds should have plenty of fresh, clean water available at all times. **It is recommended that all large breed dogs be fed from an elevated dish. This prevents gastric problems that could develop into serious complications.**

Food is high on the list of things coveted by a Greyhound! **Garbage must be completely out of reach for a Greyhound or it will most certainly be construed as an invitation to scavenge.** Anything edible that is within reach of a Greyhound – tabletop, countertop, stovetop, etc. – will most likely be ingested. **Even inedible items that are permeated with the aroma of food we have handled (think remote controls in use while we are munching popcorn, etc.) are targets for consumption by curious Greyhounds!** They are particularly adept at swiping anything being casually carried about by a child (or unwary adult), so be prepared to share your food if you persist in making it available to the watchful Greyhound. These dogs have never had free access to food at the race kennel where they lived, and they assume anything within their reach must be theirs. So don't blame the dog – you've been forewarned!

Greyhound Health

Greyhounds are bred to be strong and healthy. If properly vaccinated, fed, and maintained, most Greyhounds should remain in good health throughout their lifetimes (between 12 to 15 years). **Recent research has proven some retired racers experience diseases and health complications, probably as a result of the environment they were kept in, along with various other factors that only affect racing Greyhounds.**

These factors may affect the longevity of some Greyhounds and may create a financial burden on the adopter. We ask that you take this into consideration when making your decision to adopt. **Most often, Greyhounds are healthy, active examples of canine grace and athleticism, but it is almost impossible to predict which ones may develop problems.**

GCNM can refer you to veterinarians who are experienced in treating Greyhounds.

Exercise, Training, and Handling Your Greyhound

In retirement, a Greyhound's needs are no different from those of any other large dog. You should walk your Greyhound some distance two or three times a week, or allow him access to a fenced area for play. Please refer to article entitled ***Running and Retired Racing Greyhounds: A Dangerous Combination*** (46).

Greyhounds are extremely sensitive and intelligent, and they respond quickly to voice commands. Physical discipline is not necessary, and any type of discipline should only be done if the dog is caught in the act (never after the fact). Contrary to popular belief, a dog does not know what they are being punished for unless the correction is done at the time of the transgression. Greyhounds are easily trained, but always use kindness and patience in dealing with them, as they respond much more readily to this approach. **Refer to Behavior Series Parts 1-5 (Pages 6-18)** for more information.

After the initial adjustment period, you will find your adopted Greyhound has become a loving pet, faithful companion, and an enthusiastic, comical, bright-eyed member of the family. You will then have joined the growing number of people who have discovered Greyhounds make the most wonderful of pets!

GREYHOUND BEHAVIOR PART 1

Some Basics on Why and How Retired Racers are Different.

By Judy Kody Paulsen

Racing Greyhound trainers often deny ever having observed behavioral problems in their Greyhounds. Most of the time, this is not intentionally misleading information they provide, but it must be remembered that the relationship between racing trainer and Greyhound is one of a professional nature. Their relationship is conducted under very structured conditions, and there is very little interaction other than specifically for training purposes. Take a Greyhound out of that rigid, well defined environment, and it is likely to become confused and behave differently until it knows its place in the adoptive household and understands the new boundaries for behavior. For this reason, we cannot always rely on reports from trainers regarding a Greyhound's personality. The following article is offered as advice in dealing with a newly adopted or fostered Greyhound, but can also apply to dogs that have been in the home for some time, yet still exhibit behavior or training problems.

Retired racing Greyhounds have known a very limited and structured environment during their lifetimes. Everything they have been exposed to during preparation for life at the racetrack has been controlled by a very rigid schedule of training, eating, resting, turnouts, confinement in crates, and racing. To a racing Greyhound, this existence represents normalcy and the repetition and predictability provides a certain security for them.

When a Greyhound is transplanted into an adoptive home, there can be much bewilderment during the first few days or weeks. Understandably, most Greyhound adopters would prefer to give these dogs constant love and attention, room to roam in a safe, fenced yard, a life free from confinement in a crate, and access to toys and playtime at their whim. We are eager to bestow special treatment on them, so they're given fluffy beds and lots of affection. But we must remember, most of these things are unfamiliar to a Greyhound that has been in a racing environment, and they can be the source of fear and confusion initially.

The racing environment, beginning at a very early age, encourages competition and the desire to be "out in front" and in control. This is conducive to raising successful racers, but it can be detrimental to cultivating a personality that will be appropriate for a pet. Most Greyhounds will learn to abide by the rules that are established in its adoptive home, but adopters must be aware of certain considerations. **Implementing changes**

to discourage undesirable personality characteristics that have been developed at the track can take lots of time and patience and, above all, an understanding of what your dog may present with in terms of training challenges.

Dominance and Fear

Learn to recognize subtle signs of dominance or aggression, such as a Greyhound positioning itself in a stiff stance (usually with tail held erect over back) above another pet that is lying down or playing with a toy or eating. This signifies a Greyhound that wants to establish itself as "the boss" and wants respect from the rest of the "pack." Gently pull the Greyhound away with a firm "NO" to let it know *you* are the "leader of the pack" and will not tolerate this behavior from one of your "charges".

Watch for a Greyhound that turns its head slightly to the side when someone approaches to pet it – this may indicate it wants to be left alone or is head shy. **Never put your face directly into the face of a Greyhound (or any other breed, for that matter) unless this has long been established as acceptable by your pet.** You'll know by their response. If they suddenly become very still and the tail is not wagging, this means they may be interpreting your approach as a challenge or a threat to their well being. Resist the urge to hug or join a Greyhound that is lying down, especially if it is in its favorite bed. Remember, these dogs have had very few "personal items" during their lifetimes, and a bed and crate are at the top of the list. Of my three Greyhounds, one cannot be trusted with face to face contact unless she initiates it with licking and tail wagging; then I know it is acceptable to reciprocate with a kiss on the nose. But never do I grasp her head and keep it in one position. My other two Greyhounds are fine with face to face contact, but I still don't overdo it. You never know when a pet is having a bad day – they have moods, too, just like we do! **Many people are tempted to enforce a "you must obey" rule with head shy dogs, and they try to expose the dog to frequent, positive handling of the head. This can backfire. It is best to recognize this peculiarity and respect the dog's need to avoid such interaction.** The key here is *let the dog initiate any face to face contact*, and hopefully the tail is wagging when this occurs!

If you have observed aggressive behavior in one or more of your pets when they are playing, especially outdoors in a large open area, you should look at this as a potential disaster if you allow this type of "free play" to continue. Racing Greyhounds are especially prey driven and competitive by nature and training, and can become frenzied into an attack mode if the right circumstances prevail. Competing for a toy or jockeying in position for the lead in a game of chase are perfect examples of "setups" for fighting. Even in the most friendly and companionable of dogs, there can be a sudden overwhelming need to possess a toy or be ahead, which can produce devastating injuries in a pack response. **Muzzle any Greyhound that exhibits aggression when running with other dogs.** Muzzles on all Greyhounds while running in groups is the safest bet.

Fetching Balls or Frisbees

Never play group fetch with dogs that have shown a competitive streak unless you can separate the competitive one from the rest of the dogs. You may have to have two games of fetch going so that all can participate, but it should be only with the aggressive dog isolated in another area where the game is between just you and the dog, rather than the whole pack.

Aggression in dogs can be a result of any one thing or a combination of factors. When they are aggressive toward other pets, you must be vigilant of this tendency. **Even the subtlest hint of "alpha" (dominant) behavior should be taken very seriously.** It is your responsibility to avoid situations that may provoke this behavior.

Fear Fighting

Fear fighting among animals often follows an injury to one of the pack. This type of response is one of pain and confusion, and results in the injured animal striking out at the nearest thing that may have caused the pain. **If there are other animals present at the time of injury, the injured animal may attack and a very vicious**

fight may ensue – occasionally to the death. This is often the case when animal owners describe fights between animals that have been "best buddies" then suddenly become vicious toward one another. Very often, the owner was not present at the time of the altercation to know the details of how it happened, and they are speculating that one of the animals "just went berserk" and "tried to kill another". **Rarely will an animal turn on one of its own pack unless provoked or in pain.**

It should go without saying that handling an injured pet carries with it considerable risk that you could be bitten or at least growled at. Always muzzle an injured dog before attempting to transport or treat it.

You – The Pack Leader

Animals will almost invariably revert back to instinctual behavior without the presence of a pack leader, and that pack leader should be you. **Set guidelines for what is allowed and what is not when dealing with your Greyhounds.** Remember that the environment they have come from, in most circumstances, is one of a totally different nature compared to what they will experience in their adoptive home. They have been expected to do very few things at the track and kennel besides run and rest, and they were required to obey. **Once in an adoptive home, multiple stimuli (stairs, sliding glass doors, TVs, ringing phones, ceiling fans, children running, cats hissing, etc.) and new rules for socializing, can produce a very challenging adaptation period for the Greyhound.** These dogs rely on us as their human pack leader to keep things in order and to enforce rules that are meant to protect all those in the pack – human, canine, feline, and otherwise.

A common human behavior toward new pets, especially ones we feel have come from abusive or neglectful backgrounds, is to try to relate to the animal on its terms. We may find ourselves crawling on the floor or lying with the animal (particularly when they are moderately to excessively shy) to attempt to comfort in the initial adaptation period. **When putting yourself at the dog's eye level, especially if you are crawling toward the dog, you are creating a situation that can easily be misinterpreted as a challenge or threat.** This can produce instinctual fear akin to that of another pack member approaching for a "stand off". Similarly, being on all fours can give the "alpha" (dominant) dog the impression that you are just another littermate that needs to be put in its place.

If you want to establish a trusting relationship with a shy or timid dog, it is best to avoid direct eye contact; at least until the dog has determined you are not a threat. Stay on your feet or sit, but don't crawl. When approaching a shy dog, act as though you are walking past and gently touch its head or back; accompany this gesture with some reassuring words. Sit on a piece of furniture and let the dog approach you – don't rush the process of getting close to the dog. **Let it advance on its own terms. Have treats in a pocket so you can offer a reward each time it comes to you for attention. Do not allow children to chase or persist in approaching a shy dog.**

Crate for Safety

Don't hesitate to crate a dog for brief periods. This can keep it out of trouble or safe from endangering itself or other family pets when you cannot be present to supervise. **Do not confine Greyhounds to small rooms (i.e. bathrooms, laundry rooms, etc.) as this can frighten them and also can result in destructiveness.** A dog in a crate is less likely to harm itself or its surroundings. Don't leave a dog unattended in a crate for long hours.

It's All Up to You!

Be aware of your role in promoting peaceful relations among the pack. **Close supervision and recognizing subtle signs of aggression are paramount in providing safety for your family and your pets, especially when a new pet is introduced into the family.** Be observant of all behaviors that may signal the onset of a problem. Protect your pets and yourself by practicing common sense.

GREYHOUND BEHAVIOR PART 2

Aggression in Retired Racers

By Judy Kody Paulsen

Sleep Aggression

This disturbing phenomenon is fairly common in dogs of all breeds, but it is perhaps more pronounced in retired racing Greyhounds due to the environment in which they have been kept during their racing careers. The saying, "Let sleeping dogs lie", must have originated from a source with personal experience in this area!

A dog that growls or bites upon being disturbed while sleeping is not generally considered to be an aggressive or vicious dog. These dogs are usually well adjusted, sociable, affectionate dogs in all other aspects of their ability to relate to people and other pets. Reacting negatively to sleep disturbance is not uncommon, even in human beings.

Understanding a typical day for a Greyhound at the track or training kennel is paramount in learning to cope with this problem. Once a Greyhound begins training for their adult racing life, a very strict daily regimen is adhered to. The dogs are kept individually in crates in a large room filled with crates and other dogs. The dogs are turned out to relieve themselves early each morning and about three more times during the day. They are exercised or "schooled" about twice a day if they are active racers. Dogs that are retired or rehabilitating from injuries do not go out for these exercise sessions as a general rule. The main focus is on preparing the active racers for their performance on the track. **Each day is structured to provide exercise and uninterrupted rest for the racers.** The key word here is *uninterrupted*.

Think of this as you scratch your head in bewilderment after your adopted Greyhound has just snapped at you or your child when its sleep was interrupted. Combine this regimented lifestyle with the possessiveness of a dog that has had few personal items, *none of which it was required to share*, and you have a dog that is totally unfamiliar with the life of a household pet. These dogs must be recognized for what they are and what they have endured as part of the conditioning process for racers. **They are athletes that have been in training for months or years to produce a dog that focuses on one thing – chasing a lure.**

Deprogramming or desensitizing a Greyhound to these acquired behaviors takes patience and understanding and, above all, time. Some dogs will never overcome the tendency to be startled upon awakening, and some will never be willing to share their sleeping quarters. Desensitizing a Greyhound to touching during sleep can sometimes be accomplished by exposure to frequent petting, touching, or verbal communications while the dog is resting, but not asleep. The problem with this technique is that Greyhounds can sleep with their eyes open, thereby making it almost impossible to tell if they are visually aware of your approach as you attempt this "desensitizing" method. Another risk of this technique is that the dog may become accustomed to being handled during sleep by family members, but not by infrequent visitors whose approach and touch may signal the sudden compulsion for the Greyhound to protect itself from this intruder. ***The best rule to enforce with friends and family is that the dog is to be left alone while resting and/or sleeping.***

If your Greyhound is known to be sensitive while sleeping or resting, it is best not to allow the dog to use your furniture as its bed. A specific place for the Greyhound should be designated with a soft bed or blanket on the floor or in a crate with the door left open, and everyone should understand that this place is off limits for all but the dog. Teaching children this rule should be no different from teaching them anything else that is necessary for you to protect them from things that may injure them. I think it is important to stress at this point that all types of aggression that may be encountered in Greyhounds are also encountered in other breeds. The object of this article is to focus on why the Greyhound becomes aggressive in certain situations, not to imply that Greyhounds have an innate tendency to be aggressive.

Predatory Aggression

Predatory aggression in Greyhounds is quite common due to their training to chase, coupled with an inherent desire to hunt. This type of behavior is usually triggered by rapid movement of something away from the Greyhound or, in some cases, a struggling, shrieking child or animal which is construed as prey that is wounded (wounded prey actions can generate a frenzied attack by healthy pack members). Some Greyhounds can run and play with other dogs and/or children and not have any tendency to want to bite. However, others may want to control and "bring down" this target. **It is the responsibility of the adopter/owner to supervise all interactions among their Greyhounds and other pets and children in order to avoid injuries. Remember to muzzle a Greyhound with any inclination to chase and nip at anything moving quickly.** Even a muzzled Greyhound can inflict injury, so again, the key word here is supervise.

Fearful/Shy Dogs

Fearful or shy dogs can bite, too, and there are a number of indicators one should be cognizant of when working with or attempting to socialize with a dog of this nature. **A Greyhound's eyes can say a lot about its comfort factor around other people or animals. In my observations of shy or fearful Greyhounds, it is apparent that the dog's blink rate (i.e. frequency of blinking or upper lid movement) can be a good indicator in predicting aggression or fear.** First, it is important to understand that dogs do not blink like human beings; their eyelids rarely fully close during blinking, and is often just a very subtle movement of the upper eyelid. They can also go much longer periods between blinks than humans can. But it can be said almost without exception that a blinking dog is a content dog, and as the blink rate becomes more rapid, the dog is becoming more relaxed. When a Greyhound becomes wide-eyed and exhibits no upper lid movement, this signals a sudden concern or interest in something and often can be an indicator of fear in the shy or fearful dog (possibly this applies to other breeds, but my research has only involved Greyhounds). **Eyes wide and fixed on something can be the precursor to a sudden attempt to bite or attack. A staring dog should be regarded with caution and face to face contact with a dog in this fixation mode should never be initiated.**

On some occasions, staring may indicate particular interest of a benign nature; for instance, a dog that is watching its food being prepared or observing a treat in anticipation of being rewarded. This can produce the same fixed stare, but I think it's pretty easy to differentiate this non-blinking response from one surrounded by contrasting circumstances where a dog may exhibit aggression.

The Dominant Dog

Tail carriage is another sign we can utilize to gauge a dog's perception of danger or challenge. In a relaxed, indifferent Greyhound, the tail is usually hanging straight down, neither tucked between nor raised away from the hind legs. When observed outdoors on the property of their domicile, they generally begin to raise the tail slightly as they survey the yard when they first go out. If any threat is perceived, either by sight or sound, the tail raises almost to a horizontal position to the ground. If the threat increases, as in the approach of an intruder to property boundaries, the tail raises further. This behavior is especially evident in dogs of a dominant or territorial character. Barking may ensue and at this point, the tail is often carried high.

Observing tail carriage while dogs interact with other dogs is beneficial in predicting and preventing potential conflicts. The dominant or alpha dog attempts to establish its superiority over the other dogs in the pack by raising its tail stiffly while approaching another dog. If the other dog is dominant, too, both dogs will present with similar behavior and tails will be flagged up into the air. If an agreement is reached between the two that one will submit, one or both tails may begin to wag slightly or the level at which the tails are held may drop somewhat and the situation is then defused and can progress to indifference or play.

A dominant dog often displays its desire to dominate by raising its tail as it enters a room or an area where there are other dogs. As long as the other dogs are willing to accept his dominance, all is well; it is as if they are appreciative of his announcement! However, if another dominant dog does not wish to accept this

declaration, a stand-off may occur. Usually, the dominance issue is resolved by acceptance within the pack and the dogs will respect this arrangement without further ado.

When adding a new dog to the family, watch for this indicator among pets in the household; the presence of this behavior is a signal to you that you must be conscious of situations that may provoke conflicts. **Having a dominant dog does not mean sacrificing the peaceful coexistence of all the pets, but rather serves as a reminder that you may have to be a bit more guarded under certain circumstances.** In the case of multiple pets, there will inevitably be the occasional conflict over turf or status, but you can keep this to a minimum with awareness of the combination of personalities you have in the household.

Of great importance here is to determine if a dog shows one or a combination of any of the aggressive behavior types. If so, these dogs should be monitored more closely when around children, other pets, or anyone or anything that may approach your Greyhound in what the dog may interpret as threatening or challenging. **A dog with frequent or dangerous episodes of behavioral problems needs obedience training and possibly pharmacological treatment to assist in desensitizing it to the stimuli that it perceives as a threat to itself or its family.** Animal behaviorists can be invaluable in treating dogs with dysfunctional personalities, and great strides in this area have been made in recent years. A book that I believe to be one of the most sensible and effective is *The Dog Who Loved Too Much*, by Dr. Nicholas Dodman; you can find it at or order it from your local bookstore.

Don't give up on your dogs just because you don't understand them; enlist the help of someone who can enlighten you and give you the tools to work with the problem at hand. It's worth the time and effort, especially when you are rewarded with a pet you can trust.

GREYHOUND BEHAVIOR PART 3

Changes in Greyhound Behavior After the Initial Adaptation.

By Judy Kody Paulsen

Changes in Greyhound Behavior

Greyhounds can display a somewhat exaggerated response to situations by which other breeds would be minimally affected. It is not uncommon to hear of a well-adjusted Greyhound that suddenly develops undesirable qualities after having been the perfect pet for months or even years of living in the same home. With careful attention to the situation and by scrutinizing the entire home environment, it is possible in most every case to determine why this is happening.

A Greyhound that suddenly starts soiling the house or destroying things is most probably reacting to a change in its environment. This could be anything as trivial as moving a piece of furniture to the more disturbing cases of dissension among family members. The handling of discipline in these situations is critical. Admonishing an animal at the moment it is misbehaving is crucial to your success in discouraging future accidents. A popular misconception is that animals know what they've done because "they look guilty" as soon as you walk into the room. Nothing could be further from the truth. **Practically nothing could be more psychologically damaging than to punish an animal when it has no idea why it is being chastised.**

Never, never, never punish a dog unless it is caught in the act. A significant key to effective discipline in any situation is to intervene at the time of the transgression. Even if this means "setting up" the surroundings to produce the behavior (i.e. having someone walk out the front door and get in the car to leave while some else stays behind to spy). **Covert observation works surprisingly well with Greyhounds! They can be rather sly when they think no one is watching, but when caught in the act, they tend to remember the consequences very well.**

"Induced" Behavioral Problems

Often there will be a complaint from an adopter that the Greyhound seemed perfectly well adjusted, then suddenly became rebellious or "bratty". **Greyhounds that inexplicably begin to exhibit undesirable traits such as destroying things and marking or soiling inside the house are displaying symptoms of what I have termed "induced" behavioral problems.** These symptoms can manifest themselves after any change within the dog's usually predictable environment. **Greyhounds have lived such structured lives while at the training kennel or the racing track that they are poorly suited to alterations in their routines.**

A physical change inside the home to alter its appearance in any way, the addition or loss of a family member (animal or human), a traumatic event in which the dog was involved (anything from a loud noise to an injury to the dog), quarreling among family members — all have the potential for creating an insecure dog. **Much like the child that begins wetting the bed, it is psychologically rooted and cannot be dealt with by conventional punishment methods.**

Unfamiliar Furniture and Other Items

Limit the dog's access to the areas it seems most inclined to soil. They will almost always confine their eliminations to a particular area or will "mark" the same area repeatedly. It is imperative to make these areas off limits to the Greyhound when you cannot be there to watch them.

In the case of male Greyhounds, when items to which the dog is unaccustomed are brought into the house (a piece of furniture, a box of things from the garage, a suitcase), it is best to avoid placing them on the floor near an area the dog has "marked" before. **If you are bringing in new furniture or rearranging your furniture, be sure to watch closely whenever the male is in the area;** it is very likely he will attempt to mark the unfamiliar object(s). (This is particularly disturbing when you've just added new, expensive speakers to your sound system!) **Do not allow the dog access to the area unless you can be present. This may require setting up baby gates or another type of barrier, or crating the dog when you leave the room, even if just for a few seconds.** Allow the dog in the area when you are there so you can quickly discourage any tendency to mark. Eventually, the dog will lose interest or get admonished often enough that he will become wary of the item(s) and probably avoid the area.

Females generally do not mark, however, in some female Greyhounds, there is a tendency to do this as a result of male hormone therapy while at the track. Close observation of her behavior when she is first brought home will provide clues that indicate this may be a trait you'll need to watch out for, just as in a male.

Family Conflict

Both sexes of Greyhounds are probably equally as sensitive to conflict within the family. Greyhounds seem to be especially keen about this type of emotional turmoil within the household. Sometimes they will retreat to another room and just ignore it. However, **many times this can have a profound effect on a Greyhound's behavior, especially if one or more members engage in shouting.** These types of confrontations are known to produce high stress levels in humans, therefore it is reasonable to assume the same or worse can occur in sensitive animals.

About the only thing that can resolve a behavioral problem stemming from this type of stimulus is to remove it (the stimulus or the Greyhound). If the quarreling family members cannot be kept under control, remove the dog from the scene. If this is a frequent occurrence, do the dog a favor and return it to the adoption program for placement in more peaceful surroundings. **It is very likely a Greyhound could never learn to accept such eruptions and even though it may appear well adjusted at times, it is only a matter of time before it exhibits some type of undesirable behavior.**

Fear of Thunderstorms

Some dogs can sleep right through the most violent thunderstorms while others are veritable predictors of them in that they begin to pant and pace the floor before the lightning even starts.

This type of fear can occasionally cause a dog to eliminate on the floor, especially if it is alone during a particularly intense storm. Think about what the weather was doing while you were away if you come home to a soiled carpet – it's possible your dog did this in response to anxiety resulting from a storm.

Be careful of how you relate to your dog during thunderstorms, as you could be giving the wrong message. If you are on the floor and consoling him as he trembles with each crack of thunder, you may be reinforcing his behavior. Try not to overreact to your dog's insecurity about the storm. **It is best to go about your business as if nothing is going on outside.** If you show any concerns or nervous reaction to the noise, your dog can develop the same tension.

Some animal behaviorists have had a small degree of success in training the dog to ignore this stimulus by desensitization. This involves introducing the dog to sounds of thunder at low levels as on a stereo for brief periods, gradually increasing the noise level until the dog becomes desensitized. This is not always successful, and sometimes when it appears to be, the dog relapses at a later date. Sedatives can be used if the case is particularly bad; however my experience with these is that the storm is over by the time the sedative takes effect.

I try to turn up the TV or stereo, or have a conversation (even if it's with myself!) during the loudest part of the storm; this seems to help. **Punishment of a dog that eliminates in the house during a period of fear is counterproductive and cruel.** Leave the poor thing alone and just clean up the mess.

The Bottom Line...

"Induced" behavioral problems in Greyhounds are most often a product of our own behaviors.

Eliminating the stimulus or learning to work around it is the only answer to peacefully coexisting with your pets. Greyhounds are extremely sensitive, and that's what makes them so lovable and affectionate. **Maybe we can learn some valuable lessons about ourselves in observing the behavior of our Greyhounds.** It's never too late to change, especially if it benefits our Greyhounds!

GREYHOUND BEHAVIOR PART 4

Fighting Greyhounds?

By Judy Kody Paulsen

Fighting Greyhounds?

As more retired racing Greyhounds are being placed into homes, we have the opportunity to observe their characteristics as pets. As mentioned in the preceding articles of this series, retired racers have dispositions unique to the environment in which they are raised and trained. **Fighting among Greyhounds at the track rarely produces severe injuries, due to the fact that they are muzzled during racing and turnouts. However, once the Greyhound is in a home environment, conditions can drastically alter the outcome of a conflict between pets.** We, as adoption and rescue groups, would prefer to reinforce the reputation of the Greyhound as docile, non-aggressive, and non-confrontational; however, we would be remiss in ignoring the competitive spirit that can sometimes engage them in life-threatening battles with other pets.

Most fights in the adoptive home appear to occur between Greyhounds, rather than with Greyhounds and other breeds. The majority of the fights among Greyhounds are between retired racers rather than Greyhounds of non-

racing origins. This would support a theory that retired racers are more conditioned to compete with one another, thereby being more likely to challenge another Greyhound.

"Greeting Agitation"

When Greyhounds are greeted by their adopters or visitors to the home, there is usually much excitement. This usually occurs upon your arrival home after long or short absences or upon the first stirrings among the family in the mornings. My nomenclature for this display of exuberance is "greeting agitation". Most often, this brief encounter at the door or upon awakening just produces frenzied tail wagging, some jumping, and perhaps, for the vocal Greyhounds, a bit of barking. **Occasionally, if several pets are involved, this excitement can produce hostility among normally compatible pets. An errant claw or tooth can activate the defenses even in a submissive Greyhound and a fight can ensue before you are in control of the situation.**

If the dogs have sight of you or a visitor approaching a door or gate, or if they are signaled of an arrival by the sound of a door bell, garage door or other audible/visible sign, their excitement mounts until they are in immediate physical contact with the arriver. **Enter into your home or yard as quickly as possible to avoid prolonging their arousal. Keeping overly excitable dogs separated from the other dogs may be necessary.**

If your dogs are crated while you are away, let one out of its crate and allow it to settle before letting the next dog out. **Do not encourage excitement by getting overly demonstrative and affectionate.** Keep your voice down and limit your greeting to a brief touch on the head or back. **Ideally, you should ignore the dogs until they have settled, but this is difficult for most people if they have been away from their dogs for an extended period!**

If you can get the dogs into a large open area immediately, such as a fenced yard or spacious room in the house, the added space will give the dogs room to be animated without provoking one another upon your arrival home. Encourage visitors to ignore the dogs initially so they are not all competing for attention from the newcomer at once.

Competitive Play

Playing with your Greyhounds is a great source of therapy for you and the dogs, but it can also erupt into a brawl if certain precautions are not taken. **Racing Greyhounds are rarely engaged in common play such as tug-of-war, chase, or wrestling while they are in the structured racing environment.** The primary interaction with people, while in training to race, is for the business of racing, not playing. **They can become easily confused when their adoptive family encourages them to interact in play with people or other pets.**

Overly spirited play among Greyhounds and other pets, or people and Greyhounds, should be discouraged, at least initially. **Introducing a new Greyhound to the family should be done under subdued circumstances when it comes to play and recreation.** Do not engage in rough play with other pets in the presence of a newly adopted Greyhound unless someone has the Greyhound under control and can prevent it from lunging toward those involved in play. **Allow the Greyhound to observe the playful interaction between people, or pets and people, so that it can become accustomed to the sight and sound of harmless interplay.**

Some retired racers learn to play compatibly with other pets, while others will retain an aggressive streak. **Be on the look-out for indicators of aggression during play, and if this tendency is frequently present, then you should eliminate the activities that produce this behavior.**

Generally, the larger the play area, the faster the Greyhound can run and the more likely you are to have a collision between pets. **Collisions not only can severely injure your dogs, but could create a pain-induced fight response.** A fight that occurs when no one is home could very likely be the product of pain-induced aggression resulting from injury during play.

Sleep Space

Fighting over turf, such as sleeping quarters, is understandable if you take into consideration that racers have never had to share their sleeping space. Always be sure that your Greyhounds have separate beds — **do not expect them to share one bed, no matter how large.** Greyhounds will randomly select a bed on which to sleep. They do not insist on having the same bed each time, but they usually want separation from one another while sleeping. It is best to provide at least a foot of space between beds, preferably several feet. Occasionally, Greyhounds will lie down together and even rest their heads on one another, but this is the exception to the rule; when it does occur, it is tolerated if it is of their own volition rather than encouraged or forced.

Isolating several pets in a small area can also invite disaster. It is advisable to separate them with baby gates or by crating. If you have not seen signs of aggression among your pets and there has always been peaceful coexistence, chances are you will not have a problem; but observation is the best defense against fighting among Greyhounds. **Leaving "chewies" out when there are multiple dogs and no supervision is another invitation to disaster** — even among dogs that have never shown any possessive tendencies. Watch for the subtle signs of dominant behavior that can often lead to fighting (**see Part 2 of Greyhound Behavior on page 9**).

And When There is a Fight...

Even Greyhounds that have never shown any tendency for discord among themselves can fight. A dogfight is a most unsettling sight, not to mention the sound. Immediate intervention is the key to preventing or limiting injuries. Shouting "NO" is amazingly effective if done at the top range of one's voice, but you must persist. Stomping your feet and making any abrupt, loud noises will help distract the dogs from one another. Shaking cans containing rocks should get their attention if you are an ineffective screamer. If you are outdoors, spray them with water. Trying to physically separate fighting dogs can be extremely dangerous. If you cannot resist the urge to intervene physically, grab for a collar from behind the dog so that once separated, you will have control of the dog. Fighting dogs can direct their fury on anyone or anything, so be prepared to keep a tight grip on the collar until the frenzy subsides. Never stick your hands or feet between gnashing teeth. As hard as it is to stand by and watch, this is safest for you although it may be devastating or even fatal for your dog.

After the Fight...

Once dogs have had an altercation, there is usually a cooling down period when the dogs involved will show signs of trepidation around one another. During this period it is best to separate the dogs whenever you are not present. If dogs have shown repeated tendencies to fight, they should be separated indefinitely when left alone. This change in attitude toward one another could last anywhere between a few days to several weeks. Discourage all posturing whenever you witness it (raised, non-wagging tail; stiffness of walk when approaching each other). Be sure to show equal amounts of attention toward both (or all) dogs.

Within time, the dogs will be back to their previously compatible existence, but don't let your guard down. Although repeat altercations between normally compatible dogs rarely occur, it is your responsibility to recognize the signs of friction between pets.

Most fights can be avoided if you observe all interactions while you are with your dogs and take precautions to change the environment. Above all, do not become complacent when introducing new pets, as this is the most critical point at which you can make the determination of how the personality types will mesh. Keep on your toes during the first one or two months of bringing in your new pet, for this is when you could see potential fight situations present themselves.

Once again, it's up to you.

GREYHOUND BEHAVIOR PART 5

Greyhounds and Cats

By Judy Kody Paulsen

Greyhounds and Cats (and Other Fuzzy Things!)

As most of you know, **Greyhounds can learn to live with and respect cats and other small furry creatures.** Although racing Greyhounds have been trained to chase a lure, they can be taught to coexist with live, furry things. However, a responsible person must teach them. The belief that Greyhounds trained on "live lure" cannot learn to accept cats has been disproven time and again. It is true that these dogs are more likely to present a challenge initially, but common sense and patience go a long way in overcoming their intense interest in small furry things.

Indoor Cats vs. Outdoor Cats

When indoors, the Greyhound sees the cat as part of the family, although there may be times that a game of chase will ensue if the cat initiates it. However, **even a Greyhound that lives compatibly with cats in the house can show a desire to chase and capture a cat when outdoors.** The message here is that cats running outdoors can provoke a Greyhound's prey instinct, especially if it is a cat that is not regularly encountered inside the home. **Neighbor's cats or stray cats will most certainly be viewed as intruders in the Greyhound's yard, so never assume your Greyhound has learned to accept all fuzzy things, just because he sleeps with one in your home.**

Trusting a Greyhound alone with a cat in the initial stages of adaptation can be an invitation to disaster. **Always be sure a person is present when Greyhounds are learning to interact with other animals in your home.** Do not leave Greyhounds unattended with the other animals until you are certain that they have learned to view them as part of the family rather than part of the "main course". **If you introduce new furry members to your family, do not assume the Greyhound will understand this is a counterpart to the existing family of "furries" until you have supervised their interaction often enough to feel confident that there is harmony among them.**

Controlled Introduction

Keeping a Greyhound on a leash indoors during the introduction phase is wise, even if this has to be done for several days or weeks to ensure the safety of the other members of your animal family. Each time you walk through the house with the Greyhound on the leash, there should be some interaction with the other animals, even if it is just a glance in their direction as the Greyhound acknowledges their presence. Any act of aggression by the Greyhound should be discouraged with a firm "NO." Pause to let the Greyhound continue to observe the other animal, but always discourage lunging, growling, or any other indication of aggression. ***When the Greyhound turns its head away from the other animal, always praise him — this is a good sign that he is beginning to understand he is not to further pursue the animal.*** Allow the other animals to approach the Greyhound, but keep a firm hold on the leash and be prepared to prevent any sudden move toward the other animal.

Having other persons present, if possible, can hasten the introduction if they can keep the cat or other animal from retreating quickly from the Greyhound. A rapid retreat almost always encourages the Greyhound to chase.

Cats can be especially effective in laying their own ground rules for allowing the Greyhound to approach. Cats that hiss, spit, growl, and/or arch their backs when being approached will dissuade the Greyhound from wanting to approach the cat. After all, a Greyhound has never experienced a "lure" at the track that defiantly stands its ground! This could be a most distressing sight for a dog that has always been the pursuer!

Kittens are especially vulnerable to the Greyhound, as they are often curious and certainly not capable of escaping a predator as fast and nimble as a Greyhound. Take great care when introducing kittens to Greyhounds.

Looking Through the Window

Introducing a Greyhound to cats or other small animals by way of letting them see one another through fences, gates, or windows will almost surely produce an agitated Greyhound that may never overcome the urge to want that particular animal. This is especially true of the situation where a cat peers through the window from the outside, then dashes quickly away upon sight of the Greyhound. This situation is similar to the training methods used when the Greyhound is teased from puppyhood with a small fuzzy lure. The idea is to never let the Greyhound get hold of the lure, but to produce frustration in the continued attempts to do so. This intensifies the desire to continually pursue the object that keeps escaping. The likelihood of creating a peaceful coexistence between a Greyhound and a cat is considerably diminished if the first sighting is through a window.

One at a Time, Please!

Introductions should be done with one animal at a time. Don't bring a Greyhound into a room with numerous animals and expect him to learn the look, smell, and behavior of each individual and then to remember upon the next encounter that this one is part of the family. Let them meet one on one, before doing a "group therapy session"! Each animal may behave differently which will be producing multiple signals from you as you respond to the signals you are receiving from the Greyhound. Once the initial individual introductions have been done, you can get the group together under controlled circumstances.

Occasionally, you will find that a Greyhound on lead tends to be more aggressive toward other animals, especially dogs. This possibly could be that the Greyhound on lead feels vulnerable and incapable of defining his boundaries to the perceived intruder (another animal off lead). If you feel the other animal presents no threat to the Greyhound and vice versa, remove the lead. Keep your hand on the collar briefly so that you can intervene in case the Greyhound becomes aggressive. If you step away, you often will witness a mutual acceptance between two dogs.

People Problems

Another common obstacle to a peaceful introduction between animals is the tension in the people doing the introduction. Animals are exceptional detectors of nervousness in people, and they can respond by duplicating this tension. **If the people are tense, then the animals will be tense as well.** This is not to say that a complacent attitude will accelerate acceptance between pets, because you must supervise. But supervision with a calm, patient approach will aid in producing calmness in the animals.

The Disinterested Greyhound

Many times, a Greyhound will show little or no interest in cats. This is a most welcome occurrence, especially for the overly concerned cat owner. Predicting which Greyhounds will behave this way is almost impossible. Greyhounds that have lost interest in the lure at the track (which means immediate retirement) will usually have no desire to chase anything else. If you can obtain a history from the trainer on why the dog retired, and if this history indicates the dog quit chasing the lure, you can assume this dog will be easier to train to accept cats or other "furries".

During puppy training, prior to competing on the track (up to 18 months of age), a trainer can identify the dogs that don't exhibit much prey drive. These dogs will never make it on the track, but they will usually be exceptional pets. It is unfortunate that many of these dogs are destroyed only because they wanted to run to the trainer rather than to the lure.

Multiple Pets

Some of the most rewarding experiences we have with our pets are in observing them relating to one another. It's a great source of entertainment and the only admission fee is the time you invest in the proper introduction of all the characters. Enjoy!

GREYHOUND WARNINGS

By Judy Kody Paulsen, Founder, GCNM
(Excerpt from Fall 1999 issue of *GCNM News*)

Some of our past issues of *GCNM News* have included warnings and tips for Greyhound adopters. We are printing some of these as reminders:

1. ***Never, never, never tie a Greyhound to anything for any amount of time.*** Greyhounds are thin-skinned and have thin hair, and if they become tangled in a leash, rope, etc., can become seriously injured or even die. Other mishaps can occur as a result of tying a Greyhound to anything – the scenarios are too numerous to mention and unfortunately have already occurred to remorseful people who have made this mistake.

Don't let your Greyhound become a statistic. Never tie your dog to anything.

2. Does your Greyhound get "weak in the knees" when it is being bathed? Does it act a little dazed? It may be that the water is too warm – they are temperature sensitive. Don't use cold water, but be sure it is only light lukewarm. ***Keep a close eye on them during bathing so they don't collapse and injure themselves. They can be revived by quickly cooling the water if they begin to look a little wobbly.***

Probably everybody knows how silly a wet dog can get when the bath is over. ***Supervise your Greyhounds after bathing to make sure they don't slip on a slick surface if they take off running through the house.***

3. ***Dangling cords, such as from window coverings, telephones, lamps, and various electrical appliances create a serious hazard for pets and small children.*** Pets that get entangled can quickly become agitated and can hang or severely injure themselves. A large dog can demolish a room or portion of it in its attempt to free itself. Outdoor cables for TV or telephone can produce the same disastrous effects if left unsecured or unburied. Be sure all loose lines and cords are secured up and away from a pet's or child's reach. Small unobtrusive "cord keepers" can be attached to walls or window frames on which excess cord can be wrapped.

4. When Greyhounds are placed in their new homes, we emphasize the importance of ***keeping them on a leash whenever not enclosed in a fenced area.*** All too often, our warnings are met with skepticism and sometimes downright defiance. As a result, the number of Greyhounds lost and ultimately killed is beginning to make it difficult to justify rescuing them from the track only to have them destroyed (albeit unintentionally) once they get an adoptive home. ***Never use retractable leads. The plastic handle, if dropped on a hard surface, makes a loud cracking noise and will most certainly cause even the most docile Greyhound to spook and start running. The tragedies that can occur from this scenario are too numerous to list and the disastrous outcomes have been the source of much grief for adopters who make this mistake.***

By far, the most common method of escape for Greyhounds is bolting out open doors and gates. Next comes the dog that is trusted off lead, only to have instincts take over and lead him into the path of an oncoming car.

Please don't subject a Greyhound to practices that will ultimately end in a tragedy resulting from your complacency or poor judgment. Your Greyhounds (and GCNM) are trusting you to keep them out of harm's way.

(Your dogs should always have ID tags on their collars. Please contact GCNM if you need replacements for GCNM tags that should be worn in addition to the tag with your own information. Call 505-899-3245 for GCNM ID tags.)

5. Many adopters complain that their *Greyhounds seem overly sensitive about their ears*. If your Greyhound ever raced, it's very likely the ears will be a spot they wish not to have handled much. **Not only have these dogs' ears been traumatized by tattooing, but they are vigorously inverted for inspection before each race to verify their identification.** Next time your Greyhound lets out a yelp when its ears are being tugged on, keep this in mind – he's not just being a "wimp"!

RUNNING AND RETIRED RACING GREYHOUNDS

A Dangerous Combination

By Judy Kody Paulsen, Founder, GCNM
(Excerpt from Summer 2000 issue of *GCNM News*)

The image is one of a graceful canine athlete, half running, half flying through the air. **Everyone marvels at their speed and agility, but few consider the consequences of allowing these retired athletes to run at full speed without proper conditioning.**

"Retired" is the **key** word here. **Once retired from racing and while awaiting an adoptive home, these Greyhounds are not exercised as they were while active racers.** No longer given access to the "sprint paths," nor allowed to run on the track, these dogs are essentially confined to a life of eating and sleeping in crates with very brief "turn-outs" to relieve themselves, then back into the crate again. Rapid deterioration of musculoskeletal structures occurs.

If given the opportunity to run, particularly while accompanying other dogs or pursuing a moving animal or object, these retired racers will give it all they've got — conditioning or no conditioning. **These dogs rely on the common sense of their human companions to protect them from injuries resulting from over-exertion or over-extension. Muscle, ligament, tendon and bone injuries occur often during the first few weeks at new adoptive homes that ignore these warnings.** Gradual re-introduction to the athletic lifestyle these dogs once enjoyed is a must.

Any Greyhound that has been retired from racing more than a week and has been kept crated while awaiting adoption, needs to be on a conditioning program before being allowed to run freely (always in a fenced area!). Walking your Greyhound on a leash one to two times a day, about 1/2 mile, for the first week is a good way to start. **The longer the Greyhound has been retired and crated, the more gradual the conditioning routine should be.** Brief, supervised romps after the first week can be allowed, but, as difficult as it may be, you should discourage "flat out" running any further than once across a moderate-sized yard until the third week. Even with conscientious monitoring, these speedy canines manage to injure themselves more often than most other breeds.

Distance running and jogging with your Greyhound should be avoided under any circumstances. No matter how well-conditioned a Greyhound is, it must be remembered that these dogs are sprinters and are not physiologically suited for long distances. Anything over a mile is a long distance for a Greyhound. Most Greyhounds have never run over half a mile. **Greyhounds are extremely vulnerable to heat stroke and should never be allowed to run in warm weather.** Extended play with other dogs, during the heat of the day, is an invitation to disaster for your Greyhound. Always have plenty of fresh water available and during the summer; your Greyhound might enjoy a "dip" in a kiddie pool in your yard.

Remember too, Greyhounds coming from the track have never walked on rough surfaces, such as gravel or asphalt. Their feet have only touched soft sand, smooth cement, and the flooring of crates the entire time they have been at the track. Because of this, **bruising, splitting and tearing of the foot pads can occur if care is not taken to avoid these surfaces when first introduced into their adoptive homes.** Very brief, gradual exposure to these surfaces will eventually toughen the pads, but efforts to avoid this should be taken during the first week of arrival from the track.

Most retired racers have suffered at least one musculoskeletal injury during their racing career. These injuries re-inflate easily and can produce a chronic problem if great care is not taken to avoid continuous aggravation to a pre-existing sprain, fracture or strain. As exhilarating as it is to watch your Greyhound run, please remember that these dogs are much more fragile than they appear. **Don't make your Greyhound pay for your mistakes; enjoy their graceful elegance, but don't let them be the ones to pay the price of pain, or worse yet, their life.**

Be smart, be kind – protect your Greyhound.



ADOPTION APPLICATION

You can fill out this application either online at www.gcnm.org or print it out, complete, and mail to: GCNM, PO Box 22053, Albuquerque, NM 87154-2053

PLEASE ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS.

Today's Date _____

Your Name _____ Co-Applicant's Name _____

Occupation _____ Occupation _____

Work Phone _____ Work Phone _____

Cell Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

E-Mail Address _____ E-Mail Address _____

Home Address – Physical Location _____

City/State/Zip _____

Mailing Address, if Different from Physical Location _____

City/State/Zip _____

Home Phone _____

Number of Children at Home _____ Their Ages _____

Number & Kinds of Pets at Home _____

Brief description of current dog's personality and age(s) _____

Why do you want to adopt a Greyhound? _____

What characteristics do you desire in a Greyhound (sex, age, size, etc.)? _____

How did you learn about GCNM? _____

THE NEXT SECTION IS DESIGNED TO AID US IN DETERMINING WHETHER THE PROPER ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS ARE AVAILABLE FOR NECESSARY CARE FOR THE GREYHOUND.

Where do you live? (circle one) House Mobile Home Apartment Condominium
Other (explain) _____

Do you Own or Rent? (circle one) How many years at present address? _____

If you rent or lease, you must have written permission from your landlord. Please provide landlord's name, address and phone:

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

PHONE _____

Is your yard fenced? Yes No

If yes, please note the approximate size of the fenced area, height, and type of fencing material _____

If your yard is not fenced, would you be willing to fence all or part of it as a condition of adoption?

Yes No

Are you willing to keep your Greyhound on a leash or in a fenced area when outdoors? (Dangers such as barbed wire fences, traffic, etc. are a particular threat to Greyhounds since they can become so fixated on a distant moving object they may want to chase.)

Yes No

Are you willing and able to modify your daily schedule to accommodate a Greyhound's needs, such as going outdoors into a fenced area or walking on a leash to perform bodily functions at least four times a day?

Yes No

How many hours would the dog be alone each day? _____

Do you own or have access to an airline kennel, dog cage or crate? Yes No

Are you willing to kennel/crate the dog when it is alone? (This is occasionally necessary during the adaptation period or for especially insecure Greyhounds.) Yes No

Greyhounds must live indoors. They cannot adequately be kept in an outdoor kennel or doghouse. Do you agree to keep your pet inside your home unless for play, exercise and relieving itself? Yes No

Are you willing to keep a collar with identification tags on your Greyhound at all times? Yes No

Are you willing and able to accept full and immediate responsibility for the ownership of a Greyhound, including all health care costs and necessary burdens and responsibilities of owning a pet? Yes No

Are you willing to spend time playing with or exercising your Greyhound? Yes No

If, for any reason, you are unable to keep your Greyhound, will you agree to return it to GCNM?

Yes No

How would you describe your household activity level? Very quiet Lots of activity
Moderate activity Fairly easygoing

Would you object to an inspection of your home and premises by a GCNM representative? Yes No

Occasionally, a Greyhound with special needs (moderate to excessive shyness, minimal physical restrictions due to old racing injury, older than usual retirement age, etc.) is available for adoption. Would you be interested in being considered for such a dog? Yes No

Do you currently have a veterinarian: Yes No

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

PHONE _____

THE FOLLOWING SECTION IS DESIGNED TO GIVE US SOME IDEA OF YOUR PAST AND PRESENT EXPERIENCE IN KEEPING AND CARING FOR DOGS.

Have you previously owned a dog? Yes No

If yes, what breed(s)? _____

How was the dog(s) obtained? (i.e., breeder, rescue from pound/humane society, pet store) _____

What were the ages when dog(s) obtained? _____

What became of the dog(s)? _____

Have you ever bred or raised dogs? Yes No

Have you ever trained a dog? Yes No

If so, what method and what commands? _____

Do you know all the laws and covenants in your area regarding dogs? Yes No

Please add any additional information or thoughts that you feel would help us understand you and your home as a potential Greyhound home. _____

I understand that in order to complete processing this application, a visit to my home may need to be scheduled by a representative of GCNM, and that by submitting this application, I agree to such a scheduled visit. I also certify that all information on this Greyhound adoption application is true and correct.

I have read all articles contained within the first section of this adoption information and application packet and agree to follow their recommendations and rules for adopting and providing care for the Greyhound(s).

Signature

Co-Applicant's Signature

(Where it applies, we require a spouse's or roommate's signature on this application as certification that the adoption of a Greyhound has been approved and accepted by both parties.)