

The Home Run

Greyhound Rescue of N.E.

Greyhounds Waiting to Go Home

Spring 2009

Calling all party animals!

10th Anniversary Party and Open House
June 6, 2009 (rain date Sunday)
200 Providence St., Mendon, MA, 1:00-4:00 PM.

Wow, I can't believe we've been doing this for over 10 years! Greyhound Rescue of N.E. started on January 1, 1999. What an amazing adventure it has been. We've been through so much: the joys and the pains of finding homes for retired racing Greyhounds. We've found homes for over 560 dogs, over one a week. What a remarkable accomplishment for our staff and volunteers.

We owe so much gratitude to everyone who has helped keep us going over the years. People donate their time and money, and they adopt our dogs. Honestly, our biggest challenge is funding. After many years, the state ended our funding last year (over 26% of our budget). I'm not sure how we will cover this shortfall.



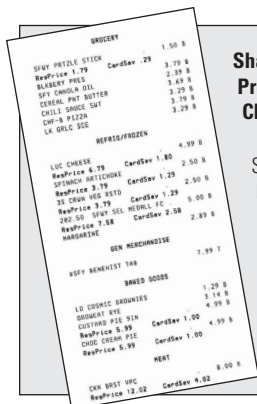
But I have to say that for 10 years, our needs have always been met.

So, we're going to have a party at the kennel. Come out and visit our dogs looking for loving homes, sit in our backyard

overlooking the woods, tell Greyhound stories, and have fun mingling with Greyhounds and Greyhound folks!

Whether you're a seasoned Greyhound owner or just want some information on this wonderful breed, come on by. We'll have a Blessing of the Hounds at 1:00, raffles and games, family portraits by photographer Jen Osijnicki, and an ice cream social! Bring a lawn chair, relax, and have some fun. (You can bring bread or fruit to feed our resident cow, Chestnut.)

Donations are always welcome. Most needed is Pine Sol, laundry detergent, bleach, stamps, and monetary donations! Thanks so much to everyone who helps in so many ways.) 🦴



Shaw's Receipt Rewards Program: Update and Change

Shaw's Receipt Rewards has a new program. They are going paperless and helping us save time counting, calculating, and mailing so many receipts. No more register receipts. Just use

your Shaw's Rewards Card on specific days and your purchases are automatically tracked. It's now easier than ever to save money for the Greyhounds.

You can register for the program by linking your Shaw's Rewards Card number with our Neighborhood Rewards organization identification number at shaws.com/neighborhoodrewards (you are required to register annually). Greyhound Rescue of N.E.'s Rewards ID# 49001018345.

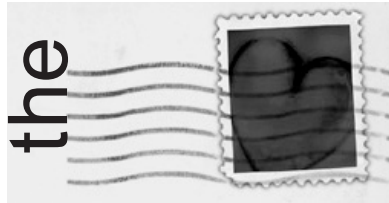
Then shop at any Shaw's or Massachusetts Star

Market on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday and use your registered Shaw's Rewards Card number. Shaw's will contribute 1% of each supporter's eligible Rewards Card purchases made on those days to our organization.

We'd like to extend heartfelt thanks to all of our friends who have faithfully mailed or dropped off Shaw's and Star receipts. We have earned over \$1,300 from this program. And we hope you'll sign up to continue to support us. If we can help you sign up, please call us at 508-478-1617.

From

the



Mailroom

Dear Diane,

I had the biggest win of my life the day in April 2002 when I visited your office to find out about adopting a greyhound to share my life with. I had it in my head as I drove over to GRNE that I was just going to meet a few Greyhounds and see if they would be a good fit for me and my apartment in Worcester. Well, little did I anticipate that a big 85 lb. gentle brindle giant named Elvis would bound into the room, walk right up to me, and stick his nose under my arm to say hello. And there began my deep love for this beautiful creature.

I ended up sleeping on the floor next to him his first night home to comfort him. But he acclimated quickly, and I came to know this handsome, sweet animal with all his subtle quirks and eccentricities. I'm not sure he could have been a good racer because he had absolutely no prey drive and greeted small animals with a curious sniff and tail wag. The small dogs of the neighborhood loved him—they walked right underneath his front legs and looked up at his face in amazement of his height! Another quirk we came to love was his fear of having something in his path. When he came over to say hi to me on the couch and a laptop wire or sock was in his path, he would stare at me asking me to move the object so he could continue.

He was so wonderfully gentle with everything and everyone. You could feed him turkey and steak with your fingers and never once feel his teeth even graze your fingertips. Everyone who met him loved him—vets, friends, family alike. He even won over my father, who is a self-promoted “non-dog” person. My father would often care for him when I went away for weekends and always commented what an easygoing dog he was.

When I moved in with my husband and we united our families—my Elvis and his two cats—his docile demeanor was further shown. If a cat found its way into his path, he'd immediately stop and make no eye contact with him, and patiently wait for him to decide to move. And when Elvis went to take a drink from his doggy buffet under the countertop, a cat would often find his way right above him and swat at the

poor boy. We've spent much of our relationship keeping the cats from bullying poor Elvis.

I have always been an animal lover, but never could I have ever imagined loving anything as much as I love my dear Elvis. He was such a quiet but joyful and wonderful presence in my life. The size and depth of his presence is so apparent to me now, the day after I had to give him the gift of letting him go.

Elvis began to have strange symptoms last June. His nails began to fall off and after the fourth one and some research on my part, the vet diagnosed him with Symmetrical Lupoid Onchodystrophy, a condition in which the dog's body rejects the nail casing surrounding the quick. He began a treatment of steroids, vitamin E, and omega fatty acids to combat his condition.

However, a month into his treatment, at 6 AM on a

weekday in September 2008, my husband and I woke to Elvis having his first seizure. We rushed him to the vet, who ran blood work and concluded that the steroids had caused liver insufficiency, which triggered the seizure. We discontinued the steroids and planned on combating the nail condition. However, a month after stopping his steroid dose, he had his second seizure.

After more blood work and x-rays, the vet still suspected that the seizure was the result of the steroids' impact on his liver. He started on seizure medication to lessen the intensity should he have another one. During this time, he started having the slightest of limps and the vet thought that it was in connection with a healing nail on that paw.

His walks began to get shorter and more labored over the next months as his limp became more apparent. We switched vets and our new vet found that the problem causing his limp was not in his nails, but in his shoulder. He ran an x-ray and there were no breaks or tears, so he concluded that the limp was the result of soft tissue damage incurred from his last seizure. For Christmas, we took him with us to spend the holiday with my husband's family in North Carolina. He started having trouble finding a comfortable position, no matter how he laid. He would often get up panting, try to walk and

Continued on next page



slip or trip himself and fall. At this point, we started to worry that there was more going on than anyone had thought.

I brought him to the vet upon returning home with him two days before the end of 2008. The vet did some tests and concluded that he had a brain tumor, which was causing the seizures, the lack of coordination, and the falls. He also thought that the brain was causing the paralysis of the shoulder and leg and that he had limited sensation in it. When I did some research on my own, this all seemed to sound reasonable—brain tumors could cause paralysis of a limb. The vet didn't recommend the brain surgery for a dog his age and condition. We looked into Elvis' big brown eyes and promised to comfort and care for him with fervor until his quality of life was no longer good.

We scratched the healthy diet of nutritious premium dry dog food and fed him steaks, turkey, Frosty Paws, cheese—whatever he wanted. And I've got to hand it to him, he was so sick but his appetite never waned. We took him out for whatever walk he could manage whenever he wanted it; he so loved greeting other dogs and sniffing the smells of our neighborhood. Our big alpha male cat Casey even helped out with loving attention to Elvis; we found him sleeping with Elvis on his bed, something he'd never done before.

His shoulder began swelling about a week ago and we brought him back to the vet to figure out why. The vet found that Elvis's brain tumor had spread cancer to his shoulder and leg bone. The only treatment option for us was to amputate the leg and shoulder and start him in chemotherapy. However, the vet warned that the brain tumor would likely spread the cancer elsewhere within two months and, unfortunately he would be recovering from the shoulder surgery and chemotherapy the whole time. He recommended letting Elvis go. At this point he couldn't make it far from our doorstep and seemed out of it most of the time. The poor boy never once

whimpered. I'm so sorry that he was probably in pain but couldn't tell us.

The night before we brought him to the vet for the last time, my husband and I slept out on the floor with him just as I'd done my first night with him, petting him and telling him

how sorry we were for not knowing what was wrong all these months. We told him how blessed we were to have had him for these past seven years and how much we loved and cherished him. At four o'clock in the morning, Elvis got up on his own and managed to tuck himself into my husband's side—a way he'd laid with me every night before my husband and I got married—and slept there next to him more deeply than he'd slept in months. It was the sweetest, most wonderful gift he could have given to us—a wonderful last image of him.

We brought him to the vet yesterday morning, and even the vet gave Elvis a kiss on the head and said that he loved him. And we kissed, petted, and

soothed him as he went, which he did very peacefully.

Yesterday was the saddest homecoming of my life. Our house is so empty without our beautiful man. He filled it with such love, beauty and regal grace. He is so missed.

Last night, I found comfort in going through my pictures of him from the various places we've visited together. It reminded me that the great majority of his life was very full, healthy, happy, and filled with love. I wanted to share a few of these pictures with you to thank you for bringing Elvis into my life and filling it with such a wonderful joy. Please also take the donation I mailed out today in honor of him and use it to help others be cared for and placed into loving homes.

All my best,
Jessica Lynch-Vasil
Mom of the wonderful Elvis
(10/1998–1/2009)



I Rescued A Human Today

By Janine Allen, Trainer, Rescue Me Dog

I rescued a human today.

Her eyes met mine as she walked down the corridor peering apprehensively into the kennels. I felt her need instantly and knew I had to help her. I wagged my tail, not too exuberantly, so she wouldn't be afraid. As she stopped at my kennel I blocked her view from a little accident I had in the back of my cage. I didn't want her to know that I hadn't been

walked today. Sometimes the overworked shelter keepers get too busy and I didn't want her to think poorly of them.

She got down on her knees and made little kissy sounds at me. I shoved my shoulder and side of my head up against the bars to comfort her. Gentle fingertips caressed my neck; she was desperate for companionship. A tear fell down her cheek and I raised my paw to assure her that all would be well.

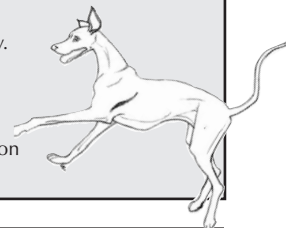
Soon my kennel door opened and her smile was so bright that I instantly jumped into her arms. I would promise to keep her safe. I

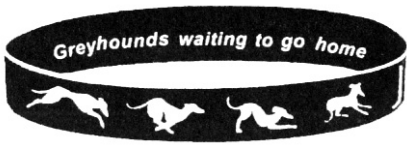
would promise to always be by her side. I would promise to do everything I could to see that radiant smile and sparkle in her eyes.

I was so fortunate that she came down my corridor. So many more are out there who haven't walked the corridors. So many more to be saved. At least I could save one.

I rescued a human today.

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Foster Homes

are always needed. You can help save a Greyhound's life by fostering for 2-4 week period. This will free up a crate in the kennel and we can save another dog. Then you tell us something about the dog's personality, making placement easier.

Board Your Greyhound

We can board up to six Greyhounds at a time here at the kennel. They'll have fun socializing with other Greyhounds in a friendly, relaxed atmosphere. We



book up quickly, so let us know as soon as you need to board. We will cater to your Greyhound's every need!

New Boarding Fee effective 1/1/09: Each dog: \$25 per day

We book up quickly so let us know as soon as you need to board!