

Letter from the Director

Dear friends,

As our 40th year comes to a close, I'd like to thank all of you for your support – in all its forms – for Greyhound Friends' work to find homes for a stream of amazing dogs.

This year we have seen a significant increase in activity at our kennel. Operating hours are often a hive of activity with visitors, adopters, and volunteers. It is a really nice change from seclusion we all experienced during the pandemic years.



Terri Shepard and friend

The steady stream of dogs in and out is quite heartwarming. The daily life of the dogs in our kennel is consistently enriched with walks, social time indoors with toys and the big blue cuddle couch, and free play in the yard throughout the day thanks to the staff and many volunteers

dedicating their time. This makes such a difference in readying the dogs for adoption. Getting to know their personalities and providing some basic training prepares the dogs better for life in a home.

We held many events this year with great success. New faces and old friends graced us with their presence, and from these events, more volunteers have come forward to dedicate their time. With the support of local business in the community and friends like you, these events brought positive recognition to the organization for the important work we do every day.

This holiday season, we are especially grateful to all of you for your help. Your financial support makes our work possible; your presence makes it meaningful, and your adoptions make it all worthwhile. From Greyhound Friends and our partners in Ireland, Portugal, Spain and China, we thank you and wish you all happy holidays.

Theresa Shepard

Theresa Shepard, CDT
Executive Director

Happy Holidays to All Our Friends!



We wish you a bright holiday season, with abundant joy, peace, and health in the New Year.



Celebrating 40 Years and 10,000 Lives

On June 24, friends gathered under a festive tent on the kennel grounds to celebrate a milestone anniversary: 40 years' work in sighthound adoption and advocacy. More than 10,000 homeless dogs were placed in loving homes over those years, one dog and one family at a time.



Although the adoption landscape has changed substantially, the need for this work persists. And 40 years later, we are still here for the dogs who need us. **Our vibrant community of dog loving friends and volunteers is helping to carry this lifesaving work into the future.**



Racers & Coursers & Galgos, Oh My!

Greyhound Friends is helping a variety of sighthounds find forever homes. Ex-racing and coursing greyhounds come to us chiefly from Ireland, and this year Spanish galgos (a greyhound cousin) have begun to arrive. Although they share many common traits that make them wonderful pets, these breeds have some notable differences as well. Most are the result of their breeding and training for a specific purpose.



Irish racer Dobbie – adoptable

When considering adoption matches, we must be mindful of the type of dog that will fit best with your lifestyle. Here is some insight into the different greyhound breeds we are placing.

Greyhounds are known for their incredible speed, athleticism, and grace. There are two main sports that showcase their talents – coursing and racing. While they involve very similar breeds of

dogs, there are some key differences between the coursing and racing greyhounds coming to us from our rescue partners in Ireland.

Coursing is a sport where two greyhounds pursue a moving lure across an open field. The dogs compete against each other and are judged based on their agility, speed and ability to follow the lure. Coursing events are meant to showcase the raw hunting and pursuit instincts of the dogs, so training is focused on enhancing natural abilities rather than coaching the dogs for racing tactics.

Coursing greyhounds tend to be larger and more powerfully built than racing greyhounds. This allows them to swiftly change directions and accelerate as they follow the unpredictable path of the lure across the coursing field. Coursing dogs also display more intensity and drive while in pursuit of prey, since their purpose, historically, is to course and catch live game across rugged open terrain. But interestingly, coursing greyhounds that we have homed have tended to be exceptionally mellow, gentle, companionable and silly when not in their “professional” coursing mode.



Irish courser Lars, adopted 11/23

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Save the Date for Events in 2024

Spring Open House on May 18 will feature field runs, contests, kennel tours, vendors, a silent auction and raffle, placement of memorial bricks and our traditional Remembrance Ceremony.

“Dog Day of August” on August 25 brings together local dog lovers for some summer fun. Other adoption groups will be invited, along with vendors offering products and services for dogs and dog people.

Fall Open House on September 21 will add a fun costume contest to the slate of activities.

Please save the dates and plan to join us for friendship and fun!



Greyhound Friends Is Named a Great Nonprofits Top-Rated Charity



Your positive reviews and shared stories have earned us the 2023 Top Rated Charity seal from greatnonprofits.org. Thank you so much!



Help Dogs Now in Ways that Add Up

Even if you can't write a big check to support adoption work, here are some impactful ways to help:

- ✦ A **donation in any amount** is appreciated and helps dogs in a meaningful way – especially now, at year end.
- ✦ Become a **Monthly Sustainer** to give a little at a time – just use the Donate button on our website.
- ✦ Running a **personal fundraiser** to benefit Greyhound Friends brings new gifts and also raises awareness.
- ✦ We have **kennel wish lists** on Amazon.com and Chewy.com – links are on our website.
- ✦ **Designate Greyhound Friends** as your charity of choice with Ebay and PayPal.
- ✦ Use an **employer match** to make a bigger impact whenever you give.
- ✦ Lend your skills as a **volunteer** – check www.greyhound.org for current needs.



Your kind support saves lives, one dog at a time.

Saving Dogs Where the Need Is Great

Nearly all Greyhound Friends dogs are now coming from overseas, from partner groups in countries including Ireland, Portugal, China and most recently, Spain. The conditions for working dogs in each of these countries differ, but they have a common theme. These are all places where sighthounds are bred in high numbers for a specific purpose, most often racing or hunting, with little or no provision for when they are no longer able to perform. One bright light in this dark landscape are local rescuers, dedicated to saving at least some of the unfortunate, unwanted dogs.



In an Azorean dog pound



Ella, an Irish lurcher hit by car, in rescue

In Ireland each year over 15,000 greyhounds are bred for racing, plus countless greyhound mixes (lurchers). Unwanted dogs are abandoned, sold to be bred or raced in countries with scant animal welfare protection, or dumped in high-kill pounds. Rescue groups take in as many as possible, provide care and prepare them for rehoming. But there simply aren't enough pet homes in Ireland for the dogs bred there. Add a "strike" like

being an older dog, injured, imperfect, a larger or black dog, and local adoption interest is virtually nil.

In Portugal thousands of podengos are bred yearly, in rural areas of the mainland and in the Azores. The national dog of Portugal, they are valued for their hunting skill but not as pets.

They are simply discarded in the off season, often injured or sick. The pounds are overcrowded and dangerous for the dogs. With no organized rehoming groups locally, rescue is



Starving stray puppy, Portugal

Order Your 2024 Calendars

"Celebrating Greyhounds" calendars are available now. The monthly wall style is \$15 and the weekly desk planner is \$20, plus shipping. To order yours please email greyhoundfriends.office@gmail.com



even more challenging there. A few committed volunteers now dedicate themselves to saving these dogs and getting them out to groups in other countries. "It is amazing to see the resilience of these dogs as they become loving pets despite indescribably harsh beginnings," says Donna Nelson-Duey, our marvelous transport manager.

Spanish galgos and podencos are bred in huge numbers each year, mainly for small game hunting. At the end of hunting season each February 1, thousands are brutally killed, abandoned, or turned over to pounds and local shelters. Many are sick or injured, some hit by cars. There are now a number of active sanctuaries and shelters in Spain that rescue these dogs. They depend on foreign adoptions as there are not nearly enough homes locally for the glut of available sighthounds.

Dogs in China face an even more dire fate. Sighthounds there are mostly bred for racing or hunting. When no longer wanted, they are sold to meat markets for slaughter. Brave animal advocates in China rescue as many as they can, bring them to shelters and move them to other countries for adoption. Only a small fraction can be saved. Worse, due to Covid and a recent CDC restriction on dogs from many Asian countries, very few dogs have been able to get out of China to the US, and transport costs are high. We expect to get our first group since 2020 soon.



Sighthound meat trade survivor, China

Dogs from all our partner countries require microchips, international pet passports, health certificates, vaccine certificates, and a USDA permit. For dogs from certain countries, transport requires a CDC permit, photos of the dog's teeth as proof of age and a rabies titer test result as proof that the dog has immunity. "It's a labor of love for the many volunteers on either end," Donna says. "Then, thanks to months of work and dedication by all involved, we get to experience and share the happy endings."

Legacy Gifts Secure a Stronger Future

A bequest from the estate of Caroline Wright, along with a disbursement from the Peter M. Bloom endowment fund, enabled the retirement of past debt this year. This means that Greyhound Friends is better poised to continue helping dogs even through economic ups and downs.



Racers/Courers/Galgos: Same but Different

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The racing greyhound is bred and trained specifically to compete in fast races at regulated dog tracks (and of course there is widespread underground racing in many countries). Racing greyhounds are lighter in build, with longer legs and a more aerodynamic frame well suited for speedy sprints.

These dogs chase after a mechanical lure, usually in the form of a stuffed rabbit, attached to a rail alongside the track. Races tend to be short, ranging from 250 yards up to one mile. Consequently, racing greyhounds are bred for top speed and athletic stamina in short, powerful bursts.



Galgo Storm – adoptable

Racing greyhounds undergo rigorous coaching and training to enhance performance, including building muscle, timing the starting box, and

handling the tight turns of an oval track. While coursing greyhounds follow natural hunting instincts, racing greyhounds must learn racing strategy and work closely with their trainers and handlers.

The Spanish galgo is an ancient breed, used in developing the familiar English greyhound. Used for racing, hunting and coursing, galgos are endurance runners rather than fast sprinters. This is reflected in their physical



Galgo Rain – adoptable

characteristics: a streamlined build, with a higher back end, longer tail and less thigh musculature; less of a deep chest, and a longer head with floppier ears. They are also agile jumpers, suited to pursuit amid brushy, rural terrain.

Though typically bred for hunting rabbits, many galgos have low prey drive in a home environment. Gentle and sweet, calm, affectionate, and loyal to their people, galgos are very sensitive in nature and need gentle guidance, positive reinforcement, and consistency in their training.

Racing greyhounds are accustomed to human environments and are athletic enough for walks and jogging. They are highly trainable and are generally calm indoors. Coursing and hunting greyhounds may require more exercise and specialized training as they acclimate to pet life at home.

When choosing your new companion, please consider your lifestyle, household routines, and activity levels to ensure a positive experience for both you and your dog.



Please Stay In Touch!

We post new dogs, adoptions, news and information on our social media pages. Please follow Greyhound Friends there to stay connected, enjoy dogs' stories, and share to help promote adoptions.

On Facebook, you'll find us at www.facebook.com/GreyhoundFriendsIncMA/ and on Instagram we are @greyhoundfriends.

Direct links are on our website, www.greyhound.org.

We send only 1-2 newsletters each year to keep operating costs down. But we'd love to be in touch more often by email.

Please sign up (or update your information) for email so we can keep you better updated between mailings. To complete a secure form just scan this QR code with your phone and follow the prompt, or go to <https://bit.ly/2PwItD3>.



Remember a Loved One with a Tree of Life Leaf or Memorial Garden Brick

In the Memorial Garden next to the kennel building, engraved bricks bear the names of beloved dogs (and people) who were a part of the extended Greyhound Friends family.



Kathy Mahoney, with leaves celebrating her dogs

A beautiful Tree of Life mural sculpture greets visitors in Greyhound Friends' reception area. Engraved leaves on the tree are a lasting and meaningful memorial.

To remember a loved one with their name on a garden brick or a hand-wrought leaf, please email greyhoundfriends.office@gmail.com for details.

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Find us online at <https://greyhound.org> (or scan the QR code).

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