

Greyhounds may be the oldest dog breed

There is only one dog mentioned in the Bible. Proverbs 30:29-31 reads:

"There be three things which go well, yea,

Which are comely in going:
Allon, which is strongest among beasts and

Turneth not away from any:
A greyhound;
A he-goat also."

In Egypt when a pet greyhound died, the family would mourn with shaved heads, fasting and wailing. A greyhound birth called for a celebration exceeded only by the birth of a son. Greyhounds were mummified and buried with their Pharaoh owners, among them King Tut. Cleopatra also owned a greyhound, and Greek mythology is filled with references to the breed.

Romans ran greyhounds to chase hares, causing Arrian in A.D. 124 to comment: "The true sportsman does not take out his dogs to destroy the hares, but for the sake of the course and the contest between the dogs and the hares, and is glad if the hares escape."

During the Middle Ages greyhounds nearly became extinct, but clergymen saved them from starvation during the famine and bred them for noblemen, who were the only ones allowed to have them.

Added to their firsts was the fact that they were the first breed of dog written about in the English language. Chaucer in The Canterbury Tales wrote: "Greyhounds he hadde as swift as fowels in flight." And of course Bill Shakespeare wouldn't be left out...in Henry V he wrote, "I see you stand like greyhounds in the slips. Straining upon the start. The game's afoot."

In 9th Century England, when Danes had conquered much of the country, one of the laws then enacted in Parliament says: "No

entire person may keep any greihounds, but freemen may if he does not abide ten miles from the forest. If they doe come any nearer they shall pay twelve pence for every mile. If the greihound be found within the forest, the master shall forfeit the dog and ten shillings to the king."

The dogs were brought to America in the 1500s by Spanish explorers to "guard, hunt, intimidate and punish enemies." They told of greyhounds that "went into the woods and returned bringing hares."

Baron Von Steuben, the German mercenary who helped Washington in the Revolutionary War, always had at his side a huge greyhound named Azor. And another famous soldier, General Custer, traveled with a hound pack of forty. He had a race scheduled the day before he left for the Big Horn River, a date he should have kept as things turned out.

The first Westminster Kennel Club in 1877 listed 18 greyhounds, and then a man named Smith changed the direction of the breed forever by inventing a mechanical lure, leading to track racing in the 20s. Initially this was only at a few locations in Florida and New England. Now however, the sixth most popular spectator sport in the U.S. is greyhound racing at over 60 tracks, all legal in 18 states from Florida to Oregon. Well over 30 million bettors wager almost \$4 billion per year, and you can imagine the tax money pouring into state coffers.

Many races are held at night and feature 13 races, each with eight dogs. There are up to 20 kennels per track housing as many as 1,000 dogs. This is Big Business - notice the capitals!

Individual greyhounds are raced every four days. Except for brief exercise periods and "bathroom privileges" they spend their

entire lives - when not racing - in 34"x36" metal crates. They are never petted. They cannot climb stairs because they have never seen them. They think water is solid and try to walk on it. They don't understand play. They exist for one thing and one thing only...making \$ lots and lots of them.

When they are injured, which happens often, or begin to slow up and lose races, they are terminated, not always humanely by a vet. A .22 rifle is involved. An estimated 50,000 dogs per year are thus removed from the racing population.

Fortunately a percentage of these doomed animals, the exact number is unknown, are "retired" from racing and adopted by families as pets, where their intelligence, gentleness and affectionate manner make them superb companions for everyone, and that includes both young and old and even other pets.

There are today over 30 agencies which specialize in the promotion and placement for "ex-racers". Each agency has hundreds of chapters in every state. These tireless workers are all volunteers and generally have more than one greyhound pet themselves. They have been infected with the "greyhound bug" - an easy thing to have happen since all one had to do is look into a greyhound's eyes, or possibly be nudged by a greyhound nose. A slightly damp nose, usually followed by a raised paw.

These great agency people are all deeply dedicated. Their fees are modest for locating and delivering a dog, expenses are barely covered at best. But their reward also comes in knowing they have helped a dog in dire need to find the loving home it deserves.

They deserve a lot of credit, and lots of new customers.

by Jack Hiltsher

Ex-racers

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ancient for a greyhound racer.

Dogs who no longer win races provide another reason. Purposeless dogs are useless dogs to a track owner, and if they slow up they are doomed. (It is said that seven out of 10 greyhounds are not fast enough to keep.) Injuries provide a third reason to be declared surplus, and disposed of, in one way or another.

Ann Whitney says her organization, "Greyhound Pets of America," estimates that only about 6,000 dogs per year are adopted as pets. "That number may be low," she claims. "Our chapter has placed, meaning arranging for adoption, 365 dogs in only two years, and we have 50 chapters. We are far from the only organization nationwide doing our thing but the gap between placements and the number of dogs 'put down' is still way too large."

Things are looking up, as Whitney points out that "more states are adopting stronger laws for kennel inspections and harsher penalties for cruelty and neglect." Then too, enforced adoption programs, started in Wisconsin, are gradually extending to tracks elsewhere. Whitney adds, "Everyone should have the cooperation we get from New England tracks, but we hear otherwise."

Ann cautions, "Please don't think we place a dog just anywhere or to whoever contacts us. Not all families will be compatible with a greyhound and we try our best to explain to people what to expect so they are not disappointed. We've had very few re-

turned but it still is something to keep in mind."

"For example, cats may be a problem," Ann says. "We need to know if there is one because some Greyhounds, perhaps trained to race after live game, may not adapt to a cat around them. Is there a small child? If so, that family needs a male, for less aggressive behavior. Female greyhounds tend to control kids rather than tolerate them. Of course no dog needs to be jumped on!"

One dog who had no compatibility problem is "Izzy" of Shaver-

"Frankly I wasn't prepared for the sleek beautiful intelligent creature."

Loretta DeBoer

Shavertown greyhound owner

town. Her owner, Loretta DeBoer, a nurse practitioner, welcomed Izzy last May. "Things worked out so well," Loretta says, "that we recently added Toni to keep Izzy company." (Owners should not be blamed for any odd names of breed dogs...they are usually a shortened version of a long pedigreed name designed to be different in the American Kennel Club register. Izzy was "Fabled Zizzo" as a racer.)

Loretta adds, "I've always had dogs, mostly mongrels, mostly large. When we settled in a house with a yard I promised myself

something different. I had heard the doctors at the clinic where I work talk about greyhounds and I had read articles about the need to save them from destruction, so we asked the Whitneys to find one for us. Frankly I wasn't prepared for the sleek beautiful intelligent creature...I run out of words. I guess that's why we now have two!

Another thrilled owner is Sandra Knouse, Patient Advocate for the Wyoming Valley Health Care System. Sandy says, "We lost Heidi at 16. She was a Schnauzer with a pacemaker installed at Cornell. Our greyhound Fawn, weighs 74 lbs. Heidi weighed only 19 lbs. You'd think I would notice a difference. I don't! Fawn moves around like she is floating, and you should see the greeting I get when I come home from work!"

The Robert Shaffers of Spencer Road couldn't seem to stop at one greyhound. Sandy Shaffer freely admits, "It's a disease!" She says, "They are so beautiful, so regal, and so affectionate. My husband and I both work and went through a lot of puppy training and different breeds we didn't keep. After hearing about greyhounds on television we asked the Whitneys to help and got Pete two years ago. He was trained in a few weeks and we have never had a single problem."

Shaffer adds, "The next one we named Whitney - yes, in their honor - and recently we are 'foster homing' a third named Eve. This is temporary (maybe) until she finds a new home. Eve had been beaten and abandoned and was deathly afraid of anyone. With love and patience she gradually improved and now is as good as new. My husband's favorite though is Pete, who pays more attention to him than to me."

There are literally dozens of other greyhounds throughout the Back Mountain but the Whitneys are far from through. Another trailer load is due next month, all "spoken for" with all the owners anxious to see their new addition.

If you'd like to save a four-legged treasure and become a happy satisfied greyhound owner, Gary and Ann Whitney would love to hear from you. The number to call is 639-2612.



A REST FROM RACING - Gorky is the Whitneys second greyhound. Quiet, sedate and regal, Gorky, age 5, is very affectionate. Greyhounds are called "three-no" dogs by some owners because they must be told "no" only three times to learn new behavior.

Extra cop

(continued from page 1)

it," he said. Nearly all communities with less than 50,000 residents who applied for the grant were approved, according to Kevin Avery of the Cops FAST Office of the federal Justice Department.

Police departments with less than 50 officers will receive funding for one officer, while departments with more than 50 officers will receive funding for two, Avery said.

Before municipalities receive their funding, they'll be required to submit a community policing plan to the Department of Justice, showing how they plan to use their new officer, Avery said.

"The municipalities will have latitude of to spend their money, but it must all be used on personnel," he said. "They must show us how they're trying to set up a community police force in their communities, to enhance existing programs or try new ones. The goal of the Cops FAST program is to build a partnership between the police and the citizens to figure ways to solve crime problems in their communities."

For example, although a municipality can't set up a teen recreation area to lower the crime

"It's a modern version of the old-fashioned neighborhood beat cop."

James Balavage

Kingston Twp. police chief

rate, it can assign an officer to work with young people at risk of breaking the law, Avery said.

The department of justice will monitor the municipalities' use of funds, he said.

Funding for equipment, technology or overtime will be available under a separate federal grant program, he added.

Because the money has already been budgeted by the federal government, the Cops FAST program won't be affected by pending federal legislation to set up community policing block grant programs, Avery said. "They can't change it right in the middle. It's part of the president's promise to put more police officers on the streets," he said.

Block grants for hiring an officer clerk and setting up a computer system would also help a community policing program, Balavage said. Each officer in his department spends 1-1/2 to two hours a

day on clerical work, which adds up to 14 man-hours every day.

"In addition to answering requests for assistance, an officer takes many telephone calls for general information, makes copies of accident reports for people, completes reports of offenses, arrests and accidents, files criminal complaints and fills out the day sheet," he said. "A reliable office clerk could do a good 80 percent of this work and leave the officers free to work on the streets."

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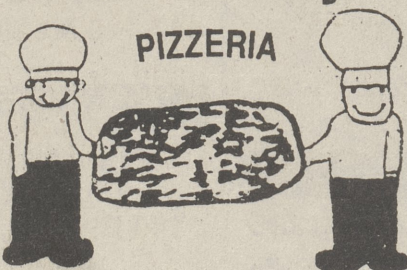
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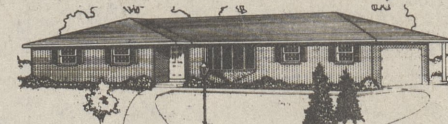
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