

Greyhound Action League of Buffalo

GAL-ZETTE

Winter/Spring 2016

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Adopted

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100 Greyhounds

(and counting!)

by Laura Pike

In March of 2015, Greyhound Action League placed its 100th greyhound. As in certain birthdays or anniversaries, a milestone like this is a cause for celebration, but also an opportunity to reflect on how far we've come and to dream about how far we hope to travel on our journey together. I hope you'll pardon me while I exit the vehicle, stretch my legs a bit and have a look around.

First off, allow me to congratulate Linda Forman on the adoption of Ruffian (TMC's Ruffian). Ruffian is the 100th greyhound placed by GAL, and joins greyhound sister Sandy and in memory, former racers Dime and Ox. Linda has been a volunteer since the very beginning of the organization, participating in many events throughout the year, most often with fellow volunteer and sister Geanine Sobczak.

While Ruffian's adoption is an important one for the GALs, so too were the ninety-nine that preceded it, every one special in its own way. Each dog's journey to adoption has been unique- sometimes hectic, sometimes difficult, sometimes surprising and every now and again, sad. These variations aside, and because we work so hard to ensure a perfect fit for placement, the percentage of dogs that have 'stuck' in their adoptive homes has always been a remarkably high number.

Speaking of numbers, as I was counting the dogs we have placed, I realized how much effort from so many people has gone into placing the 100. As it happens, it is a lot easier counting the placements- everything else is nearly impossible for me to quantify. Let me try to give you an idea about the quantities behind the quality.

- **Volunteer hours:** Too numerous to count, including, but not limited to: booths, transports, washes, fundraisers and fostering.
- **Miles:** Lots of 'em. Our dogs have come from Massachusetts,

Iowa, West Virginia and Florida. Throw in local trips to appearances, vet offices and fostering for good measure.

- **Caring:** A great deal of careful attention received from our associates in our sister adoption groups, foster families and veterinary professionals.
- **Respect:** I have enormous respect for every volunteer in this organization and for all the talents that each has shared with us.
- **Fun:** Even after all these years together, we still enjoy each other's company. In big groups and small, doing greyhound things and otherwise, you'll often find us together.



Number 100: Ruffian seems to enjoy his adoptive home.

As I said, difficult to sum up, but in any venture I suppose it's good to take inventory sometimes. To me, what is most important is that we have always been a force for good for the welfare of greyhounds in general, in our organization and elsewhere. Our beginnings as a support organization continue to serve us well, as our ripples of influence reach well beyond our geographical boundaries. A large number of greyhounds have found homes through other organizations because of the work of our volunteers in transporting, fundraising or networking, and we can be proud that our contributions have meant so much to so many.

As enjoyable as it might be to reminisce, I think it's time to get back on the bus and start heading to our 200th adoption. I hope everyone had a chance to visit the restroom or grab a sandwich. We have a little bit to go yet, and I need everyone to stay with me until we get there. Buckle up.

GF Thailand – Thailand Piquette is a beautiful gal grey that is white and fawn. Although her racing career in Tri State was short she made quite an impression. As a puppy she was referred to as “Ice Cream”. Cheryl fell in love with her as a puppy on the farm, so she was determined to supply her the couch when she finished.



WWW MaskofZorro – Mask Zgoda is a gentle but fun character that would entertain the kennel help with shaking his muzzle off and then carrying it around in his mouth. Mask retired after a long career of 184 races in Wheeling. He is fortunate to be adopted by an experienced greyhound owner and join Julies other canines.

Hallo Spur – Spur (Sage) Argue is a beautiful fawn and perfect personality girl who started her career in Flagler and then ran in Wheeling. She celebrated her fifth birthday by retiring that very same day. Retirement and a couch, what a gift! Be sure to visit her at one of the GAL functions.



Wild Renae – Renae Van Arden ran 73 races at Wheeling. An adorable little brindle girl that is settled with her family in Toronto. She enjoys being full time companion to her mom. Renae is a wonderful spokes-hound for the breed in the city, and also enjoys time relaxing at the lake.

TMC's Ruffian – Ruffy Forman had 97 races that spanned across Florida tracks Derby Lane, Flagler and Mardis Gras. Most of his competition was in Wheeling, WV. He joins the Forman family as a bigger younger brother to Sandy. Ruffy has the distinguished honor of being the 100th GAL Adoption!



Wild Gretchen – Gretchen Carlson was adopted after a long career of 93 races in Wheeling. She has been busy volunteering at the Galleria Mall. She currently is spending the winter in her Florida home.



Comet Can Fly – Comet Ballesteros – Brocki is loving life in his new home and fenced yard. He is looking forward to doing some camping in warmer weather with his new family. Comet had 74 races- retiring from Dubuque, but also ran in Bluffs Run and Mardi Gras.

Mac's Allure – Allure Twaroski raced her 79 at both Tri State and Wheeling, WV. Foster mom Shirlene offered to take her in. Once she was there Allure decided that retirement life and her family couldn't get any better. She is currently an active volunteer with Grey Save of NWPA.



TMC's X Factor – Factor Merk is as perfect as they come. His 126 races including several Stake Races at Derby Lane, Mardi Gras and Wheeling. Factor enjoys strolls with his family at Como Park. He is definitely enjoying retirement with his grey sister Lexy and volunteering with the GALs.



Mac's Rita – Rita Lacuesta is a sweet light fawn girl that had 100+ races in both Tri State and Wheeling. Upon her retirement Rita was adopted by Kennel Worker Rhea and daughter Trinity. She is loving all the attention with her new family.

Kiowa Moving Out – Movie Slusser had 90+ races in Wheeling. He is a gentle soul with eyes that would steal anyone's heart. But sorry ladies he is already taken! A true companion and momma's boy, he loves spending retirement with his new family.



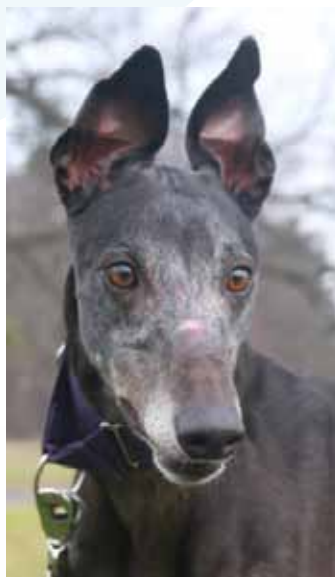
Gable Darbonne – Darby Bagne is a retired racer and brood mom to 36 pups. She had a home for a short time, but through no fault of her own had to find a new family. Original foster mom Lori loved her the first time they were together. Now together forever.



TMC's Texas Best – Texy Pike was a favorite racer in Wheeling WV. He retired after 128 starts. It was love at first sight when he was spotted resting in his crate. Texy is now a beloved member of the family and enjoys volunteering at GAL functions.



Mac's Silverado – Silver Ullery is the lucky new family member for a couple that patiently waited for just the right time to adopt. Silver raced a long career in both Tri-State and Wheeling WV tracks. He now is enjoying being loved and spoiled in his new home.



TMC's MissDevine – Devine Johnstone raced in Wheeling WV and Orange Park FL. This dynamo ran 164 times. She came to GAL for rehoming. The Johnstones, a 15+ year Greyhound Family wanted to adopt a sister for their boy George. Devine was lucky to be chosen and has brought love and entertainment to the entire family.

2015 wrap-up: in photos!

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January



Speaking engagement at Amherst Elementary School.

February



Booth at Tractor Supply.

March



Red at the Galleria.

April



Mac's Allure (Allure) arrives.

May



Our float and marchers at the Tulip Festival parade.

June



Wheeling weekend.

July



Car show in Depew.

August



The Erie County Fair!

September



Marilyn with Comet- her 50th foster!

October



Halloween.

November



GALs release our annual calendar.

December



Pet photos with Santa.

by *Laura Pike*

20 years

In another article in this newsletter, I spoke about the GALs reaching 100 adoptions. This year, my husband Greg and I will pass another important milestone- twenty years involved in greyhound adoption. I would have been more than happy to let it pass without mentioning- after all, there are several members within our group with more volunteer years. A phone call from a cranky newsletter editor convinced me, however, that my story -probably beginning much the same as yours- may offer a different perspective, and might be worth telling. Here goes:

A long time ago, in an organization far, far away, Airs Action Shot was racing for the last time. Unbeknownst to me, a small army of volunteers was already at work, conspiring to transport, bathe, vet, foster and find the right home for him- which is where Greg and I enter the story.

One day, I arrived at work to find a note from a coworker and greyhound owner Vicky Capizzi. She had heard that we were considering a greyhound, and also left the book “Adopting the Greyhound” by Cynthia Branigan. Included was her phone number in case I had any questions.

That night, I read the book from cover to cover, then gently coerced (forced) Greg to do the same. We both had wanted to adopt a dog and were researching the best breed for us. Being a cat person, their personality seemed to be what I was looking for. Greg had only a few requirements, one of which was that it be a large breed of dog.

Following a little more research, I had a home visit (for which I probably over-prepared) and soon Airs Action Shot, or Action, came to live with us.

We loved Action so much that we became volunteers almost immediately, in hopes of helping other greyhounds.

I have to admit that at my first booth I may have been a bit of a stage mom. Action, always a gentleman, received lots of praise and attention. He liked it, and I did too. I quickly realized, though, that as I was trying in some small way to help the greyhounds, I also had a chance at

Action: my first true love, my hero.



helping families enjoy what Action had given to us. No more testing the waters- I jumped into greyhound adoption with both feet.

Meet and greets, fostering, home visits, transports, dog washes, fundraising, procuring dogs, slating. There were just so many things to learn.

Luckily, I found some mentors in the organization that were not only able to recognize (tolerate) my enthusiasm, but also direct it in ways they thought may be of the most benefit. Aligning myself with Charlene Marvin, Donna Drabek and Annie Weinert allowed me the opportunity to learn quite a lot in several areas. I will always appreciate their guidance.

Along the way, I was able to visit the inside of race kennels and puppy farms. I also got to know other adoption groups and how they did things.

For a short while, I also worked in a race kennel and a breeding/training farm. I always felt that the more I learned about life as a greyhound pup and life as a racer would make my skills on the adoption side much stronger.

Over the course of twenty years, the greyhound industry has changed dramatically and, in turn, so has greyhound adoption. Tracks have closed, meaning fewer dogs available. For better or worse, the internet and social media have altered our approaches to fundraising, public relations and even our day to day communication. Owners and trainers are now able to be more selective as to which groups receive their dogs. Guarding our reputation has never been more important, and organizations unable or unwilling to adapt have withered or disappeared completely.

When it became time for Greyhound Action League to move from a support group to an adoption organization, we were fortunate to have a core of versatile and experienced volunteers already in place and willing to come along. Since then, we've added several other talented individuals, each bringing the same can-do attitude to the mix. It has been my pleasure to work along with these amazing folks. They have taught me so many things. I am proud and grateful to be a part of our small but very effective group.

Of course, no one knows what the next twenty years may hold for greyhound adoption, or the next five for that matter. What I do know is that I will be there for the greyhounds as long as they need an advocate, and I hope you will too.

The vow I made to Action was to wake up each day and do all that I can for greyhounds. With your help, I have been able to keep that promise. Thank you.



Winner: such a strong and gentle boy with an old soul.



Devlin: my special boy that taught me patience.



Blaze Michael (*Devious Boss*)

Blaze was raised in Dighton MA on a small farm. He ran a couple of maiden races at Raynham. He was quite young when he arrived in Buffalo. Fostered by Ginny he immediately became attached. He was placed with a family that did not appreciate him and quickly returned. Back again with Ginny he was now forever home. The shared a very strong bond, ever faithful.



Cosmo Fedyshin (*BW's Breezeonby*)

Cosmo shared his loving home and spacious yard with two siblings, a greyhound, Eula, and a dalmation, Colby. After managing the pain from his illness and spoiling him with lots of treats, his parents made the difficult decision to help Cosmo across the bridge. Cosmo was retired from Iowa.

Dana Oster Our beautiful girl, Dana, crossed the Rainbow Bridge (bone cancer in her shoulder). She would have been 12 on April 1st 2015. From the shy, very afraid, dog to whom Laurel introduced us 10 years ago, she blossomed into a self-assured princess who ruled our household. Thanks to both of you, GREAT & GAL, for all you do for both two and four footed critters. Miriam & Tony Oster



Barbie Johnstone (*Barbados Beach*)

Becky, Bob and George lost their beloved Barbie to bone cancer. Barbie was a confident greyhound who liked to be in charge. Some of you may have met her when she participated in the Holland Parade. Greatly missed, she was part of their family for 8 years.

Please note, we try to include all Angels we are aware of. Sincere apologies if we have omitted anyone.



Hanna Paschen (*RB Black Lady*) Although Hanna tended to be a daddy's girl, she did share her love and affection for both Brian and Diania. Her family included one of her litter brothers Satin along with several other greys and cats.

Hallie Jo Pike (*Hallie Jo*)

We were sad to announce the passing of our wonderful Hallie Jo. Retired racer from Iowa and a brood mom. She passed unexpectedly in her sleep on October 4th. Hallie Jo, although serious in nature, did love to run and play in the yard and pool. She enjoyed the company of her siblings Gracie and Sandy Paws. After their passing she would often cuddle with her nephew Red.



Sandy Paws Pike (*Nora Baby*) Sandy Paws was the most delightful boy. Always happy with a comedic side he would stamp his paws and speak back to you when spoken to. He truly was the most gentlest of souls. He loved to lay in the wading pool and play with his sisters Gracie and Hallie Jo.



Mark Piquette (*Kiowa My Mark*) Mark was a favorite in the Steubenville Kennel. He passed unexpectedly after a short illness. His remains are in the care of his trainers, along with his memory. Never forgotten.



Karen Pike (*Wheeling Karen*) We hoped Karen would enjoy retirement as part of our family, however she passed unexpectedly after having surgery for a broken leg. She was an extremely sweet girl.



Roo Roick (*Rutt Roh*) Roo retired from racing in Iowa. Roo was just as sweet as he was handsome. He was lucky to share his home with mom Frightning and his sister Ella. Roo was also a veteran of Dewey Beach. He will be greatly missed.



Spec Gallivan (*Special Moves*) This darling girl raced at six different tracks during her racing career. ' "There is a cycle of love and death that shapes the lives of those who choose to travel in the company of animals. It is a cycle unlike any other. To those who have never lived through its turnings and walked its rocky path, our willingness to give our hearts with full knowledge that they will be broken seems incomprehensible. Only we know how small a price we pay for what we receive; our grief, no matter how powerful it may be, is an insufficient measure of the joy we have been given."



Queenie Gribbin (*At The DQ*) Queenie was a gentle soul that needed a second chance at love when the Gribbin family quickly agreed to adopt her. She passed unexpectedly at a young age. Her family misses her greatly and is trying to adjust to the quiet in their home. In their time of sadness they expressed thanks for the opportunity for having her in their home.

Pepperoni Rohe (*Gable Pepperoni*) This handsome blue brindle boy was not only sweet, but could be quite the character. He started as a short term foster (fail) but never left their home or their hearts. "Easiest thing in the world was loving that angel of a perfect dog."





The Lambada has been called “the forbidden dance”. Now we know why.



This is not Spur, but a very clever im-pasta.



“Psst...is she wearing long shorts or short pants?”

She likes grey butts and she cannot lie.



“Greetings, and welcome to the Erie County Fair. Smiles, everyone, smiles.”

