

**Greyhounds Pets of America-Northern California (GPA-NC)/
Greyhound Adoption California (GACA)
Newsletter, Winter 2008**

Happy Holidays to our human and canine friends alike! We hope this finds all well and enjoying the special times the season has to offer. As is our tradition, we'll lead with the heartwarming list of greyhounds who have found their forever home within our group since last publication:

Flash found a home with Charlie & Kathy Self.

Jack Daniels joins the family of Jim & Carolyn Shofstahl, brother *Casper*, and sister *Wendy*.

Lizette was adopted by Celeste & Dave Smith.

Lily has retired with Maureen and Tom Hicks.

Hermes found a home with Ryan Eudy and sister *Shady*.

Shannon was adopted by Joe Trzeciak.

Murphy has Nick McGill as a new adopter and exercise partner.

Jewel was adopted by Mike Garcia and has become the third four-legged family member.

Congratulations to all! May your first holiday home be filled with treats, stuffies and all the belly rubs you wish!



October 25th transport (Jack Daniels, Lizette, Lily, Hermes, Shannon, Murphy, and Jewel).

In need of a home...

Could you find room in your heart and home for another? Almost nine-year-old Jackson is a sweet, mellow boy who has lived with cats and is in need of a new home due to his adopter's unexpected death. If you are interested in fostering or adopting him, please contact us at 2greys@mindspring.com.



Jackson during a mid-day rest period.

Halfway Home Greyhounds is sponsoring a “Bring a Mom home for the Holiday’s” promotion. They have devoted a special part of their website to dogs who have had a double career; first as racers and then as Moms. These gals are now finished with all the racing industry can possibly ask of them and need a soft bed and a loving family to help teach them how sweet retired life can be! Take a few minutes to look over them at: www.halfwayhomegreyhounds.com. Even if you are not able to adopt one, your sponsorship will be greatly appreciated.

GACA Current Events!

Gift Wrapping at Barnes and Noble

'Tis the season for holiday gift giving and Greyhound Pets of America Northern California/Greyhound Adoption California has been wrapping gifts for donations at the Barnes and Noble at the corner of Steven's Creek and San Tomas in San Jose on the dates listed below. This has always been a great opportunity to introduce shoppers to

greyhounds and spread holiday cheer while raising money for the organization. Sherrlyn Lancaster and Jennifer Morales organized this year's sessions. Thanks for all of their good work.

At the December 13th Show & Tell at the Petco in San Jose, Sherrlyn donned the Santa suit for the holiday photo shoot. We don't have a photo for this newsletter but hopefully we will have one by the next newsletter.

Set a bookmark to www.greyhoundadoptioncalifornia.com/events and check back often for information about recurring GPA-NC/GACA events such as:

- Weekly Saturday meet and greets at the Modesto PetSmart
- 2nd Saturday of the month show & tell at a San Jose Petco
- 3rd Sunday of the month greyhound walk in Pleasanton Sports Park

Do you know of any events that would be good show & tell opportunities? Are you interested in doing a show & tell at your local pet store? If so, please let us know and we would be happy to help you get started.

GACA Past Events Report

Greyt, Big Thanks to PetCo and Greyhound Planet Days Volunteers

A special thank-you goes to PetCo and our dedicated volunteers who participated in show and tells at their local stores during Petco's Greyhound Planet Days fundraiser this past September.



Monterey-area volunteers at a Greyhound Planet Day show and tell at the PetCo in Monterey, CA. Photo courtesy of the Schmidt family.

Annual Picnic

Our annual picnic was held on Saturday, October 18, 2008, at Amador Valley Community Park in Pleasanton, California. The weather was wonderful and the fellowship even better! Events included a silent auction, raffle, shopping from GACA

merchandise and a delicious picnic lunch. We thank all of the dedicated volunteers who helped with the set-up of the picnic and give special thanks to Nina Denegri, who coordinated the event, Richard Dunne or chef, and Delene Dunne for coordinating merchandise sales. We would also like to thank those people that brought food to share with the other attendees.



Greyhounds and their humans enjoy visiting at the picnic. Photo courtesy of Yvonne Oberman.

Good Reads

Looking for that perfect holiday gift? Any dog lover would enjoy Stanley Coren's, [How Dogs Think: What the World Looks Like to Them and Why They Act the Way They Do.](#) While humans have lived with dogs for 14,000 years, we know little about how they think. Scientific studies are helping us understand that dogs are more than just non-thinking, biological machines, but not quite "humans in fur coats". In this book, Dr. Coren attempts to explain how dogs think, in the context of how they sense and experience the world, how they have been genetically programmed to perform canine behavior, and how they learn and adapt their behaviors to changing conditions. For excerpts from some of Dr. Coren's books, visit <http://www.stanleycoren.com>.

Introducing a New Feature: Medical News

Have you ever read the nutrition analysis on a bag of dog food and wondered what it all meant? If you have, you're not alone. While we spend significant time and effort searching out the latest information on human health and nutrition, there is a stunningly small amount of information available to the general public on animal nutrition. Here as a special contributor is Dr. Nicola Mohr, DVM to share with us her knowledge of Canine Nutrition:

Nutrition consists of proteins, fats, and carbohydrates, all of which have important functions. Carbohydrate provides fast access to energy, and is needed to a small extent

for intestinal function. Excess carbohydrate is converted by the liver into fat, and into glycogen stored in muscle. Dogs can only digest simple/soluble carbohydrate, and diets high in insoluble fibers (cellulose) are inappropriate except when used in weight-loss foods. Protein is needed for many functions, including energy, but also for skin and coat health, nervous function, immune system, enzymes and hormones. Animals have to take in proteins with their diet, or they lose body functions and will not be able to produce new body tissues. Fat is the most calorie (i.e. energy) dense ingredient per unit/weight. Fat is added to dog foods for calorie enhancement, to improve palatability, and to allow absorption of vitamins. Inadequate intake may lead to fatty acid and/or energy deficiency, in turn leading to poor growth, poor physical performance, impaired wound healing, and poor skin and coat health. Minerals and vitamins are also important and required in well-balanced diets. For example, iodine is needed for thyroid hormone synthesis, and iron for hemoglobin. Deficiency or excess imbalances of these supplements can manifest as clinical disease; calcium imbalances and bone disease to name a few.

Dogs are carnivores, and although they can digest and gain metabolic benefit from carbohydrates, they are less efficient at this process than an herbivore would be. Carnivores have very powerful digestive enzymes that can handle high-energy (protein and fat) foods. The digestive tract is relatively short and not designed to convert complex carbohydrates into energy through bacterial digestive processes, such as a horse is able to do. Therefore, sources of carbohydrates (grains, potatoes) are less advantageous overall in the dog diet than animal-derived protein or fat. Food manufacturers use grains in dog food for three reasons: grains are a less expensive ingredient, historically many dog foods were made by companies in the livestock feed industry, and in order to make a kibble hold together and not crumble, a minimum amount of carbohydrate has to be integrated (typically corn, rice, or sweet potato).

Dog food ingredients are listed on the package label in order of weight. In a high-quality dry food, at least one of the first three ingredients will have been derived from an animal source for example: "chicken meal" or "fresh lamb". When looking at various diets/brands, look for natural, little-processed ingredients – e.g. whole grains are preferred over fractured grains ("whole brown rice" vs. "brewer's rice"). Generally, there is nothing wrong with including animal by-products in pet foods, as that simply describes parts from the slaughtered animal that we, in this society, consider unfit for human consumption. This includes lung, liver, stomach and intestinal organs, etc. In fact, wild carnivores will consume these parts first in a fresh kill, as they are soft, easy to reach, and full of nutrients. When included in dog foods though, be sure they come from good sources. Fat is usually added as a separate ingredient, and should be labeled as to species ("chicken fat" or "beef fat"). Avoid foods with the generic labeled ingredient "animal fat", as that denotes an ambiguous mix of sources, sometimes rendered from restaurant grease. Ingredients should be preserved naturally, for example fat with Tocopherols or Vitamin E, not with BHT/BHA. Good dog foods don't require added glucose or artificial ingredients, including food colors. From the label, one should be able to ascertain the nutrient information, ingredients, calorie contents, expiration date, and that the diet has been tested and meets minimum feeding requirements. "Complete and balanced" should be substantiated by successful feeding tests using established protocols; the most widely accepted one being that of the Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO).

Dry foods are well-suited for most dogs, including those with missing teeth; contrary to popular belief, most dogs, especially larger ones, tend to gulp their kibble, rather than thoroughly chewing it. Dry food is more economical, and less of it needs to be consumed by volume. Canned foods are 70% water, so dogs need to eat a lot more

volume to maintain weight. Canned foods generally have less need for carbohydrate and preservatives, and often are more palatable and easily digestible. All processing will destroy some nutrients, but this is not a problem in high-quality products, since the quantity lost can be calculated and the formulation adjusted accordingly. Recently, grain-free diets - not carbohydrate-free - have become fashionable. They usually have very high levels of protein, which may benefit a growing, nursing, or high-performance dog. Many older dogs, though, have a decreased ability to metabolize protein, and feeding them in this way may hasten or worsen kidney weakness and disease. Grain-free is not necessarily healthier, nor is there a problem with using corn or rice, unless an individual animal has a proven allergy to those or other ingredients. This is rarely the case.

Producing a premium dog food with quality ingredients and careful processing is costly, and thus higher quality foods are generally higher priced, although there are some exceptions to this rule. There has recently been an explosion of premium food manufacturers, but no one brand out-shines the rest. If you are feeding one diet only, because your dog tolerates it well, make sure that it is completely balanced. Dogs do not generally need variety, and if one particular ingredient or brand works, don't worry about food fads. Keep in mind, though, that dog foods are continually improving, and that your dog may enjoy a varied diet. If you look at the package label with a critical eye and common sense, you will have no trouble finding nutritious food for your canine friend.

...And to All a Good Night!

Thank you for a greyt 2008! We are looking forward to a new year filled with events, new forever homes, and big dogs sprawling on their backs with all four feet in the air, looking at us as if to say, "Hey you – get away from that computer and rub me already!"

Not a bad idea, come to think of it...

Have a wonderful, safe and Happy New Year!

GPA-NC/GACA Current Board Members

President: Jim Shofstahl

Vice President: Jill Mazzei

Treasurer: Sherrlyn Lancaster

Webmaster/Secretary: Jennifer Morales

Foster Coordinator: Carolyn Koester

Merchandise/Picnic Coordinator: Nina Denegri

Board Members at Large: Jack Fishbaugh, Delene and Richard Dunne, Scott Sanders

GPA-NC/GACA Thanks the Following Newsletter Contributors

Carolyn Koester, Contributor, Book Review, Adoption & News updates

Nicola Mohr, DVM, Contributor, Medical News

Rachel Mittler, Editor

We hope this has been an informative and enjoyable issue. Please let us know if you have ideas or contributions for future issues. Send ideas to: Rachel Mittler ghoundnews@gmail.com.

Ever wonder what it is like to visit a greyhound farm? Keep an eye out for our next issue when we include a report on Jim Shofstahl and Carolyn Koester's visit to two farms and the Greyhound Hall of Fame in Abilene Kansas.

Final Thoughts

As 2008 closes, I would like to thank all of the volunteers who keep the group going throughout the year. The past year has been a very tough year for everyone, as we are all aware, but it has also been very tough for the animals. Throughout the country, adoptions are down – this affects greyhounds as well as all other pets. With the closing of a couple of race tracks and farms, it has meant an even greater strain on the greyhound adoption community. Without the volunteers that our group and other groups in the country depend upon, we wouldn't have been able to make a difference.

I would also like to remember some of our friends (Sylvia Olson and Yogi Yoneyama) and greyhounds (Apollo, Bunny, Cisco, Farley, Fritz, Jayz, Leggs, Marcus, Onyx, Pete, Penny, Phoebe, Piper, Simba, Winks), and one very "short legged-hound" (Howard) that passed away during 2008.

Have a merry Christmas and happy New Year.

Jim Shofstahl
President