

# **Greyhound Pet Adoption Northwest**



**Volunteer Handbook**  
**Updated January, 2021**

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## Welcome

Thank you for volunteering with Greyhound Pet Adoption Northwest (GPANW). We are an all-volunteer organization so volunteerism is essential to our success in finding loving homes for recently-retired greyhounds. We have 100 - 150 active volunteers at any one time. We realize that everyone has various amounts of time and skills to offer, and we appreciate everyone for their efforts, great and small. There are a wide variety of opportunities for you to choose from. GPANW is happy to have you represent us as a volunteer and ask that you take the time to read this manual so you are familiar with the organization and volunteer tasks and responsibilities.

Please note that this Volunteer Handbook is intended as a guide. Use this as a helpful tool when you are with Greyhounds and volunteers for GPANW.

Nothing in the Handbook creates a contractual relationship or employee relationship between a volunteer and Greyhound Pet Adoption Northwest.

## History of Greyhound Pet Adoption Northwest

Greyhound Pet Adoption Northwest is a non-profit corporation and a tax-exempt 501c3 organization, established in 1993. It is part of a national network of Greyhound adoption groups that follow the highest standards for the care of Greyhounds and adoption procedures. As of 2021, we have placed nearly 6,000 Greyhounds in loving adoptive homes.

Based in Portland, Oregon, Greyhound Pet Adoption Northwest places dogs in Oregon and Southwest Washington. We have volunteer groups established for events, adoptions and support in Portland, Bend, Salem, Eugene, Corvallis, and Vancouver, WA.

## **Mission**

The mission of Greyhound Pet Adoption Northwest is to find responsible loving homes for Greyhounds bred for racing. We accept dogs from racing tracks, breeding kennels, and those in animal shelters or abandoned by their owners. No Greyhound is turned away from Greyhound Pet Adoption Northwest regardless of age, injury or where it began its life.

Greyhounds in our program are housed in foster homes once they have been medically vetted. We feel this enables GPANW to have more information regarding the specific needs of each dog, making for more successful adoptions.

## **Volunteering With GPANW**

GPANW welcomes volunteers from all walks of life, regardless of whether they have adopted a Greyhound or not. All that is required is a love of animals, and a willingness to work. As a volunteer you are our most important resource and we can't stress enough how much we appreciate all that you do for GPANW and the Greyhounds we serve.

If you are a new volunteer, you will typically work initially with one or more of the seasoned volunteers in the areas in which you are interested. Please ask questions of the person training you.

## **Neutrality Policy**

It is our policy that... "*GPANW is politically neutral and is neither pro-racing nor anti-racing. We are, however, against the destruction of Greyhounds without legitimate medical justification. Euthanizing Greyhounds for economic reasons is unacceptable.*"

**All volunteers are expected to follow this policy when interacting with the public. We volunteer for the dogs—not for any political agenda.** Our personal convictions are just that, personal. We have chosen this path because we feel that we are able to help more Greyhounds find their forever homes by remaining neutral rather than working against the racing industry.

## **Overview of Volunteer Opportunities**

Some volunteers work directly with the Greyhounds, others work at events; some interact with the public and others work behind the scenes. Some have time restrictions and volunteer for a few events throughout the year, while others volunteer for positions that need a weekly time commitment. Our events have an event leader, who is an experienced volunteer. The opportunities below are a sample of our most needed-volunteer functions; we also have one-time volunteer needs and new events for which we recruit through Facebook and our monthly newsletter.

### **Hound Arrival Operations**

When new groups of Greyhounds arrive, we recruit volunteers to greet, bathe and coordinate pickup of dogs by their foster family.

### **Special Events**

These include fundraising events such as an annual art auction, our own annual picnic and hounds wash, and an annual Holiday sale. Volunteers plan, organize and work at the events. We sometimes participate in

public events such as festivals or fairs, and recruit volunteers and their hounds to take part.

### **Transport**

GPA Northwest has a transportation program, in which volunteers safely transport Greyhounds in their vehicles to and from veterinary appointments and other locations. When the dogs arrive by air, we need volunteers to drive our truck and trailer to the location and return them to a designated location.

### **Committees**

We welcome volunteers to work on our standing committees, each of which has a Committee Chair:

- **Placement.** Work with potential adopters to determine if a Greyhound is right for them, and work with them to find the right Greyhound for their situation, while providing support to ensure the adoption is successful.
- **Foster.** The GPA Northwest Foster Program is designed to provide temporary homes for all the Greyhounds awaiting adoption, expose them to as many aspects of life as a pet as possible, and provide them basic training. We are always looking for new foster homes. There is a separate Foster Handbook to assist volunteers in this program.
- **Fundraising.** As a non-profit organization, we rely on donations to offset the costs of our adoption program. Fundraising takes place in a number of ways - events, direct solicitations, grants and appeals. Volunteers with advertising, grant writing, or donor development experience are always needed for this committee.
- **Events.** We put on events throughout the year, including Play Dates at large fenced areas for Greyhounds to romp around together. Volunteers are needed as "field monitors" and other tasks during the Play Dates. Our Holiday Sale and Halloween Romp are other examples of events volunteers can sign up for.
- **Merchandise.** We sell Greyhound-related merchandise through our **Greyt Stuff Store** to GPA Northwest members or non-members with the intention of raising funds to help support our adoption program. Merchandise is available online and at several of our major events.
- **Animal Welfare/Medical.** This committee is responsible for evaluating the medical status of Greyhounds as they enter our program ensuring we get the best medical care for our dogs at a reasonable cost, evaluating the medical options for serious medical issues, monitoring dogs as they recuperate from surgery or illness, updating our medical protocols, and overseeing bills received from the veterinary hospitals with which we work. Volunteers with a background in veterinary technology, animal husbandry, and pharmacology are valuable for the committee's operations.
- **Communications.** Volunteers work on communication with GPA Northwest members through our newsletter and e-mail, and communication with the public through our website, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter to promote our adoption program and fundraising activities.

## Questions from the Public

When speaking to the public about Greyhound adoption, some of the common questions you receive and points that you will want to keep in mind are shown below. If someone asks you a question you aren't sure of, please refer them to our website, [www.gpa-nw.org](http://www.gpa-nw.org), or get their email address and let them know you will find the answer and get back to them. Your event leader or experienced volunteer is also a good source of information.

### What Is A Retired Racer?

With a life span of up to 15 years, they usually retire between the ages of 2 to 6 years and are retired for various reasons. Most are healthy, well behaved and make a wonderful addition to a family as a pet. Males are generally between 65 and 85 pounds and measure 26 to 30 inches high and females are between 50 and 65 pounds and measure 23 to 26 inches high. Greyhounds come in many colors - brindle, black, white, red, fawn or a combination of these colors.

### Are Greyhounds Aggressive?

Most Greyhounds are docile in nature and are among the most gentle of breeds. They are the original "couch potato". They form a very strong bond with their human family and are eager to please. Greyhounds do not make good watchdogs. Some may bark if a stranger comes near but barking is usually out of excitement.

### Are Greyhounds Housetrained?

Greyhounds are "kennel trained" which means they will not normally relieve themselves in their kennel during their racing career. Most Greyhounds in the GPA Northwest adoption program spend time in a foster home prior to adoption and will be housetrained in their foster home. They are very intelligent, sensitive dogs and once your routine is established you should have no trouble with accidents in your home.

### Are Greyhounds Indoor Pets?

YES! Greyhounds must live indoors. They cannot withstand temperature extremes due to their thin skin and low body fat. They don't have the same undercoat as other breeds and due to their physique aren't able to protect themselves in extreme heat or cold. Greyhounds must never be chained or staked outside. Greyhounds can reach a very high powerful speed in three strides - chaining or staking makes snapping their neck or other major injury a very real possibility. They are highly social animals and must be with people.

### Can I Trust My Greyhound Off Leash?

**NO! GREYHOUNDS MUST ALWAYS BE ON A LEASH WHEN OUTDOORS AND NOT IN A SECURE FENCED AREA.** Greyhounds are sight hounds and can see clearly for a half mile. If they see something of interest, they can be gone in an instant. They have no knowledge of streets, cars or traffic. Greyhounds love to run, and within a secure fenced area, it is perfectly OK. Greyhounds enjoy walking or jogging, and are usually very well behaved on a leash.

### How Important Is Exercise For My Greyhound?

A Greyhound is an athlete like any other athlete. Greyhounds adapt well to life as a pet and need no more than a romp in the backyard and an occasional walk in the park to keep them fit. The perception that a Greyhound is a high-energy dog is probably the biggest misconception about them. When racing, they are sprinters who may race for less than a minute a few times a week. This is not a high-energy breed like labs or Dalmatians. They spend most of their time lounging, which is why they adjust very easily to live in an

apartment or townhouse. As with any dog they should have daily exercise, which can be fulfilled by a daily walk.

### **What About Children And Other Pets?**

Greyhounds are normally patient, loving animals. All children should be taught to respect any dog, and never to bother a dog that is sleeping. It is our policy not to adopt Greyhounds to families with children under the age of five. Teaching co-existence to both dogs and toddlers is generally asking too much of young, busy families. Greyhounds have lived with other Greyhounds all their lives and should quickly make friends with other dogs that you have. All Greyhounds in the GPA Northwest adoption program are tested for their compatibility with cats and small dogs.

### **Why Do I See Many People Muzzling Their Greyhounds At Get-togethers?**

Their racing instinct is based on a well-developed prey drive. When you have a group of Greyhounds together, especially unfamiliar ones, it is advisable to muzzle them to prevent accidental bites. Greyhounds are not dog aggressive, but when excited may nip at others. Don't let the muzzles lull you into a false sense of security. You must still monitor a group of muzzled Greyhounds since it's possible to catch ears through a muzzle and so on. Do note that muzzling is not always required; it's simply a sensible precaution if you are dealing with a group of Greyhounds.

### **Safety Guidelines For Handling Greyhounds At Events**

GPANW wants every volunteer and Greyhound to have a safe experience when you volunteer for an event. We have many different types of events with a different purpose.

Please read the following guidelines and happy volunteering.

- a. If your Greyhound does not do well at social functions, please consider leaving him at home. The safety and well-being of everyone at events is important. Forcing a dog to endure something they are not happy about makes a miserable experience for the dog and isn't a fair representation of the Greyhound breed. You can always attend an event without your dog and help in some other capacity.
- b. Make sure that you check in with the event leader and let them know your dog's name(s) and the personality of each dog.
- c. If there are other dogs around, please make sure that your Greyhound is on a short leash, secure with you, and not interfering with other dog's leads. Leashes tangle quickly and this could lead to a growling session or worse. Keep the leash loop wrapped around your wrist in case your dog tries to bolt or is startled. This will enable you to control your dog and avoid a run away.
- d. When representing GPA Northwest at events, you and your Greyhound are expected to adhere to the practices and policies of the organization. NO extended retractable leads are allowed. You should have control of your dog at all times and extended leashes are dangerous for Greyhounds. We recommend that you use a martingale collar or body harness so your Greyhound will not be able to slip out of his collar and take off in the blink of an eye. All Greyhounds are expected to be on leash.
- e. Be prepared. Make sure that your dog or foster dog has plenty of water and that you clean up after your dog. Be careful when you walk them in potty areas, as there can be hazards to their feet.
- f. When volunteering at events that feature foster dogs in ex-pens, please remember these foster dogs will have had varying levels of experience at events and may have

unpredictable responses to various stimuli. Your purpose at the event is to be ready and approachable for people to ask questions, but to keep a watch on the dogs in the pens at the same time. If a particular dog is having difficulty in the situation, talk with your team leader about ways to help that dog be more comfortable in the situation.

## **Nondiscrimination Policy**

GPA Northwest embraces inclusiveness, diversity, and equal opportunity and welcomes diversity in its volunteers, adopters, donors, and board members. To this end, GPA Northwest adheres to procedures that will ensure equal opportunity for all people without regard for race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, LGBTQ orientation, marital status, or disability, and other characteristics protected by law when recruiting volunteers, providing services or educational programs, or considering new Board of Director members. Harassment on the basis of a protected characteristic is considered a form of discrimination. Anyone who believes this policy has been violated should report the situation to the President or Secretary of the Board of Directors to investigate and correct any practice which may be at variance with our nondiscrimination policy.

## **Adoption Process**

GPA Northwest has established formal procedures to ensure that retired racers are placed in loving homes with people who will take good care of them. The adoption fee includes having the dog spayed or neutered, its teeth cleaned, shots up to date, heartworm test and a general exam. The dog will have been wormed and treated with flea preventative. In addition, each dog comes with a collar, leash and muzzle.

There is a \$100 application fee, which is applied toward the adoption fee (the fee changes periodically, and can be found on our website). Once an applicant has submitted their adoption application, the application is assigned to a trained Placement Volunteer. The Placement Volunteer will work with the applicant to determine if a Greyhound is right for them, conduct a home visit to give first hand safety information pertaining to Greyhounds and answer any questions the applicant might have. If the application is approved, the Placement Volunteer will assist the applicant in finding the right Greyhound for them.

## **Insurance and Liability**

Greyhound Pet Adoption does not provide medical, vehicle or other insurance for volunteers and is not financially or otherwise legally responsible for any injuries or damage that may occur from volunteering with our organization.

**Thank you for your interest in volunteering with Greyhound Pet Adoption Northwest.**



## APPENDIX

### History of the Greyhound

The Greyhound is an ancient breed that may date back to the Pharaohs of ancient Egypt. They are the oldest, purebred dogs still in existence today. Evidence of their origin goes back over 4000 years. Paintings inside the tombs of the great Pyramids depicted Greyhound-like dogs. They were prized pets and hunting companions of many ancient peoples, including the Egyptians, Arabs, Greeks, and Romans.

In early Arabian culture, the birth of a Greyhound was cause for great celebrations and second only in importance to the birth of a son. They were the only dogs permitted to share an Arab's tent or ride atop his camel. They were also the only dogs mentioned by name in the King James Version of the Bible (Proverbs 30:29-31). To be presented with a Greyhound was considered the most prized gift one could receive. Persians believed that the Greyhound was permitted in the next world to give information and evidence about mankind. It was the Egyptians who first raced Greyhounds for sport in open fields with a wild hare as quarry and no rules of the game except speed. In the Early Kingdom, Greyhounds were considered to possess divine powers.

Greyhounds almost became extinct during the Middle Ages as famine and pestilence spread across the land. Men of the cloth saved them, and nobility claimed them as an exclusive right of theirs.

Greyhounds were bred as coursing dogs, with the ability to track their prey by sight rather than smell, spot a moving object up to half a mile away, sight game over huge expanses of open terrain and to run at great speeds over long distances in pursuit of their prey; hence their streamlined bodies and narrow heads to cut the wind, deep chests to allow for enlarged heart and lung capacity, long legs and well-muscled quarters to enable them to cover ground at speeds of up to 45 miles per hour. They possess keen intellect and seem intuitively connected to each other and their prey when coursing in an open field. Their sprinting ability enables them to expend an enormous amount of energy in a short period of time. Their ability to blend speed, coordination, and strategy has made them great hunters as well as racers.

In 1014, King Canute instituted the Forest Laws, forbidding commoners to hunt with their Greyhounds on Royal Lands. Any peasant caught hunting in the Royal Forests would be fined and his Greyhound seized, lamed, or killed. These laws, in one form or another, remained in effect for hundreds of years, and the constant battles between the nobility and the commoners became known as the Greyhound Wars. This was the time when the white or parti-colored Greyhounds became associated with the nobility, and the solid colored dogs, with the common folk. The darker colored dogs were better camouflaged when they hunted in the forests and fields at dusk or early morning.

Coursing as a sport grew out of the Greyhounds' natural hunting abilities and tremendous speed and agility in the field. In England in the 18th and 19th centuries, the Landed Gentry, being the sporting folk that they were, formed coursing clubs and met on weekends to compete with their Greyhounds. The Waterloo Cup was one such contest, and it grew to become the premier coursing event in the world. At a coursing meet, several dogs are slipped (loosed) at the "Tally Ho!" signal of the Huntmaster and chase a hare until it is either caught or eludes the dogs. Each Greyhound in competition is judged on its speed, agility, ability to follow and turn the hare, and on the kill.

As the British immigrated to America, they brought their Greyhounds with them and found them ideally suited to chase down rabbits that were interfering with their crops. This led to bets and wagers among the farmers as to who had the faster dog.

In the early 1900's Oval Track Racing was developed and quickly grew in importance. This new Greyhound activity became more popular than coursing, as it was contained within a smaller space, did not involve the killing of live game, and lent itself well as a spectator sport. In the last ten years there has been a tremendous grass roots movement in this country and abroad to adopt retired racers and place them in loving homes. This movement, accompanied as it has been by extensive media coverage, is placing thousands of Greyhounds into homes each year and adding greatly to the already well-established interest in the breed. The Greyhound is one of the most aesthetically pleasing members of the dog world.

General Custer was a big Greyhound fancier, President Lincoln had a Greyhound on his family coat-of-arms, John Barrymore, the famous actor, always kept his house full of Greyhounds as pets, and Bo Derek, the actress, has several retired racing Greyhounds, and is a great advocate of Greyhound Adoption programs.

The Greyhound was long considered dogdom's "best kept secret". Now that the word is out, more and more people are adopting Greyhounds. Greyhound owners are an intensely loyal and supportive group who love their charges with a passion.

There is definitely a great interest in the breed around the globe. After so many years of companionship with mankind, years filled with love, humor and admiration, but also, sadly, with cruelty, abuse and misuse, the Greyhound is finally realizing his due; a soft place on the couch of a family who adores him and a society who appreciates one of the most colorful, most beautiful dogs in existence today.