



Texas Greyhound Association

Representing the Greyhound Breeding and Racing Industry in Texas

On Saturday, February 4, the Texas Greyhound Association hosted its 2nd Annual Adoption Summit, drawing 20 representatives from Heart of Texas Greyhound Adoption, GPA North Texas, GPA Houston, GPA Central Texas, Greyhound Adoption League of Texas, Hill Country Greyhound Adoption and Gulf Greyhound Park. The Summit is designed for the active interchange of ideas between greyhound adoption groups for the purpose of increasing adoptions and promoting greyhounds for the benefit of the racing industry.

The theme of the 2006 Summit was “Marketing Greyhounds”. Speakers included Diane Whiteley, Executive Director of the TGA, Lynn Rorke Reardon of LOPE and Darren Anderson, active with amateur sight hound racing.

The session started out with input from participants on what is going well in greyhound adoption, and what needs improvement. All of the participants praised the dedication of the volunteers in their organizations, cooperative greyhound breeders, the TGA and its commitment to greyhound welfare and organizing the Summits, and the increased communication between adoption groups. Areas to improve include decreasing the number of “returns” to the adoption groups, increasing the number of foster homes, potential burnout, and lack of public awareness and promotion of greyhounds.

Diane Whiteley moderated the discussion on methods of marketing retired racers, which included the costs associated with veterinary care prior to adoption, benefits of greyhounds as companions and family members, effective target marketing, channels of distribution, promotion and strategy. Many ideas were shared on advertising and promotion, and areas noted for improvement.

After lunch and time for informal communication between the groups, the next speaker was Lynn Rorke Reardon, Executive Director of LOPE, a non-profit adoption organization for retired racehorses. Lynn brought a different perspective as she outlined LOPE’s mission of placing horses in second careers as working and pleasure horses. Her group matches horses with new owners and has developed a good relationship with the media, racetracks, trainers, veterinarians and feed companies. Lynn presented a new approach for greyhound groups to consider, and was very much appreciated.

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Darren Anderson presented an excellent look at amateur racing for healthy, retired greyhounds. He emphasized the social and fun aspect of amateur groups competing safely with their own greyhounds. The TGA will host another “fun run” at its headquarters in May.

The afternoon finished with a presentation on developing media press kits and effective use of press releases. A general discussion followed on improving coordination and communication, ideas for fundraising and locations for “meet and greets” for prospective adopters, the establishment of a “halfway house” for greyhounds waiting to get into adoption programs, and a steering committee to coordinate the adoption groups.

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