



# PAWS

# Tales

Issue 14

Summer 1997

## Notes from the Director

In Loving Memory

Hasty

The weather has warmed up, and our 45 mile an hour couch potatoes have taken to long, lazy days on the couch under the fans! While things tend to slow down during the summer, we have a lot of exciting events planned for the fall. Read on for more information about our Picnic with the Pups/Fundraiser in October, the Doo Dah Parade, our Cardinals Games fundraiser, and other great events for the holidays. We've also included information for great gift ideas for the holidays!

Kimba

We're having a great summer. We've adopted over 220 greyhounds to new homes this year. Much busier than we normally are for this time of year!

Since our last issue our volunteers attended two wonderful events. The first was Breuners Arizona, an upscale furniture store. Breuners invited the greyhounds to greet their customers in the lobbies of their two retail facilities, and donated 1% of their gross profits to Arizona Adopt A Greyhound. We want to thank Breuners for their

Berta and Streak

generous donation of close to \$600 to the greyhounds, and our volunteers for all their time and effort. We have also adopted one new greyhound so far to a family who saw our group at Breuners. Great job everyone!

We also attended the Spring Special Olympics. This is always a great weekend, and the kids who participate in the Olympics get such a thrill meeting and petting the greyhounds. It's usually a rewarding experience for everyone involved, and the feedback we received from the volunteers was great! Thanks to all the families who went to ASU and gave their time for a very worthwhile organization. The Fall Special Olympics will take place on Saturday, October 18, from 9:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. Please give Kiersten Kerr a call at 971-6935 if you're interested in joining us! She'll call you back just as soon as she has more details.

Have a great summer, stay cool, and we'll see you all in the fall!

Happy Hounding!

Cheryl

*Note:* The Greyhounds pictured throughout this newsletter with their name(s) in the black bar were adopted by families through AAGI.

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# Dooops & Scoops

## Festival of Lights Parade/Snow Day

We're making arrangements to attend the City of Tempe Festival of Lights Parade this year. Our Fall Newsletter will contain all the details for this, as well as "Snow Day," when downtown Tempe is covered in several tons of snow! The Tempe Convention and Visitor's Bureau sponsors both of these events, and is very excited about the addition of the greyhounds. Start thinking about greyhound coats that light up!

## Greyhound Coats

Speaking of coats, stop by the AAGI trailer to see samples of greyhound coats in all weights and colors. These coats, made by Chrysanthemum, are top quality, and handmade to order. We'll place the order for you and by winter your greyhound will be sporting a bright new winter jacket. Priced at about \$30.00, a portion of each sale is donated to AAGI, so you're not only buying your baby a pretty coat, your helping the greyhounds still waiting for homes! They also offer terry cloth coats which can be wet down to keep your greyhound cool in the hot weather.

## AAGI T-Shirts

We have a new shipment of AAGI T-shirts in the trailer. Always in demand, the Arizona Adopt A Greyhound T-shirts are a great way to brag about your greyhound and the program. The AAGI trailer is open on Friday nights, usually from 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm. Don't forget, if we're doing adoptions in the trailer, please be patient until the greyhounds and their new families are finished.

## Doo Dah Parade

We will again be participating in the Chandler Doo Dah Parade for the fourth year. The Doo Dah Parade is a wild and wacky, tasteless and tacky parade that celebrates, well, nothing in particular! Sponsored by the City of Chandler and KMLE Country Radio, it's become an institution in the valley. And the 45 Mile An Hour Couch Potatoes are a favorite of the crowd! The date for this year's parade is Saturday, October 11. Please call Elizabeth Stoltz at 649-5070 and leave your name and number if you're interested in participating. She'll call you back as soon as she has more information (probably in September). As always,

participation in the Doo Dah Parade guarantees you an invitation to Alumni Night on Sunday, November 23. You'll all receive information on Alumni Night in the fall.

## Arizona Cardinals Fundraiser

We've decided to try the Cardinals fundraiser again this year. We've scaled it down a bit - we'll be working one double booth only, and we've been guaranteed the best location in the house. I guess we proved last year what hard workers we are!

If you are interested in selling beer for the greyhounds at the Arizona Cardinals' games this year, please call Michele Rebeor at 812-9205. For those of you that didn't work last year, we make a percentage of the sales from the beer we sell at the games. We made over \$2,000 last year, and hope to make even more this year. It's hard work, but the greyhounds are worth it!

## Greyhound-Friendly Apartments in the Valley

We have some inside information on some changes in the policies of a number of apartment complexes in the valley concerning pets. Previously a canine over 25 pounds was extremely difficult to find a home for in an apartment community. Recently a number of upscale properties have re-evaluated their pet criteria and now base their acceptance on the breed's behavior!!

This means that a 65 pound greyhound is more socially acceptable than an eight pound terrier. These apartment communities are saying that they want "Nappers - not Yappers!" Good news for those of us that must relocate temporarily, or who would like to adopt but live in an apartment!

## City of Phoenix Renaissance Festival

The City of Phoenix will be having a local Renaissance Festival on Saturday, September 27 and Sunday, September 28. This will be a much smaller festival than the yearly Renaissance Festival we usually participate in. If you're interested in volunteering at this event, please call Kiersten Kerr at 971-6935. We do not have all of the details yet, so be patient. We'll call you when we have the exact location and schedule.

# Picnic Time!

## We're Having a Picnic, and You're Invited!

Our greyhound family is growing and growing here in Arizona, and we have many requests for a get together where everyone can participate. So this fall we've decided to host a fundraiser/picnic for the hounds. You are all invited to join us at Papago Park for a Picnic with the Pups on Sunday, October 26. We'll be cooking hot dogs and hamburgers and hosting all sorts of activities for you, your family and your greyhounds. Some of the games we're planning include a balloon toss for you and the kids, a Buster Cube Competition, and a costume contest for the greyhounds. We'll also have a Pet Counselor Booth for all those questions you've always wanted to ask but never did, and a nail trimming and ear cleaning booth. And of course there will be lots of greyhounds and their adopted families together to share stories and laugh about our crazy pets. How did we ever live without our greyhounds?!

The greyhound gift shop booth will be open and stocked with t-shirts, t-shirts, t-shirts and other greyhound goodies, so bring your checkbook and get some early Christmas shopping done. Our greyhound jackets will be on display in case you'd like to order one, or two, or three...!

As most of you know, Arizona Adopt A Greyhound is a non-profit organization. Our sole purpose is to find homes for all of the racing greyhounds after they retire from the track. While we get a generous grant from the Phoenix Greyhound Racing Foundation, we try to organize at least one fundraiser each year to help offset some of the costs involved with running this program. Our Picnic with the Pups in Papago Park is our big fundraiser for 1997.

When you arrive, if you're interested in participating in any of the games or visiting any of our booths, just buy some tickets at the entrance. Each ticket will be 50 cents. As you're visiting the different activities, look for the sign that says how many tickets it takes to participate. One hot dog will be two tickets, one hamburger will be three tickets, a soda will be two tickets. Each game will be two tickets to participate, with a prize for the winner of the game. Our Nail Trimming and Ear Cleaning Booth will be eight tickets, etc. Want to eat or play a game, but don't know what to do with your greyhound(s)? For a couple of coupons, a Human Hitching Post will babysit while you enjoy yourself! **All** money collected will go to the greyhounds waiting to be adopted, including paying for food, boarding, vet bills, beds, treats, toys, etc.

Our picnic will be on Sunday, October 26, from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. at Papago Park (see map for details). Look for signs the day of the picnic to help you find Ramadas 9 & 10. The food will be available between 11:00 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome, with or without their greyhounds. Sorry, but only greyhounds allowed, no other breeds please. It's **very** important that you let us know if you plan to come and participate or eat. This is a fundraiser, so we don't want to over purchase food and drinks. Please, please, please RSVP by sending the attached coupon in no later than September 1. We really need as close to an accurate count as we can get before this date.



## We hope to see you all there!

**Yes**, I'll be attending the Picnic at Papago Park with my with  without  my greyhound(s)!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Greyhound(s)'s Pet Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Greyhound(s)'s Racing Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please mail this form to RSVP to: AAGI Picnic at Papago Park • 6321 E. Regina Street • Mesa, AZ 85215**

# Home Alone

Tufts University School of Veterinary Medicine • Newsletter, *Your Dog*

You're hustling to get the kids ready for school and get to work on time. Before flying out the door, you make sure Fritz has water, dry food, and a non-splintering chewbone. You even turn on the radio - easy listening. Maybe today will be different.

Alas, you come home to find the water, food and bone untouched. Instead, Fritz has gnawed off a piece of door frame and shredded a sofa cushion.

## Separation Anxiety

Dogs are great companions because they become so attached to people. But the attachment sometimes backfires in the form of separation anxiety. Fortunately, most dogs do not become anxious when left alone. "A well-balanced dog realizes that its owners have departed and curls up for a snooze," says Dr. Nicholas Dodman, Director of the Behavior Clinic at Tufts University School of Veterinary Medicine.

However, dogs that do exhibit separation anxiety behaviors - excessive barking, household destruction, and inappropriate elimination - are not acting out of spite or anger. They are simply distressed by separation from "their people." Most dogs live to please - an important fact to remember as you try to help your dog overcome separation anxiety.

## "Normal" Anxiety

Certain anxieties in dogs are normal. For example, when you bring a new puppy home, it usually cries for a few nights as it adjusts to life away from litter mates. During the critical learning period from about seven weeks to four months, puppies - like human infants - need

almost constant attention as they seek a secure position in your family's "pack." But over time, you should leave your dog alone for increasing periods of time so it doesn't form unhealthy attachments to you or other family members.

## Why My Dog?

Separation anxiety most often occurs in dogs that become very attached to their owners. While genetics may play a role, most experts believe certain early experiences lead dogs to form intense bonds with people and therefore become vulnerable to separation anxiety.

For example, puppies deprived of human contact during the critical learning period are at risk of developing separation anxiety. "You can't treat a 7-week-old puppy like a lawn tractor and park it while you go to work," cautions Dr. Dodman.

But there's a flip side: a dog that spends almost all of its time with people is also likely to feel distress when suddenly left alone. Either extreme - too much or too little contact with people - can cause separation anxiety in a dog.

In well-behaved adult dogs, separation anxiety may develop if an owner suddenly changes routine - for example, by returning to work after a period of unemployment. Occasionally, an otherwise well-adjusted dog develops separation anxiety in connection with a fearful incident that occurred when it was home alone. If a dog, terrified of thunder, is home alone during a severe electrical storm, it may thereafter associate being alone with thunder and become

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# Don't Miss the Picnic!

See other side for details!



*There are times when a dog with separation anxiety seems to be possessed. Jasmine. Photo courtesy of Virginia Schultz, Thornton, Colorado.*

anxious whenever its owner leaves.

Older dogs that have stayed home alone without incident for years may also unexpectedly display

signs of separation anxiety. Almost invariably in these cases an underlying medical problem is the cause; ill dogs often seek out the comfort of their owners. If separation anxiety occurs in your elderly dog, consult your veterinarian.

### Signs

Within minutes of its owner's departure, a dog with separation anxiety starts to whimper or bark.

After vocalization fails to bring back its owner, the dog may try to escape - chewing moldings, breaking screens, even shattering windows. In extreme cases, dogs may urinate or defecate in the house because they are simply beside themselves with anxiety.

A rarer manifestation of separation anxiety is self-mutilation such as lick granuloma. Dogs groom themselves because it feels good, but some highly anxious dogs turn grooming into a licking obsession which can lead to skin ulcerations.

Your dog may not display these extreme behaviors, but it may show subtle subclinical signs of separation anxiety. Some animals, for example, won't eat or drink during their owner's absence.

### Treatment Options

Successful treatment requires patience, consistency, and praise. "Praise is an important part of treatment, because dogs inherently want to please," says Dr. Dodman. Positive reinforcement gives your dog the confidence to tolerate longer periods alone. Conversely, punishing a dog for separation anxiety behaviors that occurred earlier makes the dog more anxious because it doesn't connect the punishment with the undesirable behavior.

Rather than reversing the specific "bad" behaviors, treatment for separation anxiety focuses on reducing the dog's panic level just before and after the owner's departure. Because dog behavior is

relatively complex, treatment usually entails a combination of methods: behavior modifying desensitization (gradually increasing the dog's exposure to situations that produce anxiety) and counter-conditioning (training the dog to expect pleasure not panic, when left alone). In difficult cases, anti-anxiety medications "pharmacological shoehorns" as Dr. Dodman calls them - may facilitate behavioral treatment.

### Repetition

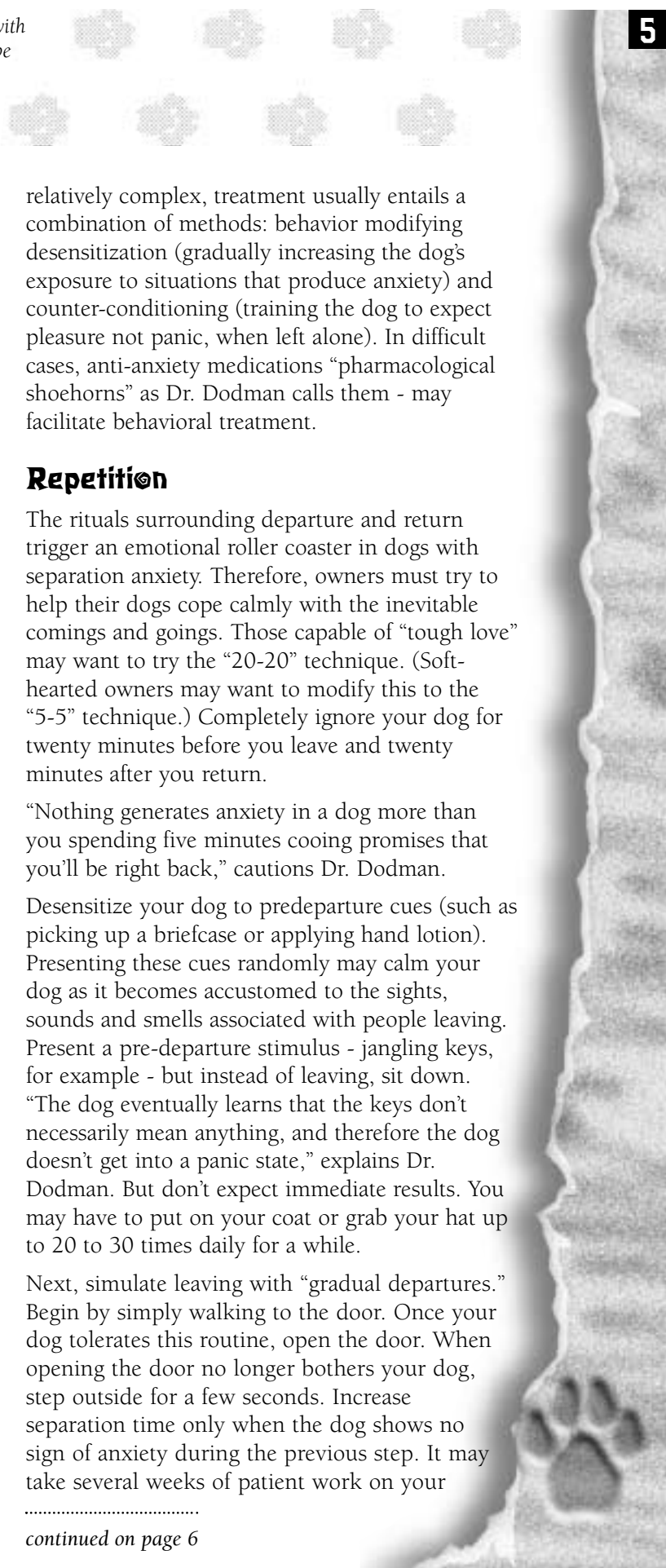
The rituals surrounding departure and return trigger an emotional roller coaster in dogs with separation anxiety. Therefore, owners must try to help their dogs cope calmly with the inevitable comings and goings. Those capable of "tough love" may want to try the "20-20" technique. (Soft-hearted owners may want to modify this to the "5-5" technique.) Completely ignore your dog for twenty minutes before you leave and twenty minutes after you return.

"Nothing generates anxiety in a dog more than you spending five minutes cooing promises that you'll be right back," cautions Dr. Dodman.

Desensitize your dog to predeparture cues (such as picking up a briefcase or applying hand lotion). Presenting these cues randomly may calm your dog as it becomes accustomed to the sights, sounds and smells associated with people leaving. Present a pre-departure stimulus - jangling keys, for example - but instead of leaving, sit down. "The dog eventually learns that the keys don't necessarily mean anything, and therefore the dog doesn't get into a panic state," explains Dr. Dodman. But don't expect immediate results. You may have to put on your coat or grab your hat up to 20 to 30 times daily for a while.

Next, simulate leaving with "gradual departures." Begin by simply walking to the door. Once your dog tolerates this routine, open the door. When opening the door no longer bothers your dog, step outside for a few seconds. Increase separation time only when the dog shows no sign of anxiety during the previous step. It may take several weeks of patient work on your

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*Juvie, short for Juvenile Delinquent, can find some creative ways to get into trouble when he's home alone. Photo courtesy of Gay and Jim Holst, Silver Springs, Nevada.*



part before your dog is comfortable with 15 minutes of solitude.

Under no circumstances should you allow the dog to reach a full blown panic during these graduated-departure exercises. You can't try to desensitize your dog over the weekend and then leave it alone all day during the following week. "That's like desensitizing someone to fear of heights while at the same time dangling them periodically from the top of the Empire State Building," says Dr. Dodman. Therefore, working families may have to spend some vacation time on these exercises.

### **Pleasant Expectations**

As your dog becomes desensitized, start training it to be more independent even when you are together. Using a light lead, gently lead the dog to its bed, praising it and rewarding it with a food treat. Or tell the dog to sit and stay as you move progressively further away until it stays without anxiety in a room by itself. Use praise and food treats to reinforce the message that such "detachment" is pleasurable.

"Environmental enrichment" may help an anxious dog get past the critical first half-hour alone. Give the dog long-lasting goodies to distract it from your departure and absence. Instead of feeling anxious when left alone, the dog now anticipates a snack. Scatter treats twenty minutes before departure; then sneak out the door so your dog doesn't see you leave.

In addition to traditional beef knucklebones, you might try leaving hollow, hard-rubber chew toys stuffed with peanut butter, or drilled-out molar bones jammed with cheese spread. Your dog will

have hours of challenging and tasty "work." (Of course, it helps if the dog doesn't use the Persian rug as replacement!) You can prepare these treats in advance and keep them refrigerated until you need them.

Speaking of edibles, many veterinarians recommend a low-protein diet for adult "home alone" cannons. Input (food) should balance output (exercise). And feeding high-energy chow to a dog that stays inside all day is like putting jet fuel in a lawnmower. (Remember, always check with your veterinarian before changing your dog's diet.) Also, most dogs need at least twenty to thirty minutes of aerobic exercise every day. A tired dog is usually a calm dog.

### **Crate Training**

Desensitization and counter-conditioning are effective, but they can be time consuming. Until you can make the time for these approaches, crate training is an expedient stopgap. Some people consider crate training inhumane "imprisonment." But many dogs, when properly acclimated, actually feel safe and happy in crates during the workday. (Your dog's ancestors probably dug dens for shelter and puppy rearing.)

If a dog is not properly acclimated to the crate, however, this "halfway house" may aggravate an

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### **Anti-Anxiety Medication**

Although not a panacea, medication can be a valuable ally in treating separation anxiety. Veterinarians sometimes prescribe drugs, including tranquilizers, hormones, and tricyclic antidepressants such as amitriptyline, in conjunction with behavior therapy. At the proper dosage, tricyclics reorganize the brains electrochemical connections with relatively few side effects and without sedation. Dogs usually stay on medication for several weeks — long enough to subside anxiety while they undergo behavior modification.

Veterinarians are careful to bring dogs up to the proper dosage — and wean them off — gradually. But the first few times you administer anti-anxiety medication at home, you should stay with your dog to watch for side effects.

anxiety problem. During acclimation, keep the crate door open at all times. Give the dog a chance to associate the crate with pleasurable experiences like play, food, and praise. Never use the crate as punishment, and never shut the door until the dog is completely comfortable inside. And be sure to attend to your dog's exercise needs when you get home.

Remember: Dogs that misbehave when home alone are not malicious. Your dog is trainable and

has an innate desire to please you. While you can't overcome separation anxiety overnight, with some patience (and perhaps professional help), odds are you and your dog will get your relationship back on track.



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### The 30-Minute Threshold

Preliminary signs of separation anxiety in dogs, such as panting and pacing, often begin as owners prepare to leave. More overt (and destructive) behaviors usually begin minutes after the owner's departure. "The first 30 minutes are the most important," notes Dr. Nicholas Dodman, director of the Behavior Clinic at Tufts University School of Veterinary medicine. If a dog calmly passes that threshold, it will generally remain calm.

So running home at lunchtime will not stave off your dog's separation anxiety. In fact, if you go home briefly at noon, you subject your dog to another nerve-wracking separation.

### Word Search — For Fun...

V O L U N T E E R R D  
B H I E R P J L E D N  
C G F A U O E S V E U  
K D C X N D I T E R O  
M K L A W A D D N I H  
R E C A R E L N T T T  
N O Q D E E U E P E H  
R S N P N V R I F R G  
T U S O U O E R V A I  
F A S T W L X F Z Q S  
Y E G R E Y H O U N D

- |        |             |         |            |
|--------|-------------|---------|------------|
| Adopt  | Fundraiser  | Pet     | Sighthound |
| Care   | Greyhound   | Racer   | Speed      |
| Event  | Love        | Retired | Track      |
| Fast   | Lure        | Run     | Volunteer  |
| Friend | Needle Nose | Safe    | Walk       |

### Thank You, Thank You, Thank You!

All of us at AAGI would like to extend a big **Thank You** to two very special families.

I'm sure you've noticed how great our newsletter looks. Angelia Sivertson donated her time and talent to design this issue. She and her husband Eric adopted their greyhound, Cupid, on Valentine's Day of this year. You can contact Angelia on-line at [angneric@xroads.com](mailto:angneric@xroads.com) with any questions or comments about the design of the newsletter.

Tom and Betsy Rhomberg, who adopted Kimba in March of this year (look for her picture!), graciously donated the printing of this newsletter. Tom and Betsy own **The Printing Center**, located at 2227 South 48th Street in Tempe. Give them a call at 438-8522 for any of your printing or copying needs!

Thanks again to each of these families, and to everyone who has offered to help with this newsletter. We just couldn't do it without our wonderful volunteers!





**Arizona Adopt a Greyhound, Inc.**  
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Phoenix, Arizona 85022

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## **Petsmart Schedule**

Please See Site for Current Schedule.

