

Amanda's Diary

We continue our monthly update with RGT co-ordinator Amanda Ainsworth on some of the issues that she and the headquarters staff have been tackling in recent weeks.



Amanda was not happy. A bill for £363 had arrived on her desk. It was the veterinary bill for a greyhound who had recently undergone dental surgery to have all it was of her teeth removed.

The fact that it was required at all was clearly irritating. The fact that the bitch was only three and a half years old and had just come in from a racing kennel at a bookmaker owned track was what really sent Amanda over the top.

She said: "It doesn't make it right, but it is a lot easier to tolerate when a trainer has fallen on hard times and the condition of his retired dogs has deteriorated.

"But in such a young dog who was racing in March there is no excuse. This is down to neglect, pure and simple.

"We simply don't have the resources to keep paying these type of bills which are entirely avoidable."

Always wary of industry politics, Amanda stopped short of apportioning blame, but the thought process is obvious.

First of all, the trainer responsible for letting a comparatively young dog develop severe gum disease and gingivitis should be brought to task.

But what of the role of the stipendiary stewards and the track vets?

GBGB spokesman Peter Laurie said: "I have received details of this specific case from Amanda and the matter will be fully investigated.

"Trainers placing greyhounds with the RGT for rehoming have a duty to ensure they are in good physical condition and should a breach of the rules be identified here or in any other case, the Board will take proportionate action."

Overall Amanda believes that the condition of dogs has improved significantly in recent years, but there is still some way to go.

She said: "Ten or twelve years ago probably 90 percent of dogs came to us with fleas and worms. It is now probably 30-40 percent which is still too high."

THE recent £75,000 donation by BAGS is proving a welcome challenge for RGT head office.

The money was given to her charity on the basis that it should specifically be used "for raising its fundraising profile".

Amanda said: "Although the money has to be targeted in a specific way, rather than just 'put in the pot', it is earmarked to help us raise more money. Ideally we would like to turn the £75,000 into £250,000 if we use it wisely.

"We have various ideas in mind including a test mailing to plea for funds, something we have never had the resources to do in the past."

SHOPPING Channel QVC raised over £15,000 for the RGT thanks to the sharp thinking of home-finding volunteer Jo Johnson.

Amanda said: "Jo, who is a volunteer at our Merseyside branch, works for QVC who support four different charities each year.

"She persuaded them to support us for the first three months of 2011 which was a fantastic bonus."

BROADACRES DAN, the former Wimbledon hurdler mentioned last month has been re-homed.

The seven year old, whose elderly owner was to be admitted to an old people's home, is facing a life of being totally spoiled.

Amanda said: "My mum is hav-

ing him. She already has two in the house and Dan has fitted in quite nicely."

AMANDA admits that she cried when Daren Johnson finished his Give A Bit Back 850 mile run from John O'Groats to Lands End.

He has raised £20,000 so far and plans other ventures to reach his target of £100,000 which will be split between the RGT and Help For Heroes.

She said: "It was very emotional at the end. It looked as though it had all taken a great deal out of him, both physically and mentally."

You can still donate to GABB at <http://www.justgiving.com/giveabitback-RGT>

Daren's bravery has encouraged Amanda to consider another attempt at the charity ballot for next April's London Marathon. There are so many requests from charities that only a small percentage are invited to participate.

She said: "I've just started training with my retired dog and huskey. The way things are going I hope I don't make it through the ballot."

THE RGT have joined the Twitter revolution @rgt_uk and are hoping to join Facebook.

Amanda said: "Unfortunately the registration for Retired Greyhound Trust has already been taken on Facebook. If the person who owns it is a Greyhound Star reader could they please get in

touch."

You can now donate by mobile phone as well. Text RGT02 £10 (or other amount) to 70070.

This service was launched by Vodafone on 9th May with JustGiving and is called JustTextGiving and is free to UK charities and 100% of the donated amount will go to the cause, go on give it a try, if every

Star reader donated just £5 we could raise ££££££. I'll let you know next month how generous you are!!

THERE comes a point when even the most devoted owner realises that their beloved pet has reached the end of his days.

Unfortunately, they are not always able to take the final step and ask the vet to put the animal to sleep.

Amanda said: "We had a case this week with a dog who was seventeen and half years old.

"He had become incontinent and rather than make the ultimate decision, the lady phoned us to ask if we would take him.

"It is not an uncommon problem but it does cause a lot of distress because some people see euthanasia as a bad thing to do. In some cases, they want nature to take its course, in other cases they are more worried that they might be viewed as 'a bad person'.

"We had one lady complain to us because we had knowingly rehomed a dog with someone who had had their previous dog put to

sleep.

"We pointed out that the previous dog was fifteen when the vet was called in but she still thought it was wrong.

"That is the crux of the problem, it isn't about cruelty it is about your own conscience. There are some terminally ill people who fly to a clinic in Switzerland to end it all, while others are kept alive on machines in a hospital.

"Personally, I believe in quality of life and if I think a dog has lost its quality of life, I am prepared to make the decision on behalf of the owner if they ask me.

"In my personal opinion, taking that decision is the tough part. Trying to pass the dog on to someone else because you can't cope is the coward's way out."

HOMING figures for the first four months of the year are 'slightly higher' than for the equivalent period in 2010.

Amanda said: "The numbers aren't startling and 2010's were poor, but it is still encouraging given that many other charities seem to be struggling.

"Whether the figures are as bad as rumours suggest, at about 25 per cent down, we won't know for some time, but the general feedback is quite gloomy."

The New Year figures invariably also bring a spike in the number of dogs returned to the kennels.

Amanda said: "It happens every year, at the end of January and beginning of February and is due to marriage breakdowns.

"It seems that the pressure of having all the family in close proximity over Christmas inevitably leads to the annual divorce season."

THOUSANDS of greyhounds will take to the streets, fields and beaches of England on Sunday June 26.

Last year 1,641 dogs took part,



this year the aim is to get 2011.

Amanda said: "The whole thing is organised by Janet Peacock and although the RGT is not directly

involved, many of the branches will be taking part."

More details www.greatbritish-greyhoundwalk.org.uk

Martingale Collar



This fabulous item, from Cas Collars, is new to our range and proving a popular choice by our supporters and their hounds.

Available in red, blue and green, to match our range of superior walking-out coats, rain macs and indoor fleeces, this collar adds a real touch of class to your greyhound.

Made of black nylon webbing, (2" wide) and faced with ribbon embroidered in gold, this collar

offers not just elegance, but security and comfort. The fittings, made of stainless steel with a clever D-ring/loop design, set this purchase apart from traditional side-release collars. It naturally tightens if your greyhound pulls, lunges or tries to back out.

Priced at £15 (including p&p) we believe you will be delighted in not just the exquisite appearance of this collar, but at its practicality and quality.

Event	Date	Branch
Suffolk Show	Wednesday 1	Greyhound Homer
Royal Bath & West Show	Wednesday 1	Devon (East) - Honiton
Royal Bath & West Show	Thursday 2	Devon (East) - Honiton
Bramham	Thursday 2	North Yorkshire
Suffolk Show	Thursday 2	Greyhound Homer
Royal Bath & West Show	Friday 3	Devon (East) - Honiton
Bramham	Friday 3	North Yorkshire
Bramham	Saturday 4	North Yorkshire
Royal Bath & West Show	Saturday 4	Devon (East) - Honiton
Haverling Council Fun Dog Show	Saturday 4	Essex - Greyhoundhomer
Tesco Store, Meet n' Greet	Saturday 4	Birmingham - Hall Green
Greyhound Extravaganza 211	Sunday 5	Essex - Greyhoundhomer
Colemere Greyhound Gathering	Sunday 5	Shropshire and Borders
Greyhound Extravaganza	Sunday 5	Eastern Counties
Bramham	Sunday 5	North Yorkshire
Royal Cornwall Show 211	Thursday 9	Morwenstow (Corn/ Devon)
Royal Cornwall Show	Friday 10	Morwenstow (Corn/ Devon)
British Legion Poppy Picnic	Saturday 11	Birmingham - Hall Green
Elvis Tribute	Saturday 11	Hull
Coffee Morning - Exmouth	Saturday 11	Cornwall
Victorian Fayre	Saturday 11	Birmingham - Hall Green
Royal Cornwall Show	Saturday 11	Morwenstow (Corn/ Devon)
Poole Fun Dog Show	Sunday 12	Dorset & Somerset
Fun Dog Show	Sunday 12	Dorset (Poole)
Three peaks challenge	Monday 13	Bridlington
Next GRSB Meeting	Tuesday 14	Shropshire and Borders
Three Counties Show	Friday 17	Birmingham - Hall Green
Stratford Upon Avon Street Collection and Awareness Roadshow	Saturday 18	Birmingham - Perry Barr
Kidderminster Carnival	Saturday 18	Birmingham - Hall Green
Ty Mawr Dog Show, Cefn Mawr	Saturday 18	Shropshire and Borders
Promenade Shopping Centre	Saturday 18	Bridlington
Kinver Country Fayre	Sunday 19	Birmingham - Hall Green
Dog show	Sunday 19	Bridlington
Bromsgrove Annual Street Fayre	Saturday 25	Birmingham - Hall Green
Shirley High Street, Street Collection and Awareness Roadshow	Saturday 25	Birmingham - Perry Barr
Axe Vale Festival	Saturday 25	Devon (East) - Honiton
Witheridge - St John's Fair	Saturday 25	Cornwall
Greyhounds at The Stifford Show	Saturday 25	Essex - Greyhoundhomer
Great British Greyhound Walk	Sunday 26	Birmingham - Hall Green
Great British Greyhound Walk	Sunday 26	Lancashire & Belle Vue
The Classic Ford Show	Sunday 26	Cornwall
The Horbury Show	Sunday 26	WYorks/Hudder & Wakefield
Great Greyhound Walk	Sunday 26	Bridlington
Great British Greyhound Walk	Sunday 26	Oxford
Great British Greyhound Walk	Sunday 26	Brighton & Hove RGT
Great British Greyhound Walk 211	Sunday 26	Northumberland
June - Walk with the Greyhounds	Sunday 26	Cornwall
Axe Vale Festival	Sunday 26	Devon (East) - Honiton
Royal Norfolk Show	Wednesday 29	Eastern Counties

Sponsored by Burgess Pet Care

GREYHOUND EXTRAVAGANZA

SUNDAY 5 JUNE 2011

GREYHOUND SHOW + ALL BREEDS FUN DOG SHOW

To be held at the Animal Health Trust, Kentford, nr. Newmarket, Suffolk CB8 7UU

Trade Stands • Refreshments • Ample Parking (Donations welcome) • Picnic Area

Greyhound show with classes for pet greyhounds of all ages.

Family Dog Show with classes for all breeds including lurchers and crossbreeds. Novelty ring with fun classes in a beautiful setting.

Entry Fee £2.00 per class
Registration from 9.00 a.m.
Judging commences at 11.00 a.m. in three rings
Trophies for all classes and rosettes for all entries

For full show schedule and more information on trade stands and entries contact the show organisers on 0845 602 2658 or 07787 701695

On-line class booking available in advance at www.retiredgreyhounds.co.uk

For more information about the show and the work of the Retired Greyhound Trust nationally and in your area, log onto: www.retiredgreyhounds.co.uk or call: 0844 826 8424

For more information about the Animal Health Trust visit: www.aht.org.uk

retired greyhound trust