

With racing over, tracks, shelters team up to... Release the hounds

By Ira Kantor | Tuesday, December 29, 2009 | <http://www.bostonherald.com> | [Local Coverage](#)

Wanted: "forever homes" for some 125 Raynham Park greyhounds put out to pasture by the state's new dog-racing ban.

And how's this for a holiday twist? The track's owners are reaching out to Bay State animal shelters - their former opponents in the heated dog-racing debate - to help the pooches find new digs.

"To them, these dogs were their family so they are treating them that way," said Raynham Park spokeswoman Amy Lambiaso.

Added Kara Holmquist, the MSPCA's director of advocacy: "We're definitely ready and willing and able to make this work. We've not been on the same page through this, but I think everyone's goal ... is to make sure those dogs that are retiring will find that forever home."

Holmquist said several other shelters, including the Animal Rescue League of Boston and the Northeast Animal Shelter in Salem, are eager to temporarily house the greyhounds if their owners can't find big-hearted puppy lovers.

"It's refreshing to see two sides of this debate set aside their differences and work together to help the dogs," said Carey Theil of the Somerville-based Grey2K USA.



Photo by Faith Ninivaggi

Dog racing shuts down Friday after 56 percent of voters opted in 2008 to ban the sport. Raynham's greyhounds ran their last race Saturday.

Some 50 greyhounds have already found new families in New England, Lambiaso said, while hundreds are heading to tracks in Miami, West Virginia and Arkansas.

Greyhound Friends in Hopkinton, which finds homes for about 300 greyhounds a year, has taken in 20 from one Raynham Park trainer in the past month, said Executive Director Louise Coleman.

"We're glad to take them," Coleman said. "We've always gotten really nice dogs from there."

Track owners hope to have homes for all remaining canines by the end of February, Lambiaso said.

To learn more about adopting greyhounds contact: "Off Track Pets" at Raynham Park, (508) 824-4071.

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