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## Greyhounds Reach the Beach Combines Sun, Sand and Funding for Canine Cancer Research

When Pat and Wayne Tyson adopted Autumn, their first greyhound, in 1994, they had no idea where their decision would lead. As it turns out, they quickly became part of a close community that is passionate about these dogs, many of which are retired racers.

Through a greyhound mailing list, Pat began corresponding with Judy Dillon who had adopted Chella and Martha Sherman who had adopted Argus. The three women decided it would be fun to have a couple's weekend in Dewey Beach, Delaware, where they could meet in person and have fun with the dogs at the beach. Then, they decided to post the weekend plans on a greyhound mailing list. As it turns out about 85 people and 65 greyhounds descended upon the Dewey Beach community over Columbus Day weekend in 1995.



"Founding Dogs" Autumn, Argus, and Chella on Dewey Beach in 2004

Since that time, the event has grown to include a few thousand people and greyhounds, who stay for the entire weekend, roaming the beach long after most tourists have left for the season. In the beginning, only one hotel allowed dogs. Today, the greyhounds and their owners have the run of the town, with many hotels allowing the dogs only for "greyhound weekend." Now known as Greyhounds Reach the Beach, the annual event includes morning beach walks, a brunch and a raffle that raises money for Morris Animal Foundation's canine cancer research.

The raffle began after vendors started donating valuable items to the event. The group chose to give MAF the proceeds because of its funding for bone cancer studies. This painful disease affects a large percentage of greyhounds with many dogs losing a leg or their life. Pat explains that it made perfect sense to use the donated items to raise money for research into this disease.

After a few years, the event became so large that the women partnered with the Greyhound Project, a nonprofit dedicated to helping retired greyhound racers find new homes. Through Greyhounds Reach

the Beach and other outreach efforts, including a matching-gift program, the Greyhound Project has helped to raise more than \$269,000 for MAF since 1998.

“I never imagined I would get myself into something this big,” Pat says. “We’re still overwhelmed by it.”

Over the years, the Tysons have developed many long-standing friendships, including other greyhound owners who understand what it is like to lose a dog to bone cancer. Pat and Wayne lost Autumn last year when she was 14 years old. In a bittersweet twist, Judy and Martha lost Chella and Argus in the same year.

“We adopted them within six months of each other and we lost them within six months of each other,” says Pat, who currently has two greyhounds, Harmony and recently adopted Hawk, and dachshunds Ozzy and Max.

The legacy these three dogs has left will not be forgotten. Morris Animal Foundation recently began funding a clinical trial for bone cancer as part of our Canine Cancer Campaign. We hope to some day cure this dreadful disease, and greyhound lovers will be part of that success.

This October 5-7, as they have for the past 13 years, greyhound lovers will romp Dewey Beach with their dogs, mourning those that are gone and celebrating those that remain. In the process, they will help us in our mission to cure canine cancer.

For more information on Reach the Beach, go to [www.adopt-a-greyhound.org](http://www.adopt-a-greyhound.org). To contribute to the Greyhound Project matching-gift fund, [click here](#) and choose the box to designate your gift.