

Needlenose News

A Miyasaki-Renquist Publication

BACK TO SCHOOL

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- A call to arms — support the Needlenose News!
- How many greyhounds can fit on a queen-sized bed? See for yourself inside!
- Ever wondered whether Kim and Matt are ever getting hitched? Updates on page 3!
- Philip or a deer? You decide!

September 6, 2005, marked the beginning of a new school year. Kim is resuming her teaching career at Will C. Wood Middle School. I'm fleeing a hideous, unsupportive principal at Goethe in favor of a competent, if somewhat abrupt principal at Wood. So far, I'm mostly impressed. People are very nice, students seem better behaved than in previous years, and the school, though under renovation, is more or less put together.

High points: For the first time in three years, Matt and I were spared the ordeal of applying butcher paper to cover peeling paint on cement walls. Instead,

I have a newly painted room, lots of bulletin boards, and linoleum instead of orange 70s carpet (gum stained, not so good for teaching science).

Low points: My room is UP-STAIRS. This makes it hard to drag the contents of my garage (about 800,000 Tupperware bins of school supplies) into my room. Also, the room has cabinets uselessly partitioned into tiny sections, limiting storage space. Finally, they've installed this new-fangled motion detector that automatically turns lights on and turns lights off after 10 minutes of no movement. This results in the lights regularly going off during my



Front view of Will C. Wood Middle School.

prep and lunch break. Oh well.

I'm teaching 5 sections of 8th grade (yay!) science, with a maximum class size of 32 (so far) and averages around 26. I'm really enjoying the smaller classes. You'll probably hear more as the year wears on. Cheers!

SUPPORT THE NEEDLENOSE NEWS!

Recently, aspersions have been cast upon the value of the Needlenose News by one Kevin Miyasaki, who declines to believe that anyone reads this publication and believes it to be a waste of my time. Let's show

him! If you value the information the Needlenose News brings, please contact your son/grandson/nephew/cousin/friend and let him know! How can you help? For the price of a stamp, drop him a line at:

2949 Portage Bay West #189; Davis, CA 95616. If you're on the internet, e-mail him at: kmiya123@yahoo.com. Or call him (local for Fresno people!) at (559) 288-8269 and say, "I read the Needlenose News!"



GREYHOUND ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND

Encounter number one occurred at the Mendocino Botanical Garden in Fort Bragg, roundabout mid-July. A woman approached Kim and Philip, oohed and ahed, and talked about “her two” in the car. Now, you have a hint about what kind of creatures her two were in the title, but I didn’t. I thought she just meant dogs until she started asking where we got Philip. “An adoption group,” I said. “Well, of course,” she said. “Which one?” That’s when I figured out that she knew rather more

about greyhounds than your average bear. She was from Louisiana, and was traveling with her husband and two greyhounds. Philip was very excited to meet them. Her dogs, not so much.

Encounter number two was discussed in the last edition of the Needlenose News. Matt and Kim dog-sat for Bill’s two greyhounds, Willow and Hugh. No photos were available at the time of last printing, but they are now! For those who don’t remember, Willow and Hugh

took over the house, and Philip, far from pining when they left, enjoyed his solitary splendor on the sofa.

Encounter number three was on our last hurrah vacation to Fort Bragg just before school started. We were walking Philip on the beach when a huge dog came bounding toward us. Uh oh. . . no, wait, it’s a greyhound! Two, in fact. Philip romped with Fury and Conan on the beach, and the dogs (and their family) were staying at the same place as us!



Clockwise from front: Philip, Willow, Kim, and Hugh proving once and for all that three greyhounds can, in fact, fit on a queen-sized bed. There’s even some room left over for a person!

DEALS (WHAT ELSE?) AT DEALSOFAMERICA.COM

So Kevin comes over one night, bringing Matt home from work, and as is usual, grabs the computer (it’s a laptop) and turns it on. He bought a new computer mouse, and wants to share this experience with Matt. “Go to DealsofAmerica.com,” he says.

“DealsofAmerica.com?” I say, in an appalled voice. “What sort of site is that? It sounds totally shady.”

Although Kevin did admit it sounds shady, it’s legit. The site collects deals — what else? — and posts them together for people to peruse. It’s mostly electronics, but occasionally there’s household-y stuff, so I’ve taken to checking it out. This led to me purchasing, in one day, more things of DealsofAmerica.com than Kevin has. I bought a \$60 digital camera to

facilitate getting pictures into the Needlenose News, as it takes Matt and I forever to bother to conventionally develop photos. I also bought a new cell phone (my old one died when you hit the battery) with a rebate that will return \$75 net to me! Cool, no?

The only drawback? It’s a new number: (916) 833-8972.

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KIM AND MATT: GARDENING DUMMIES

Since our yard has been in a state of dramatic disarray for quite a long time now (say, oh, a year), Matt and I decided that something would have to be done. My gardening urges usually come in the winter, are short-lived, and have unfortunate results, like the pots I put together and then forgot to water. So, to help us find our way,

we invested in a volume of our favorite series, Gardening for Dummies, and bought an issue of Sunset magazine.

Both sources advised us to plant cool-season annuals, perennials, and bulbs. We headed to our local nursery and invested exactly \$114, split between annuals, perennials, bulbs, and

soil/mulch/snail bait. (Last time I planted pansies, they were gone the next day, victims of my radulated friends.) Five hours of leaf clearing, dirt mixing, and general hard work later, we’d prettied up the planting beds in front of the house. Our formerly unhappy azaleas are even blooming. Now, if I can only remember to water. . .



New plants (still alive!) that grace our front yard. The bed used to have just the maple and the azalea bush to the far right.

UPDATE ON WEDDING “PLANS”

As you probably know, Matt and I intend to get married at some point. Frankly, I've been putting off planning the darn thing because, well, I'm lazy. Surprise! However, here's the scoop:

We're thinking that we'd like to do a small-ish ceremony at the Mendocino Botanical Gardens. You may have noticed that the gardens play a substantial role in our vacations (see "Greyhound Encounters of the Third Kind, page 2). The plusses of the garden? It's

pretty; we wouldn't have to decorate much. We love it. It's wheelchair accessible *and* has little electric carts available to help people get around. Plus, they allow dogs (well-behaved, on leash). All in all, seems like a good fit. This way, we get the outdoor wedding we'd like, and nobody fries in suits in the Valley summer.

So when's the big day, you ask? We don't know. It's a big deal for us to have even this much settled. Pictured at the top right is the dahlia garden, gorgeous

but with best blooms in August, right before I go back to school. That's a possibility. Pictured at the bottom right is the meadow lawn, dull as dish water at the moment but surrounded by rhododendrons which should be in bloom in June and possibly July. In other words, at most, we've narrowed it down to some time next summer. We hope.

You can look at the garden's website at: gardenbythesea.org.



Views of the Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens, just outside of Fort Bragg.



TODAY'S THE DAY THE GREYHOUNDS HAVE THEIR PICNIC

Every year, our adoption group holds a reunion picnic for adopters. It's generally in late September, so we were invited last year, but we didn't go because Philip had worms, which we figured we probably shouldn't spread around. This year, though, he's healthy, so we bundled him into the car and headed to Walnut Creek.

At the picnic, Philip eagerly pulled on the leash, pretending

not to be leash-trained, so as to sniff the genitals of other dogs. Other greyhounds were, of course, doing the same thing, so sometimes there would be a chain of dogs sniffing each other. Most amusing. Matt and I estimate that there must have been well over 100 dogs there (Matt says 150), and I swear, Philip sniffed them all. Some dogs were able to walk past other dogs without lunging

toward them, but Philip wasn't one of those dogs. Maybe next year.

Another of Philip's failures: he refused to bob for treats. A volunteer put a treat in a bucket of water; the dogs were supposed to stick their noses in and get it. No dice. He just lapped at the water. Apparently 80% of dogs can do it. . . Oh well. We all had fun anyway.

Some dogs were able to walk past other dogs without lunging toward them, but Philip wasn't one of those dogs.

PARDON ME, IS THAT A. . .

A recent thread on our adoption group's bulletin board regarding amusing questions people have asked about greyhounds. Adopters have reported being asked if their greyhounds are, in fact: whippets (understandable), Dalmatians, pit bulls, very skinny golden retrievers, starving, deer, jaguars (!), and cheetahs (!!).

The comments and questions you get depends both on the breed and on the color of your individual dog.

Matt and I overheard a woman say to her husband, "That poor dog is so skinny. Why doesn't someone feed it?" He replied, "It's a greyhound, dear. It's supposed to look like that."

More recently, a small child saw Philip and said, "Look, a deer!"

So that you can judge for yourself, I'm including pictures of a deer in grass and Philip in grass. Philip's resemblance to other animals will be explored in subsequent editions.



Top: Deer in grass.

Bottom: Philip in grass.

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Unless I hear otherwise, you'll continue to receive the edition you're currently getting. FYI, if you're getting a PDF version and you didn't ask for it, I might not have your street address. Happy reading!

Check out Greyhounds!
www.goldengreyhounds.com

**Gruggles (non-greyhound owning people)
are just greyhound lovers in disguise.**


Needlenose News

SEE, WE'RE NOT SUCKERS FOR ALL DOGS!



Kim and Philip enjoy the Mendocino coast.

One day at work, Matt's talking to a professor with a computer question. She sees a picture of Philip on Matt's desktop computer and comments on what a cute dog he is. "Is he a rescue?" she asks. "That's really nice," she says. "I'm glad you guys rescued. By the way, if you like dogs, and want another, we have these 37 collies that need foster homes. Because dogs like friends," she says.

"I'll keep that in mind," Matt says.

Two days later, Matt gets an e-mail from another professor who happens to be the collie rescue group coordinator.

She's heard from professor number 1 that Matt has a rescue dog, and is again proposing that we foster collies. "I didn't know you were into rescue. Nice to hear," the message says. "My life is consumed with collies right now. We're in desperate need of foster homes. All ages, all temperaments."

Matt and I decide that, although we do want to get another dog, long-term fostering of an active dog like a collie is not for us. Besides, we don't have time to train a dog right now. This excuse elicits an offer from the rescue coordinator to give us one of the dogs that has already been in foster

care for a year, and then she'll give that foster home a new collie, fresh out of the kennel. Tempting though this offer is, we still turn it down.

And we're standing firm on the "no collies" decision, even though every time Matt sees professors 1 and 2, they ask him if he's given any thought to fostering a collie. I mention this to prove, once and for all, that Matt and I are not complete suckers when it comes to dogs. (Although, for some reason, people seem to think that we are. My vet once tried to give me a deaf Dalmatian. "Free to a good home," he said. I turned that one down, too. Of course, I didn't have a yard. . .)

