



A Miyasaki-Renquist Publication

Needlenose News

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Special points of interest:

- *Matt and Kim improve their kitchen a little!*
- *Matt and Kim think about improving their yard (a lot).*
- *Explore the similarities between Philip and a kangaroo on page two.*
- *Find out how Philip got a Dogster page.*

What's New At the Miyasaki-Renquist Household

Wedding plans are proceeding apace. My dad is looking at reception spaces in Fresno, which reminds me of the following point that didn't get a lot of space in the wedding edition: there will be a separate reception (that you will be invited to) in Fresno. Obviously, we'd love to have you at the wedding (that's why you're invited), but if you can't make it, we'll still celebrate. Also, we'd appreciate it if you'd send back your postcard from the wedding edition if you haven't already.

Interfering with wedding planning is a devilish new (to us) Japanese puzzle

called Sudoku. The basic form consists of a 9x9 grid with some numbers sprinkled about. Your job is to place the numbers one through nine exactly once in each row, column, and 3x3 box. These puzzles are all the rage in Japan and England, and I found them on the [Washington Post](#) website. I'd seen them before, but the numbers made me think that they were something like magic squares, which require addition. As it turns out, that's not so, and so a significant portion of our lives is now consumed by solving these puzzles.

Matt's applying for jobs at

the UCD Med Center, which is 10 minutes away. His current job, by contrast, is 50 minutes away (sometimes more if traffic interferes). Keep your fingers crossed and I'll keep you posted.



We celebrate Philip's third birthday! Read more on page 3!

Wow, A Free Postcard!

Okay, so a free postcard is really not that exciting. However, here's the deal: this edition of the [Needlenose News](#) has a pre-addressed, pre-stamped postcard in it. What's it for? Well, as you may have noticed, I'm lousy about remembering dates — birthdays, anniversaries, etc. I always mean to make a list; sometimes I even start. . . and then I lose the list and have to start all over.

A new age has dawned, though: that of the internet. A while back, a friend of mine sent me an e-mail asking me to register my birthday at [BirthdayAlarm.com](#). The site sends e-mail reminders to the user before important dates. Wow, I thought, what a good idea. However, since not everyone I'd like to have info on is connected to the internet, it didn't seem practical for me. . . unless I put in the

dates myself, which brings us back to that whole list thing.

To help me out, fill out the postcard and drop it in the mail. If you are getting the PDF version, you can go to: www.birthdayalarm.com/dob/55203951a903223376b363. Whew! (I can e-mail you a message with that link so that you can just click.)

But don't hold your breath waiting for a card, okay?



Top: Tile before
Bottom: Tile after

Improving Our Kitchen, One Tile At a Time

Anyone who's seen our kitchen can testify to its shortcomings: a miniscule amount of useful counter space, a sink with a drain hole the size of a quarter, a wall in the middle. . . Oh, I can go on and on. However, possibly the most grating thing is on the four square feet of usable counter space that we have: the original 1920s hexagonal tile. The tile came complete with the original 1920s dirt. The grout was originally white, but had loosened and been covered with grime so that it

looked black, lovingly outlining each tile. Yum.

Matt and I decided that a relatively small amount of work could probably tackle this problem, so we dug out the old grout with utility knives, scrubbed the counter with Ajax, bleach, and vinegar (consecutively, not all together; to remove dirt, dirt, and water deposits, respectively), and re-applied grout. The result, while still not resembling a brand-new countertop, is amazing. How amazing?

There's a [Futurama](#) episode in which Fry and the Robot Devil switch hands (you know, in a deal with the devil). Many machinations later, the Robot Devil gets his hands back, as does Fry. Fry looks at his hands and says in an appalled voice, "What did you do to my nails?" The Robot Devil replies, "I cleaned them."

That pretty much sums up what I thought when I saw the newly grouted countertop for the first time.

Joe's drawing up plans for us, and we'll implement gradually. First up? Sprinklers.

We're Maybe, Possibly, Doing Something With Our Yard

Approximately 18 months of living in this house has brought us to a not-so-astonishing conclusion: Brian Patrick Murphy spent a lot more time on his yard than we do. (I argue that this is because he lacked a greyhound.) We knew this, of course, because our neighbor Willie has mentioned that she used to see him out watering every evening. Needless to say, we

don't quite meet that standard. As a result, the yard's a mess. Our azaleas (who knew they were woodland plants?) are unhappy, all the shrubs are overgrown, our lawn in front has big dead patches, and our lawn in back is a big dead patch. Also in back, Mr. Murphy installed attractive brick edging to contain the plants. Behind it is a boxwood hedge. Now, his dogs were

ancient cocker spaniels who bumped into things. When they peed, they hit the brick. Our dog, by contrast, hits the hedge, creating lovely urine burns.

Matt, however, works with someone who does landscaping on the side. Joe came out to take a look at our yard on Sunday. He's drawing up plans for us, and we'll implement gradually. First up? Sprinklers.



A Kangaroo? Philip?

The previous edition of the [Needlenose News](#) explored unusual resemblances people see between greyhounds and other animals. The animal Philip is most frequently mistaken for is a deer, but I feel that I can make a good case for a kangaroo, as well.

To wit: Kangaroos jump. Philip jumps.

Kangaroos like to sit in the sun. Philip likes to sit in the sun.

Kangaroos have long ears, long noses, and powerful hind legs. Philip has long ears, a long nose, and powerful hind legs.

Kangaroos are reddish-brown. Philip is reddish-brown.

Kangaroos forage for food in their habitat. Philip forages for food in his habitat.

Plus, recently, we walked by a toddler who saw Philip and asked his dad if Philip was a kangaroo. "No, that's a greyhound," the dad said. "A greyhound?" said the kid. "Yep," said his dad. "Like the bus?" the kid asked. Enough said.

Letters to the Editor

A new feature! Many thanks to Emily for the inspiration.

Also, many thanks to those of you who answered the call to defend the Needlenose News. As Kevin put it, “I think you wrote something about me in that thing of yours, but since I don’t read it, I don’t know what.” Well, at least he got the gist of it.

In addition to informing Kevin of the informative value of this publication, Emily sent the Needlenose News the following corre-

spondence (and the title is hers, not mine):

The Shortest and Most Demanding L.E.D Ever

1. You should go to www.dogster.com and register Philip.
2. I read the Needlenose News. So it shows you do have some pull with important people like me.

Emily Leach
San Francisco

The results of Emily’s letter are twofold. First-fold: This story. Next-fold: The next story. Read on to learn more.

Envious of Emily’s influence? Want to see *your* letter to the editor in the Needlenose News? Fire away! The Needlenose News accepts letters by snail mail or e-mail. Other submissions will also be considered. 150 words or less, please.

Your compensation? The glory of appearing in this eminent publication.



I just saw Emily last week, but I didn’t take any pictures, so have another picture of Philip’s birthday instead.

Philip’s Web Page

Dogster.com is a web site devoted to the web sites of dogs. Or, as Matt put it, “It’s like Friendster, but for dogs.” Friendster is a social networking site. Post a profile, link to friends, yada yada yada. I don’t have a Friendster site; I find it much more engrossing to do this for dogs.

As a result, I was up way past my bedtime last night

getting Philip’s Dogster page started and looking at other dog’s (mostly greyhounds) pages on the site.

I checked Philip’s page again today to look at the statistics. So far, Philip’s been seen 97 times, seven users have rated his page a five-paw page, he’s been corralled once (that means someone’s bookmarked him), and he’s been given nine

bones (a kind of virtual kudo). In what Matt calls “rampant bone inflation,” two of those bones were mine. The first one was an accident; I was just playing with buttons to see what happened. The second time, I admit, was inflation.

Participate in rampant bone inflation yourself by visiting Philip’s page at: www.dogster.com/?215181.

Participate in rampant bone inflation yourself by visiting www.dogster.com/?215181

Happy Birthday Philip!

The day we had been waiting for had finally arrived: Philip turned three on November 2. Why is three such a significant milestone? Because a two-year-old dog is still a puppy, and we’re a bit tired of our 65-pound puppy. We’re not tired of the *dog*, mind, just the puppy behavior. So ever since Stu gave us the leash (and, by proxy, a serious case of hookworms)

and said, “Here you go; he’s 20 months old,” I’ve been waiting for the adult dog to emerge. November 2nd was the big day.

Was it anticlimactic? Well, yes. That said, the dog’s been settling down progressively for a year, and anyone who doesn’t believe that didn’t see him when we got him. At any rate, it was time for a celebration.

So I dutifully purchased party hats and birthday candles from Rite Aid, as well as a cherry-honey-vanilla-flavored dog cake from a company by the name of Burpdog Biscuits. (It was advertised as wheat-free. Turned out it had corn, which gave Philip. . . well, you know.) All intestinal grumbling aside, a good time was had by all (see right).



Philip enjoys a slice of his birthday cake. Turns out it didn’t agree with him, but he liked it anyway.

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Needlenose News

Needlenose: An affectionate term for a greyhound
Gruggles: Non-greyhound-owning persons

Check out greyhounds!
goldengreyhounds.org

Needlenose News options: Paper and PDF versions

Want to change versions? Contact Kim. Want to get off the list? Contact Kim. Comments? Questions? Contact. . . Kim.

Postage this edition courtesy of Auntie Sach! Thank you!



Top: Philip feasting on peppercorns.

Bottom: Philip modeling his down coat.



The Greyhound, The Peppercorns, and The Wardrobe

Our backyard tree drops a plethora of unwanted vegetable matter in the fall. Let me clarify; the matter is unwanted by Matt (he has to rake) and by me (it's sticky). However, it *is* wanted by Philip, who consumes the dropped berries like they're candy.

Last year, we'd be looking for him at bedtime and he'd be outside, munching on berries. He'd eat and then go outside, to munch on berries. We'd call him in and he'd come, then turn around and head out to munch on berries. They didn't seem to do him any harm, so eventually, we stopped worry-

ing. Matt's dad says the berries are peppercorns, which does nothing to enlighten me on their palatability to greyhounds, but I'm just a human, so clearly I don't know. (They didn't taste that great to me, but then, neither did his birthday cake.)

Fall is also the season when the greyhound wardrobe comes out. Greyhounds don't have undercoats, so they get cold easily and need overcoats. Matt grumbles that he never thought he'd have a dog that needed a coat, but I enjoy making greyhound coats.

For fall, Philip has a

fleecy coat with penguins embroidered on it. The background is white, which turns out to be a bad idea. Actually, I knew it was a bad idea, but was seduced by the penguins.

For winter (we have heat now, but energy's expensive and bundling up is cheap), Philip has a super-deluxe parka made from a \$15 down throw I got at Target. There were feathers all over the house for weeks after I made it, but the coat is snuggly. It has an extra-long neck to cover his ears and long side flaps to cover his legs when he sits. Isn't Philip a lucky dog?