

NITTANY GREYHOUNDS
STRATEGIC PLAN 2004-2009

Executive Summary:

Since 1997, Nittany Greyhounds has been dedicated to saving as many racing dogs as possible. Through a wide network of volunteers and board members spread across western Pennsylvania, Nittany Greyhounds has been able to sustain a strong base of committed workers, and through their efforts, more than 600 greyhounds have been saved to date. Five satellite locations operate throughout Pennsylvania, covering 25 counties and utilizing hundreds of volunteers who have donated tens of thousands of hours. Nittany Greyhounds has developed a reputation of distinction and quality throughout the U.S. racing industry, and the organization is known to take animals that others will not (injured or 'difficult').

Nittany Greyhounds as an organization is on the threshold of dramatic change. After five years, and through no fault of the organization at-large, we no longer have a physical kennel space from which to operate. We have not stopped operating, although our efforts have been scaled back and foster homes are being used to accommodate the dogs we take. It is our absolute mission to regain our space and to strengthen our organization from the ground up. We have an opportunity to affect change and we will do so with increased community awareness, fund-raising, and with grants and awards. We continue to maintain and foster our relationships with track owners, handlers, and adoption coordinators.

Vision:

Nittany Greyhounds will be known as the premier greyhound adoption and education program in the United States to include a quality shelter, community education programs, agreements with other pet rescue organizations, and outstanding relationships with track owners.

Goals:

The overarching goal for Nittany Greyhounds is to increase its adoption efforts. This goal will be accomplished in two phases:

Phase 1: Short-term goals

1. Maintain the highest level of adoption activities possible given our present kennel-less situation and using "foster" homes.

2. Raise awareness about greyhound adoption in western Pennsylvania, not only for potential homes, but also for new volunteers.
3. Begin a fund raising campaign for short-term expenses, including medical, adoption, travel, food, and foster education.
4. Establish an education program for volunteers who wish to be foster parents and for greyhound care in general.
5. Establish a Professional Advisory Board.
6. Create a new Nittany Greyhounds brochure.

Phase II: Long-Term Goals

1. Begin a long-term capital fund raising campaign.
2. Build or buy a physical kennel space within five years, to include a kennel attendant, equipment, computers, office furniture and supplies, etc.
3. Increase greyhound adoptions to the level of accommodation of the new kennel space.
4. Begin pet education programs in the community, including outreach to special needs populations and other groups.
5. Continue to increase awareness about our organization, and reach out to other pet rescue groups.
6. Continue internal education efforts for our own volunteers and foster homes.

Organization Strengths

President Elaine Skidel, founder of the organization, is well-known in the racing industry and within the community for being compassionate, cooperative, and highly dedicated to the cause.

Nittany Greyhounds works WITH tracks, not against them, to try to save as many greyhounds as possible. It is impossible for us to shut down dog racing, so we have chosen to work with the industry for the sake of the dogs.

Nittany Greyhounds has a reputation for taking as many dogs as possible as quickly as possible, and also for taking dogs that others will not take (such as injured dogs, brood bitches, or dogs with special needs).

Nittany Greyhounds is known as an organization that totally supports its adoptive homes, including a mentoring program, follow-up contact, medical support when critically needed, and general support whenever needed. We think of the Nittany group as a family.

Nittany Greyhounds does not entirely limit its efforts to greyhounds. The organization will help any orphaned animal and has many times. Nittany has a great relationship with other animal rescue organizations in Centre County (PAWS, Golden Retriever Rescue, Beagle Rescue, Australian Shepherd Rescue), and also with local veterinarians and technicians.

Nittany Greyhounds has within its vision a collaborative, community education program—a center where all pet owners, students, and other adoption agencies can come together for the welfare of all animals.

Nittany Greyhounds is located in close proximity to a major research university, which hosts a pre-veterinarian program. This student group has been involved with us in the past.

Nittany Greyhounds “parents” are a great resource for us—doctors, lawyers, accountants, and many other volunteers who help to guide us as we move forward.

The commitment of the Nittany Greyhound network is extraordinary. With more than 600 “parents” in the group, we have a groundswell of support within our own ranks.

Nittany Greyhounds has five satellite locations throughout western Pennsylvania, each with its own dedicated group of volunteers. These volunteers coordinate events every month, including “meet and greets,” parade appearances, school and retirement village visits, library programs, and other community events. Our community involvement is strong and valued and we are well-known within the communities we serve.

Nittany Greyhounds is becoming independent as an organization, no longer revolving around one family only and relying now on the larger core of members to carry on.

Organization Challenges:

Currently, Nittany Greyhounds has no physical kennel from which to operate, making foster homes our only means of taking dogs. Evaluation and medical care is extremely difficult without a central location.

Nittany Greyhounds has a small core of volunteers who do the bulk of the work. More volunteers must be recruited to widen the scope of our organization.

Nittany Greyhounds has done no fund raising in the past, so we are at a disadvantage as we go into a fund raising campaign now. We have no idea what our fundraising potential is, making long-range planning difficult.

Nittany Greyhounds does not have a large bank balance, although we do have some fund pledges from members for matching funds applications. Short-term fundraising will be critical if we are to keep operating.

Strategies to Meet Our Goals

Phase I—Short Term

Maintain the highest level of adoption activities possible given our present kennel-less situation and using “foster” homes.

- Within our principal adoption areas, foster homes have been identified.
- The current available dogs have been placed within foster homes.
- Applications are being accepted and approved for dogs, and dogs will be accepted from tracks as we have homes ready to take them. Specific procedures have been outlined and are being used for the most efficient and effective adoptions possible.
- Area kennels have been contacted for possible space if we should need them.

Raise awareness about greyhound adoption in western Pennsylvania, not only for potential homes, but also for new volunteers.

- “Meet and greets” and other events will be continued, with greyhounds in attendance at all of them. Increase our appearances if possible.
- Contacts will be made with local media in our service communities.
- Contacts will be made with national media.
- Distribute our newsletter more widely than to just members.
- Contacts will be made to local organizations about the possibility of speaking engagements.

Begin a fund raising campaign for short-term expenses, including medical, adoption, travel, food, and foster education.

- A Fund Raising Task Force has been established. The Task Force has been asked to complete a Fund Raising Plan and to solicit ideas from the membership.
- The Fall issue of the newsletter includes articles about our short- and long-term goals, encouraging our membership to get involved, both financially and as volunteers and with their ideas.
- Grants and awards application processing has begun.
- Some community fund raising is ongoing and will be continued (raffles at events, collection jars, goodie store sales, etc.)
- If volunteer services of an accountant and a lawyer are not forthcoming, hire both.

Establish an education program for volunteers who wish to be foster parents and for greyhound care in general.

- The President has established a sub-committee to examine the issues and to put together a specific education program for foster home volunteers.

Establish a Professional Advisory Board to both raise awareness at the business-level of our communities and for legal, accounting, and other advice as we move forward.

- The Executive Committee will identify and request participation of these people in our activities.
- A meeting will be scheduled of the Professional Advisory Board and the Nittany Greyhounds Board of Directors.

Create new Nittany Greyhound marketing materials.

- A new brochure will be created to promote greyhound adoptions and to educate the public about greyhounds in general.
- Create an insert for the materials that will include a fund raising pledge card and list of how people can get involved in the organization.
- Continue publishing the newsletter quarterly.

Phase II—Long Term

Build or buy a physical kennel space within five years, to include a kennel attendant, equipment, computers, office furniture and supplies.

- Begin a capital fund raising campaign. A Fund Raising Task Force will be put into place and the group will be asked to complete a fund raising plan for sustaining Nittany Greyhounds in the future. Current fund raising activities will be maintained and additional fund raising projects will be planned.
- Once our fund raising potential has been established (within one year), the Executive Committee will visit other kennels and begin to put together a written plan for a kennel for Nittany Greyhound, based on best practices and our specific needs.

Increase greyhound adoptions to the level of accommodation of the new kennel space.

- Even though this particular goal is dependent upon the new physical space, efforts will be ongoing to increase our adoption efforts using new volunteer foster homes as they are identified and trained.

Begin pet education programs in the community, including outreach to special needs populations and other groups.

- Relationships will be continued with community organizations. (It should be noted that before the loss of kennel space, the Nittany Greyhound facility was designated as a community service site, meaning that high schools Leadership Centre County, and other organizations allowed work at our kennel to qualify as a community service project.) A relationship with the special needs program at the high school was established and will be continued, providing space for the students to get valuable real-world experience. The Pre-Vet Club of Penn State also was involved with the kennel and that relationship will be reestablished.
- Nittany Greyhounds will continue to, and increase, their participation in local community functions (library programs, parades, retirement community visits, etc.).
- As our physical facility becomes available, our space will be made available to local groups for educational purposes.

Continue to increase awareness about our organization, and reach out to other pet rescue groups.

- As our kennel project comes to fruition, part of the building will include community rooms and boarding kennels that will be offered to other pet rescue groups who don't have physical facilities.
- Letters of support for our efforts, and closer ties will be established with other pet organizations in our local communities.
- An informal "Speakers Bureau" will be established and publicized so that local groups will seek out Nittany Greyhounds to speak to their meetings.

Continue internal education efforts for our own volunteers and foster homes.

- Establish a "volunteer hour timecard" so that Nittany Greyhounds can better keep track of our volunteer hours.

Funding

To operate as we have in the past, with kennel space and staff, it is estimated that Nittany Greyhounds needs to raise approximately \$50 per dog placed. Some of that money is raised by the adoption fee, but not all that is needed.

In the year 2002, financial statements indicate the following:

Total Revenue	\$14,384
Total Expenses	\$14,209
Total Excess	\$ 175
Total Assets	\$6,899 (fund balances carried over)

2003 Financials can be requested, or questions answered, by calling 814-632-DOGS.