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## A Dog Named Hazel

By Jean Follmer



Darcy Cole shares a smile with her new dog, Hazel  
Photo Jean Follmer

In 2005, Darcy Cole decided to surprise her husband, Brett, for his 40th birthday. Since Brett is a major fan of barbecued ribs, Darcy decided to take him and five of his friends to the barbecue hotbed of Kansas City. They enjoyed countless ribs and visited the Harley Davidson Finishing Factory and The Woodlands Dog Track.

At Woodlands, Cole saw a dog by the name of "Mulberry Hazel" in the program. Coincidentally, her mother's name is Hazel. "We bet on her to win and she won; I remember calling my mom to tell her," says Cole.

In August of 2007, Cole's mother passed away. Cole came across the old program and remembered seeing greyhound adoption tables in front of The Woodlands Dog Track. Woodlands closed in August of 2008. The next month, Darcy contacted Mulberry Hazel's owner to see if he still had her and if she was available for adoption. Mulberry Hazel had been injured but was kept on for breeding purposes. The owner told Darcy she could have the dog when he was done with her. Mulberry Hazel had two more litters of puppies before she came to live with the Cole family in Lafayette. Cole guesses she probably had six litters of puppies in the last two years.

Compared to many greyhound stories, Hazel's is a happy one. According to local non-profit organization Greyhound Friends for Life, hundreds of greyhounds "grade off (become unprofitable) every day, leaving kennel owners with expenses but no income from the uncompetitive racers. Some kennels will hold on to failed racers for as long as possible, but for most it's strictly business." With dog tracks closing throughout the country, many dogs are euthanized simply because they have nowhere to go.

"I'm in love with this breed and that's why I want to get the word out," says Cole. Cole notes that a lot of people are under the misimpression that greyhounds are hyper and need a lot of exercise. Actually, they are relaxed, loving companions, according to Cole. "She's my 40-mile-per-hour coach potato," says Cole. The greyhound's speed is something for prospective owners to consider. "My biggest concern is never letting her off the leash," says Cole. In fact, Greyhound Friends for Life is adamant that the dogs should always be kept on a leash if they're not in an enclosed area.

It would be hard to say which one is luckier or who really rescued who. Mulberry Hazel definitely won the race that matters and Cole gets to smile every day when she says her mom's name. For more information about local greyhounds, visit [www.greyhoundsforlife.org](http://www.greyhoundsforlife.org) or nationally

[www.adopt-a-greyhound.org](http://www.adopt-a-greyhound.org).

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