

THE BOCA RATON observer

2003
2013
CELEBRATING A DECADE OF COMMUNITY



KARL BURTZLOFF AND HERO SO HAPPY TOGETHER

Awesome Greyhound Adoptions in West Palm Beach finds good homes for these majestic dogs, some of which are trained specifically as service dogs to be matched with local U.S. veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder. They learn to help their owners physically, and also provide great comfort.

For veteran Karl Burtzloff, having a Greyhound has made his life a little easier. And a whole lot happier.

Burtzloff had always wanted to enlist in the U.S. Army so in 2003, he eagerly signed up. But later he was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis and in 2006 had to resign because his disease was inhibiting his ability to work.

When he returned home to Palm Beach Gardens, the 37-year-old admits he kept to himself most days—until he encountered Awesome Greyhound Adoptions at a local festival. He learned that some of the service dogs were given to veterans and he wanted to see if he was a good match.

Nine months later, he's the proud owner of Hero. Burtzloff's dog not only helps him maintain his balance on most days, but has motivated him to create and maintain a daily schedule.

"He's really helped stabilize my life," Burtzloff says. "I'm single and not working, so I don't have a normal routine. But he wakes me in the morning, I feed him and take my medicine, we go for walks. Having Hero has helped me to get out of my shell a little bit."

Barbara Masi, president and founder of Awesome Greyhound Adoptions, says these retired racing dogs make great companions. They're wonderful for helping someone afraid to do simple things, such as leaving the house alone or being in large crowds.

"They are gentle. They are sweet. They are clean and do not bark," says Masi, pointing out that they also make great family pets. "They're the perfect breed."

For more information about Awesome Greyhound Adoptions, call 561-737-1941 or visit awesomegreyhoundadoptions.org.