

## ROLO'S TALE:

We welcomed our sweet, handsome, brindle boy, Rolo, with open arms about a year ago, knowing full well that he suffered from grand mal seizures. We were confident, however, that we could provide a 'haven' of sorts for him so that his seizures could be managed in a safe and comfortable environment. Disappointingly, within a couple of weeks, he experienced a number of seizures within a very short period of time. We rushed him to Tuft's Veterinary Hospital, in Walpole, where his condition was stabilized and his medication was increased. Rolo remained seizure-free for seven months...and then one Thursday morning he experienced another cluster of seizures. Again, he was quickly and gently rushed to Tuft's where they found his temperature to be very high... in excess of 106 degrees. Rolo experienced several additional seizures during the four days he was monitored at Tuft's and was finally well enough to return to our kennel the following Monday. During his stay at Tuft's, another medication was introduced into Rolo's regimen with the hope of preventing these life threatening seizures.

Unfortunately, this new combination of medicine caused Rolo a great deal of unsteadiness...especially towards his hind end. He would stumble easily and/or lose his balance, fall...and then would struggle to 'right' himself, not quite knowing where his legs should go. Sometimes he would be too weak... and would just lie down totally exhausted. We cannot even begin to convey how difficult and painful it was for us to witness Rolo going through this constant daily battle. Though his inner strength and perseverance were evident, clearly, his quality of life was much less than what he needed and deserved.

After struggling with our own emotions regarding Rolo's lack of progress, we brought Rolo to Massachusetts Veterinary Referral Hospital, in Woburn, for a consultation with a wonderful neurology specialist, Dr. Gena Silver. She recommended an MRI, spinal tap and a bile acid test...that she performed three days later. These tests would help to shed some light on what could be causing Rolo's seizures... perhaps an earlier head trauma, something pathological or idiopathic causes. All of the test results came back negative and based on these findings, Dr. Silver encouraged us to consider trying a new medication, Zonisamide, to help control Rolo's seizures and, hopefully, provide him with a better quality of life. The 'downside', was that the cost for this medication would exceed \$300 per month. Nonetheless, we were bound and determined to help Rolo...and as a non-profit organization, it would be necessary for us to appeal to those individuals who could appreciate our efforts on behalf of Rolo.

Many people at our kennel and many others, who have met Rolo and know of his situation, have embraced him...literally and figuratively. He is a tall, lanky, handsome boy who has penetrated our hearts with his innocence, determination and spirit. On those days before medication quieted his energy and strength, Rolo would be outside in a large turnout area...running, playing and wagging his tail. He was a beautiful sight... and resembled a young colt experiencing the exhilaration of freedom as his legs worked in tandem with the rest of his magnificent body. He was truly poetry in motion.

Rolo's plight has been mentioned to many people... and has frequently come up in conversations over the course of time. We shared the outcome of Rolo's neurological tests/evaluation with one of our wonderful volunteers, whose sister, happened to work in the pharmaceutical industry. As they say, 'the rest is history.' When Sally told us that her sister could provide this new 'miracle' medication for our precious boy, Rolo {at virtually *no* cost to our kennel}, the emotional flood gates opened...allowing months of quiet desperation, frustration, discouragement and intense sadness to finally be acknowledged...and released. Our hearts are comforted...hopeful...and grateful beyond words.

Rolo is doing much better since being on this new medication. He is more alert, has more energy and is once again enjoying his newly emerging strength when walking and running. Watching him 'play' again touches our hearts to the very core...and we are convinced that his quality of life will improve even more dramatically...allowing him to, at long last, run like the wind again!

As you can well imagine, however, Rolo's emergency medical treatment has significantly taken its toll on our financial resources. With that in mind and to honor his strength and determination, we are establishing a medical fund in Rolo's name. This fund will be on going, so as to help provide assistance to our other greyhounds who have specific medical needs while they are in our care...and as they patiently await their loving 'forever' home.

We refer to them as 'four-legged angels' and they truly are. But in this 'labor of love' on behalf of this magnificent breed, we have been blessed to encounter many wonderful 'two-legged angels,' as well. We call them 'friends.'

From the depths of our hearts...we thank all of you so much for helping us to help these precious, priceless, furry, bundles of love...'gifts' that we cherish... our beloved greyhounds.



*Sincerely,*

*Nancy, Mary...and **Rolo***