

# GREY2K USA WORLDWIDE



## **Announcement of GREY2K USA Worldwide**

*Presented by GREY2K USA Executive Director Carey Theil to a group of friends and allies in Arlington Massachusetts on October 12, 2013*

Twelve years ago, Christine Dorchak and I formed GREY2K USA with an absurd notion, that ordinary citizens could bring about change, and successfully challenge an industry based on cruelty, an industry that wielded immense political power and had been entrenched for decades.

We started with very little. We did not have an endowment, or a powerful backer, or a team of experienced staff members.

Instead, we had a tiny office with no windows, a small but committed board of directors, and a dream. A dream we had lived through, in which we had given the greyhounds a voice, and stood up to two of the most powerful tracks in the country, before finally losing one of the closest ballot questions in state history.

For me, the dream took hold in the final days of that ill-fated campaign. In those closing hours, I could feel how close the election was and realized, for that first time, that we could win.

When the measure lost, we were devastated. We knew that as a result, thousands of greyhounds would suffer and die. But at the same time, a lingering sense of possibility remained.

A few people shared that dream with us, including Reverend Tom Grey, who had already spent years leading a grassroots fight against the money and muscle of a predatory industry, and Dr. Jill Hopfenbeck, who had treated countless greyhounds, discards of an industry that values dogs as nothing more than a number to gamble on. They encouraged us, and helped us move forward.

In the following years, you stood with us while we grew. We won important victories and suffered setbacks. Through it all, we continued to work, always striving to be better advocates for these majestic dogs.

I've thought a lot recently about the friends and allies who have fought with us: Board members, volunteers, financial supporters, and leaders from other humane organizations. GREY2K USA has truly become an army of compassion.

A dozen years later, we have ended greyhound racing in New England. The number of active dog tracks in the U.S. has been cut from 48 to 21, with the remaining tracks on the verge of collapse.

Despite this success, our work is not over. We must continue to fight until dogs no longer live in cages, no longer suffer injuries, and are no longer discarded, for an industry built on greed and denial.

We are here tonight, because we are also called to help greyhounds in other parts of the world. When we formed GREY2K USA, it was based on the idea that greyhounds in Florida, and every other state, were just as important as the greyhounds in Massachusetts. So we joined together, with the goal of giving greyhounds a national voice. In that same spirit, I am proud to announce a transformation tonight, an acceptance of an international mission. GREY2K USA Worldwide will seek to give greyhounds a global voice, because the greyhounds in London and Sydney are just as important as the greyhounds in Miami and Des Moines.

The United States will continue to be our primary focus. However, while we fight for American dogs we will also forge alliances with like-minded groups in other countries. These will be collaborative relationships that we will approach in a spirit of humility and mutual respect. We will seek to offer whatever assistance we can in their fight to end the cruelty of dog racing.

This is a global industry of cruelty, and it deserves a global response.

I ask you tonight: stand with us as we enter this next phase. Let's take the miracle that started here in Massachusetts, and turn it into a worldwide movement. Together, we can send a message that regardless of where it exists, the cruelty of greyhound racing will not be tolerated.

Thank you.