

For greyhounds: Finally, a dog's life

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The Republican Editorials

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The Jan. 1 closing of the Raynham-Taunton Greyhound Park represents a happy ending to the hard-fought battle to ban dog racing in the Bay State.

In November, 2008, voters gave resounding approval to a ballot question

calling for the closing of the state's last two greyhound tracks – the Wonderland Greyhound Park in Revere, which closed last September, and the track in Raynham.

Previous ballot measures seeking the ban were defeated through the efforts of dog track owners, but last year's referendum proves that good causes march on.

Approval of the ban, which also prevents the opening of other dog racing tracks, ends a cruel and ultimately financially bankrupt practice.

Data showed that the dogs were kept for as long as 20 hours a day in small, stacked cages, suffering numerous and life-threatening injuries. Since 2002, more than 800 racing dogs have suffered injuries in Massachusetts.

These numbers prove that, for racing greyhounds, there was no such thing as a dog's life.

The ban on greyhound racing is a victory for thousands of supporters of the Committee to Protect Dogs who gathered enough signatures to put the question on the ballot; it's a victory for animal lovers; and it's a victory for the gentle canines who suffered abuse at the tracks.

By the time the referendum passed, we believe the inherent cruelty of dog racing was already taking a financial toll on greyhound track owners who saw declining attendance at the races.

And for the dogs? It looks like they're headed for good homes and the dog's life they deserve.

Last week, some of the newly emancipated greyhounds arrived at the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society of Springfield where they'll stay until they find new homes.

Anyone interested in adopting a greyhound can call or visit Dakin at 171 Union St., Springfield (413) 781-4000