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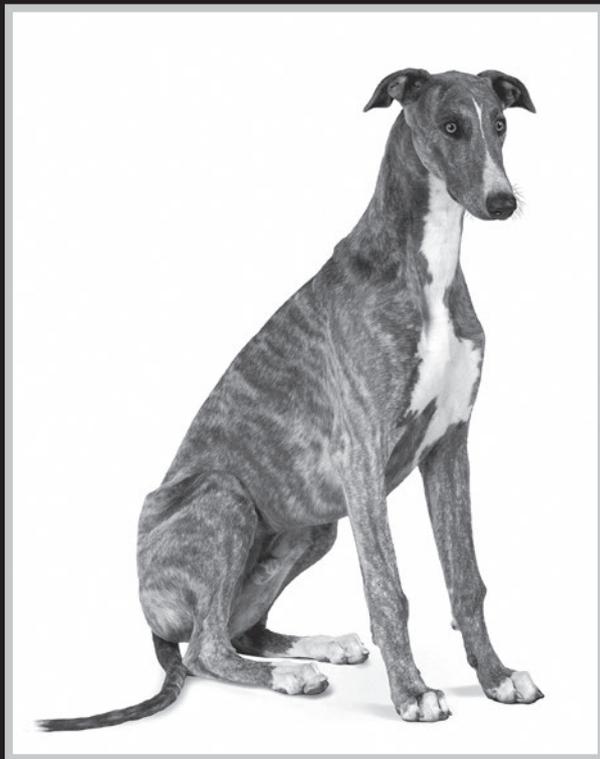
[www.swanbournevet.com](http://www.swanbournevet.com)

## The Pet Professionals

Tony Viganò , Michelle Harrison & Melanie Criddle. Veterinary Surgeons

## SPRING 2018

### THE GREYHOUND



### Inside this issue

Road Test	Page 2
The Greyhound	
Swanbourne Dashboard	Page 3
Dog Training: What You Need To Know	Page 4
Spring Tips	Page 5
Spring Tips	Page 6
Ask the Vet Team Profiles	Page 7
Kids Corner	Page 8

### Swanbourne Veterinary Centre

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Saturday:	8.00am to 4.00pm
Sunday:	8.00am to 2.00pm
Public Holidays:	8.00am to 12.00pm



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# ROAD TEST: THE GREYHOUND



One of the most ancient breeds known they date back some 7000 years and are revered for their speed, strength and hunting instinct.

Originally a hunter of game such as deer and wild boar with the hare as their primary quarry in England, they have endured as a breed in recent times through their use in lure coursing and greyhound racing. Dispute exists as to their exact origin and whether they really date back to the time of Pharaohs or whether they are a cross between the original Celtic hound and a Greek hound.

#### HISTORY:

They are thought to have originated from the Arabian Sloughi and found their way to England with Celt traders some time before 900 AD. A Greek influence is thought by some to exist in the early breeding but it is universally accepted that the modern Greyhound was developed in England.

Thought to have been used as a hunter originally the hare was their natural quarry in England and interest in lure coursing and racing in countries all over the world has guaranteed their popularity, with Perth being introduced to the sport in 1971.

As a pet they often find placement after a racing career per favour of the popular rescues groups that exist and both racing and show lines are equally successful in this role. It is for this reason that I highlight them as a breed this month as it is such a good cause to give a retired Greyhound a loving home as they make very good pets.

#### APPEARANCE:

A sleek, contoured dog, the greyhound is unabashedly built and bred for speed.

The deep chest, flexible curved spine, long straight front legs and muscular arched hindquarters create a picture of speed and power.

They have a long head and tapered muzzle, with a wide skull between small rose ears that are folded back. The long graceful neck is complemented by a long slow slung tail, slightly tipped at the end, and the short coat comes in all colours including black, grey, red, fawn, either solid or brindled and whole coloured or spotted, with or without white markings.

They are commonly between 68-76cm in height and weigh 27-32 kg.

They live approximately 12 years.

#### CHARACTERISTICS:

A sensitive, sweet and elegant dog they are brave and loyal but can be willful.

Their intelligence is often underrated due to their reserved nature and they need early socialization lest timidity becomes a problem.

Whilst they are generally gentle and even tempered they have a definite prey instinct and being sight hounds will chase anything that moves possessing great stamina.

They are reputed to be the fastest dog alive and can reach speeds of 65km/hr and socialisation with cats and other small pets is essential if they are to co-exist.

They make excellent pets bonding strongly with their owners and seldom bark so are not great watch dogs.

#### WHO SHOULD HAVE ONE:

They are excellent with children and only a small percentage will chase cats and other small pets following a racing career, which is a typical pathway they find themselves as pets via the many rescue groups that exist for this purpose.

Training and socialization may be necessary but this is not difficult.

Seldom barking they do not make good watch dogs and in fact are very inactive, even lazy indoors being content to curl up in front of the fire.

They are sensitive to cold and a coat will be necessary in winter in most climates.

Due to their racing background they typically love routine and exercise is necessary daily preferably in an enclosed area if they are off the lead as they will run off typical of all sight hounds if something catches their eye.

They are very low maintenance needing the occasional brush and are average shedders of hair.

#### VETERINARY PROBLEMS:

Having a deep chest they are prone to bloat (a distension of the stomach with gas that can lead to torsion which is a surgical emergency) and so care with feeding is required particularly before exercise.

Drug sensitivities as with all the sight hounds are reported particularly with some anaesthetic agents and insecticides.

One notable good point is their marvellous hips. They have been bred for speed and speed alone down through the ages and so hip dysplasia is virtually unknown in this breed.

In summary greyhounds are generally bred these days for show or racing purposes and both lines make good pets either from the start as puppies or following retirement.

Many greyhounds are put down following cessation of racing but there are active groups these days which rescue the beautiful animals from this fate and they go on to become wonderful pets in loving homes.

Tony Viganò



## SWANBOURNE DASHBOARD

Well, what a Winter it has been. Thank goodness it is all but over! As a Winter person and devout Melbourne-ite I didn't think I would ever hear myself say that!

Our Dog Obedience classes held off site had to be cancelled countless times due to the rain and on the few occasions we "braved" the elements it was very unpleasant, bringing first hand meaning to "Ice Station Zebra". Having said that we soldiered through it even using my own undercroft garage on one Wednesday evening!

Try as I might I was unable to arrange an alternate/undercover venue as all the schools I approached had (understandably) strict rules about dogs on site and I even looked at carparks in shopping centres but to no avail. Finally I made an arrangement with the RAS to use a pavilion through the winter months of June, July and August but not until next year, so 2019 should be a way more comfortable time.

Since our last newsletter we have employed two more Murdoch veterinary students for reception on weekends (and the occasional weekday slot). I have highlighted Beth Thompson and Nicole McIntosh later in this newsletter under staff profiles and they have really stepped up, and join Phillippa Suter on Saturdays and Sundays. This has become necessary since Melissa Neale completed her human nursing qualification taking up an appointment at Joondalup Hospital. Melissa was with us five years and we are indebted to her for her work here and look forward to seeing her briefly during the end of year exams (the scourge of all students) when she will fill in as much as her busy schedule allows.

The day before I was due to take 10 days in Melbourne mid August the NBN (DOT technology) had a major "out" which even included Telstra's own NBN service. This led to three days of using a diversion for all 4 phones to just one mobile. A disaster for staff and clients alike. Please accept my apology for yet another issue with this complicated system which has left me pondering whether it has all been worthwhile. I guess in the scheme of things it will be but seems we have to endure some pain before this happens. Again my apologies for those of you who tried to contact us over those three days and received all manner of confusing messages and misinformation.

Weekends at Swanbourne continue to be a busy time and we now have two vets on both days plus extra nursing and reception staff to cope with all our activities. Puppy school and Puppy Management dominate Sundays

with 4 classes from 9am until 1pm under the direction of Dog Whispering (Lisa Ricketts) and of course Neri Karazija who now appears on 6PR on occasional Thursdays with Tony and Mel.

Along with our general involvement with the local community we are currently sponsoring the Murdoch Veterinary Students "half way day". An annual event held by the student body to celebrate the half way mark of that long and arduous course (I remember it well!) we are proud to be part of their festivities.

On a more serious but maybe humorous note Mel Criddle is currently recovering from surgery to her elbow following a house cleaning accident when the electric cord of the vacuum cleaner conspired to trip her up. Something I have always steered clear of realising the dangers of housework, she fell victim to this mischievous device, but after surgery she has made a rapid recovery. Husband Paul is resigned to this occupation in the future!

On a more serious note we suffered the first break-in at Swanbourne for 12 years when a felon jemmied the new sliding glass door with consummate ease. Alas he found no cash, was met with the alarm within 90 seconds and was photographed by not one but two cameras. Tony missed him (thankfully) by 4 minutes having been called by the security company, and even his car was photographed, leading to his arrest within days. Needless to say the glass door security as well as the camera have been beefed up as a consequence.

As Spring has officially arrived I have included the Spring Tips in this edition of the newsletter so don't be caught unaware as all manner of things now re-emerge with the warmer weather, greater outdoor activity and general awakening from the slumber of TV addiction which accompanies the Winter months. Your dog will be full of it with his/her daily walks in many cases resuming and the overexuberance this brings amongst his/her cohorts at the park so beware this does not result in scuffles and rough play!

Finally the team members at the Swanbourne Veterinary Centre enjoyed the annual Winter Dinner put on by the practice last night. A great night was enjoyed by all culminating in a nail biting win by the Eagles.

Have a great awakening to the Summer madness and take care with your best friend.

Tony Viganò



# DOG TRAINING: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW: Good Citizen Program

Understanding what your pup needs at this stage is very important and why they are doing the behaviours that we may find unpleasant. They are going through the first circle of development which requires patience, trust and understanding.



You may encounter certain behaviours with your pup. Understand they need to learn how to fit into our world and what our rules are. Teaching them the right before the wrong is crucial to developing a well-rounded puppy.

The puppy classes we have on offer here are unique to this practice. Here you will learn how to emotionally regulate your pup, another important lesson in your pups development. Other things you will learn how to teach your pup include basic leadership commands such as lay down, stay, heel, and recall and provide an initial level of socialising.

To this end we have 3 steps in our canine education program:

### PUPPY CLASSES (Steps 1 & 2)

Puppy Classes are held on site at Swanbourne Veterinary Centre on Sunday mornings. Puppies must be between 8-12 weeks old when they start their first class and have had at least their first

vaccination and be de-wormed.

Puppy Preschool is the first instalment of your dog's training. We have a 9am and an 11 am class each Sunday. Puppy Management is the second phase of training which builds on and enhances the training learnt in preschool. This is held at 10am and 12pm on Sundays.

As each group is at a different stage of the 4 week program, we recommend joining one and coming at the same time every week. This also means that the puppies will go through their training together and will be the best of friends by the end!

**DOG OBEDIENCE-** For puppies and dogs over 6 months old

Basic Dog Obedience is the natural progression from Puppy School and Management.

These classes are designed to:

- \* Socialise the young dog
- \* Brief owners on dog behaviour, communication and obedience training techniques
- \* Demonstrate how to discipline the young dog

These classes are held Saturday mornings at 9:30am at Swanbourne Oval and Wednesday evenings at College Park.

Please call us on 9384 2644 for more comprehensive information, start dates or to book your spot!

Tony Viganò



# SPRING TIPS

Well, if last year's winter was wild this year takes the cake! I am not complaining but I can tell you we have been running Dog Obedience lessons for 30 years and I have never before had to consistently cancel classes due to inclement weather in all that time. If anyone has a warehouse or covered area suitable for Winter Dog Obedience classes please ring me!

So....Spring will be a welcome relief for many people and not the least being our pets that become quite depressed when their walks at the park are curtailed not to mention the anxieties that rain and particularly thunder create!

Cats equally stay inside by the fire and the activity rate of everyone in the household drops as the humans watch sport on TV and the pets can be neglected.

As the weather warms not only do pets and their owners come out of hibernation but parasites, snakes and other nasties also become more active. In Perth our temperate climate means we should never let our guard down against parasites external and internal but many people do and the compliance rate of monthly preventives can be as low as 5/12 months a year which means that burst of warm weather in winter can spell disaster if heartworm preventives and other parasite control has lapsed. Fear not as we now have some excellent medications that can be given every 3 months such as Bravecto (incidentally there is a spot on form of Bravecto coming soon that lasts for 6 months!), so these can be used now, and like all oral medications these reach back rather than forward in control.

## 1. Heartworm:

I fear that vigilance has fallen off alarmingly with heartworm control since the disease was first discovered in Perth based canines some 25 years ago. Control is easy and I favour the annual injection which can be given at the same time as annual vaccinations. The injection is made of spherules that are dissolved gradually from the site of the injection over the next 12 months giving good control. Heartworm prevention is also available in monthly and three monthly oral medications and remember we have the right temperatures, the right mosquitoes and bodies of water such as lakes and the river for the disease to be ever present. The only factor that saves us is that the majority of dogs are protected as the disease requires an infected dog population to be propagated. This I fear is falling off and cases are being reported in Perth once again. Ask your vet!

## 2. Intestinal worms:

From a human health point of view control of internal parasites is important and this is easily done with the plethora of products on the market given monthly, three monthly and either individually or in combination with other preventives so again ask your vet!

## 3. External parasites:

These ramp up as the weather becomes warmer and fleas head the list but ticks and lice are also prevalent and easily prevented

## 4. Flies:

A major problem in areas such as horse studs but also seen in suburbia around rubbish bins and outside/backyard areas particularly if food is left uneaten, there is compost around or faeces from the family pet are not cleaned up regularly....bag this as soon as you see it and keep a special bin that can be put out for collection or deposited in the special bins provided at most parks and recreation reserves. The use of pyrethrin sprays in the back yard, aerosols such as Ndem on the pet and topical ointments on prime areas of your pet such as their ears all help to reduce this annoying problem.

## 5. Bees:

A major problem all year round particularly for susceptible animals here stings can cause anaphalaxis in pets and people. Watch out for that sudden yelp and lameness or grossly swollen face during a walk at the park....a visit to the local vet may well save a life and if your pet (or child?) are susceptible the consequences become worse after each encounter and desensitisation may well be necessary.

## 6. Birds:

We are so lucky in Perth having an abundance of bird life in the suburbs to enhance the beauty of our gardens and recreation areas, but beware the territorial species such as magpies, butcher birds and honey eaters which delight in dive bombing both people and pets during the mating season in Spring. A hat is a must and I also carry an umbrella as they can draw blood or worse as they dive bomb intruders into their breeding areas!

7. Equally give birds a chance in your garden by ensuring the family cat is wearing a bell as these fire side tabbies during the winter turn into efficient killing machines as they creep up and mesmerise birds and their young, just doing what comes naturally but very distressing when it happens

8. And on the subjects of cats, please keep them inside from dusk as they are busy meeting and mating during Spring (those that are not sterilised...as they all should be!) and the ensuing fights throughout the night can keep the neighbourhood awake as they scream at each other, locked in mortal territorial battle.

## 9. Noxious Plants:

When planning your garden please get advice regarding the species you should plant. There are a plethora of noxious plants in every garden and this is a topic about which most pet experts have only a sketchy knowledge.



## SPRING TIPS (continued)

I have included a list to avoid with these notes. Equally planting native species will ensure your garden is full of birds, frogs and other marvellous creatures.

10. On the topic of "house and garden" and before you get too enthused as Spring starts to bloom, care must always be taken when using snail baits, lawn fertilisers and other caustics outdoors. Frogs and reptiles (avoid snakes!) are greatly affected by these agents and snail bait can be very toxic to dogs as they attract dogs and should be used sparingly (follow the directions!) and preferably put in wide necked jars and conduit pegged to the ground as the products will attract snails. Try to use animal friendly products at all times and don't leave stocks of nitrogenous fertilisers and snail bait in reach of inquisitive pets.

### 11. At the Park:

After a long wet winter your dogs will be overjoyed to once again have that daily romp in the park, chasing balls and Frisbees and meeting their cohorts. Beware of squabbles that may occur between focussed individuals that become obsessive about their own balls and tug toys as this can cause mayhem, injury and bad feelings amongst owners! Ensure your dog has been properly socialised at puppy and obedience classes so they become good citizens and learn to share, recall and generally follow your instruction to the letter! Severe fines and worse can ensue if they transgress on a regular basis.

### 12. Travelling in the car:

Please ensure you secure your dog just as we must do. There are some handy harnesses that clip into seat belt anchor points to prevent your best friend from injury when you are forced to stop suddenly, not to mention the damage they can cause flying around the car! Car sickness is also a problem in many dogs and this can be reduced by regular trips to desensitise them but also how and where they travel in the car. It is a combination of motion sickness (try putting them on the floor behind the front seats) but also anxiety due to fear so medications may also help initially to familiarise them with car travel. Most dogs get to love travelling in the car and being with their people.

13. On the subject of cars and we talk about this constantly, please do not leave dogs or any animals for that matter unattended at any time in a locked car. Heat stroke can occur within 6 minutes even in temperatures as low as 25C. Spring is a critical time as the temperatures can climb higher than you think!

14. The sun's heat particularly in the middle of the day can be detrimental in white cats particularly with sunburnt ears and noses and also white staffies and boxers. Consistent sunburn can lead to squamous cell carcinomas in dogs and cats

so be sure to protect them from this. There are some good screening lotions available for pets though of not much value in cats.

15. The beach is back on the agenda in Spring so watch out for blowfish (beach and river) as these can be very toxic and also errant anglers who leave fish heads and gangs of hooks on the beach leading to these being caught in mouths and worse.

16. Throwing sticks for dogs at the beach is an absolute no no. Some dogs are incredibly quick catching them in the air and as they land pouncing on them with such ferocity that the sticks can be driven deep into their throats. Please use frizzbies to exercise them and not balls either as I have seen these caught deep in their throats, particularly squash balls which can also damage eyes as they fit neatly into eye sockets. Backyard cricket is best played with a tennis ball as cricket balls can break windows (!) but also teeth and limbs!

17. Swimming is great fun but the water can exacerbate ear problems so speak to your vet about a management problem for chronic swimmer ear!

18. Some dogs also swallow water at the beach when jumping through waves and biting at the foam. This leads to vomiting in the car on the way home so give them time to settle down before that long trip home.

19. Also remember older dogs and the family pool can be a lethal combination with tragic circumstances when they can't get out. If you go out, and at all times anyway, keep the pool gate firmly shut.

20. Barbecues can be a problem because of that hot plate taken off to drain the fat and meat products. Very inviting but desperately hot and not good for eager tongues! Just like those hot bitumen roads on bare pads.

21. Beware also that guests do not casually drop or feed the dog at the BBQ party. Offcuts of fat and particularly onions can be very toxic with the latter causing anaemia in susceptible animals.

### 22. Reptiles:

Beware of snakes in the Spring. They come out of hibernation full of venom and are a constant problem. Dugites in the sand dunes and inland and tigers around lakes and rivers must be avoided at all costs. Keep your dog on the path and trained to recall under all circumstances. It is best to walk in the early morning rather than the heat of the day at avoid any unpleasant surprises.

The list of issues we encounter with our pets in the Spring is endless but is also a special time, beautiful in most respects but there can be a sinister side for our pets.

Tony Viganò



# ONLINE BOOKINGS

# ASK THE VET

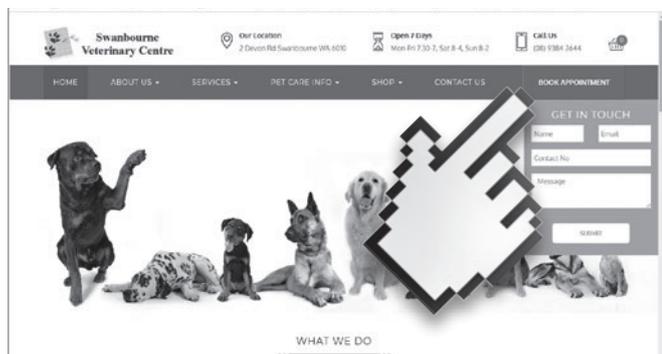
We have introduced the functionality to enable our clients to book their own appointments through a secure link on our website.

Appointment times are available 7 days a week. You select the service – vaccination, general check, dental check or senior health check - then choose the day and time that suits, and book your pet in! When you complete your booking, you will receive an email with confirmation of the booking details.

If you wish to book an appointment with a specific vet or cannot find a suitable appointment time, please don't hesitate to give us a call.

Always remember that if you have immediate concerns about your pet, please call us! As always, our friendly team are always here to help by calling 9384 2644.

Booking is easy – simply visit [www.swanbournevet.com](http://www.swanbournevet.com) and click on BOOK APPOINTMENT.



**Question:**

Ava from Swanbourne asks: "Can I give my dog antihistamines to help control his itchiness in Spring?"

**Answer:**

Antihistamines are one of the treatment options for dogs and cats that suffer with atopy (skin, paw and ear problems due to airborne allergens), and are useful in a few other situations. Rather than completely eliminating symptoms, these medications may decrease severity, improve quality of life, and reduce dependency on other products used to treat atopy.

They are appealing to many pet owners who have had personal experience with the effectiveness of such medications, like the over-the-counter availability of many antihistamines in chemists, and are dissatisfied with cortisones, or unable to afford cyclosporine or desensitisation.

However, antihistamines are no cure and, like cortisones and cyclosporine, only suppress allergic reactions. They may not eliminate all itchiness, and there still may be the need for other treatments. An animal may be responsive to one antihistamine but not another, so a 3-6 week cycle of experimentation is required. By testing at least 3-4 different drugs, pet owners can work out which agent works best.

While this family of drugs is safe enough to be available without script in many cases, they are not without side effects. And just like in humans, your dog shouldn't drive, nor your cat use heavy machinery when taking antihistamines!

# TEAM PROFILES

## Nicole McIntosh

Nicole is a Murdoch Veterinary student joining our weekend team to gain experience and do some reception shifts.

A Victorian girl (a Tigers supporter!), whose father grew up in Shepparton whilst her mother is Scottish, she has lived all her life in suburban Melbourne, growing up surrounded by pets of all kinds.

Her breakthrough moment came after a work experience stint in year 10 at the Ringwood Veterinary Clinic, when she was offered a part time job at that practice (a very familiar scenario to me over the years here at Swanbourne). The mould was set, and from that beginning she worked her way up as a veterinary nurse in the same practice.

Nicole then completed her undergraduate degree at La Trobe University in Animal and Veterinary Bioscience majoring in microbiology, and from here she moved to Perth last year to begin the Veterinary Doctorate qualification at Murdoch.

With a special interest in oncology her aim is to steer her career interests in that direction.

She loves travelling and hopes to incorporate this into her future as well.

Welcome to Swanbourne Nicole. We look forward to furthering your special interests and meeting your goals.



## Beth Thompson

Beth hails from Gisborne in New Zealand where she was dux of her secondary school, Campion College in Gisborne.

She completed a BSc in Biomed at the Auckland University before moving to Perth to enter the Veterinary School here where she hopes to graduate with honours on the way to becoming the best Vet she can be and is currently in the 3rd year of the new Doctorate course.

Her pedigree for the position includes grandparents who owned a dairy farm and a stepfather with a cattery so she definitely has the background.

Two sheep, an aged retriever and younger Labrador along with a host of chickens and two cats all make up her menagerie, which her mum is hosting in her absence!

In her spare time she runs half marathons regularly and aims to do a full marathon one day!

Beth is helping out with reception duties currently at Swanbourne in what we hope will be a help in her studies until she graduates.

Welcome to Swanbourne Beth, we intend to help you on your way to those goals.

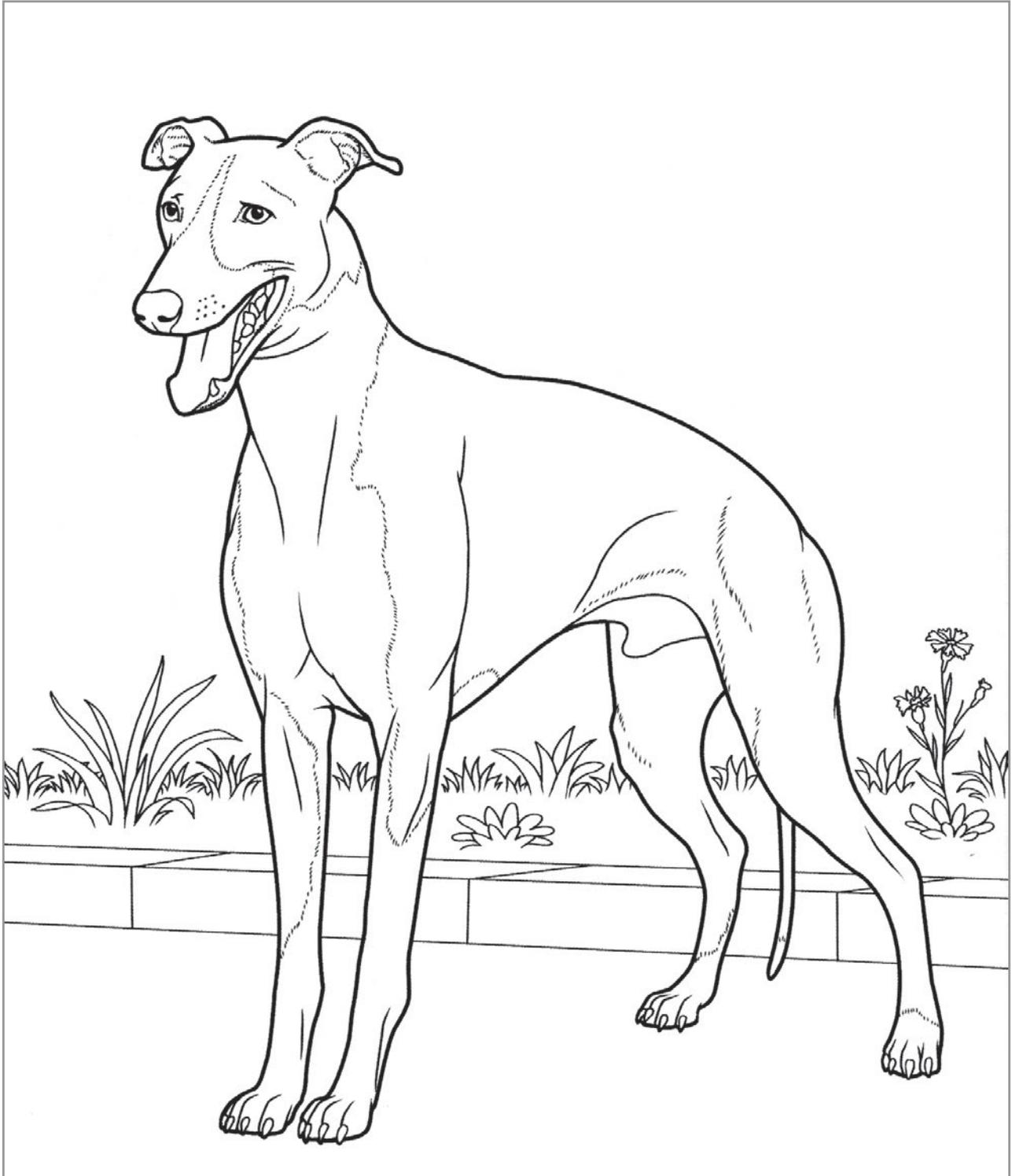
Tony Viganò



# Kids★ Corner

Children up to 12 years old are invited to enter our colouring-in competition.

Please post or return your entry to Swanbourne Veterinary Centre by Dec 31<sup>st</sup> 2018 for your chance to WIN a year's supply of Flea Control products for your pet, plus a pet toy for your best friend.



Name:

Age:

Address:

Contact No.:

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*Good Luck!*

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