



Pictured are Sean and Natasha Yoder with their two greyhounds Beans and Fred at Helena's Barktoberfest. (Reporter Photo/Graham Brooks)

By [Graham Brooks](#)

Maylene couple gives greyhounds a second chance

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HELENA—Sean and Natasha Yoder have a passion for dogs, particularly greyhounds and on Saturday, Oct. 17 they brought their two greyhounds to Helena's inaugural Barktoberfest and shared the story of their two pets.

The two greyhounds, 10-year-old Beans and 4-year-old Fred, are not just your ordinary greyhound. What separates Beans and Fred is they were given a second chance through the program Second Chance Greyhounds.

“Prison inmates take Greyhounds and train them as part of whatever programs they're in in prison and Fred went through that program and so he came sort of ready,” said Sean. “He didn't know what stairs were but he knew basic commands like sit, stay, lay down, how to act on a leash and things like that.”

Second Chance Greyhounds is an all-volunteer, non-profit organization that works together to place former racing Greyhounds into adoptive homes. They are fostered and trained by state inmates who learn patience and responsibility, according to the organization.

“We got Beans because he was a stray and they found him and the track here (Birmingham) and they went to Muscle Shoals and got him,” said Sean. “He had heart worms and they didn't think he was going to make it and when we adopted him he was still going through treatment for that. That was eight years ago and he still acts like a puppy today.”

Both Beans and Fred were enjoying the festivities of Barktoberfest where there were numerous other dog breeds, gourmet treats and plenty of space for dogs to enjoy themselves.

When particular greyhounds do not pan out as racing dogs or have retired, the Birmingham Race Course places them up for adoption and Sean went to the track to find out more information.

Sean and Natasha are currently Maylene residents and Sean said it was a neighbor back when he lived in Nashville that drew him to the Greyhound breed.

“We moved here 11 years ago and the first thing that I did when we got settled in was I went to the racetrack and I called Natasha and said that I adopted a dog,” said Sean. “I went up to the track to get some information on them and it was something I always wanted.”

The couple now has three greyhounds total and they plan on always having one in the future.

“I think we’ll probably always have one,” said Sean. “They’re great pets.”