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‘Lucky’ Mascot Finds Home, Will Appear at MSCC Games in Marion

Talk to most sports fans, and they’ll tell you they go to great lengths to bring a little luck to their favorite team. Kathy Wicker, a Mid-South Community College employee for eight years, did just that recently when she adopted “Lucky” Saks to be the basketball Greyhounds’ official mascot.



“I have always wanted a big dog in the house, but I did not want to have to replace everything that a big puppy would eat while it was growing up, namely drapes, couches, chairs, and door frames,” Wicker said. “When the adoption of the MSCC mascot was proposed, I did some research on retired greyhounds, and it became very clear that this is exactly what I needed to do.”

MSCC President Dr. Glen Fenter had encouraged college employees to consider adopting a greyhound that could serve as the official mascot, and Wicker accepted the challenge.

“We had several employees who expressed interest, but adopting a pet that will participate in college events is a major commitment,” Dr. Fenter said. “We are proud of Kathy for stepping forward and helping us find a good home for our official mascot.”

Wicker said Saks, a four-year-old red brindle Greyhound who raced under the nickname “Flying Saks,” effectively did the choosing as she took a liking to Kathy and her dog Maggie, a 6-pound Yorkie.

“She actually picked us for her family,” Wicker explained. “We looked at several different dogs, but Saks was the one who was curious but very gentle with Maggie. Every dog had its own distinctive personality, and Saks was especially sweet. I have the sweetest, most loving, most beautiful Greyhound in Arkansas.”

Southland Park Gaming and Racing, which committed \$250,000 to the MSCC sports program over the next 10 years, paid the adoption fee and helped with the overall acquisition process. Vickie Cohen, Director of the Mid-South Greyhound Adoption Option (MSGAO), selected several Greyhounds that she thought would be best suited for the Wicker household.

“Saks has adapted to our home so quickly and so completely that it is as if she grew up there,” Wicker said. “She is good with all other dogs, with the grandchildren, and anyone that comes in the house. She doesn’t bark at all, and she loves her new crate and big bed.”

“Saks and Maggie share food, and drink water from the same bowl. There is no evidence of jealousy between them. They are amazing. I can’t tell you how excited I am to have adopted ‘Lucky’ Saks. I consider myself to be the lucky one. Isn’t it terrific that she is also the very first MSCC mascot?”

Although Wicker thinks she has the pick of the litter, she would acknowledge that Adoption Option houses many canines that would make good pets. The program finds families for about 130 greyhounds a year (on average) and can provide care for as many as 30 canines at a time.

Greyhounds are affectionate, sociable, generally quiet, and low-maintenance animals. The ones available at the Adoption Option are also crate trained, which makes housetraining easier.

“Our goal is to increase public awareness of the pet-ability of retired racing greyhounds, and our focus is always on the dogs,” Cohen said.

MSGAO is a non-profit organization that is partially funded and supported by Southland Park, local racing kennel operators, boarding fees, gift shop sales, area

fundraisers and by charitable contributions from both corporate and private donors. For information on adopting a Greyhound, go to www.midsouthgreyhound.com.