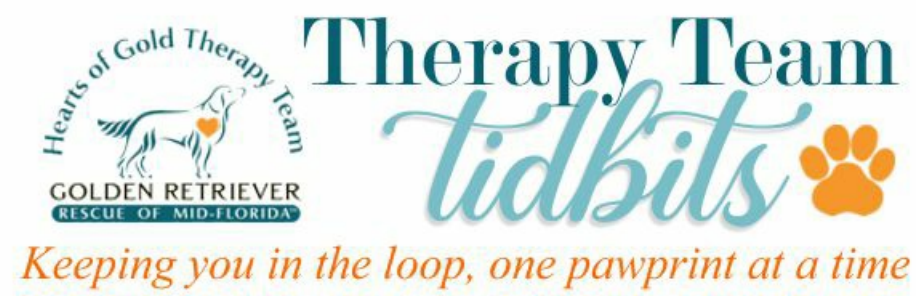


APRIL 2026



In the Spotlight: Dog therapy is good medicine!

Several of our teams regularly visit hospitals and medical schools, spreading furry love to patients, families and caregivers. You'll find Gary J. and Thor, Charlie H. and Lala, and Dotty D. and Nova are on site several times each week! Lala not only has her own toy box in the Physical Therapy department at HCA Florida Pasadena Hospital, she and Charlie were honored by HCA Florida St. Petersburg Hospital after completing 52 visits in 2025! At the hospital's monthly award ceremony, they were recognized for their dedication to patients and staff, and celebrated in the sweetest way: the entire team singing Happy Birthday to Lala.



Photos (left to right): Thor, Lala, Nova

Campus Visit Brings Smiles and Memories

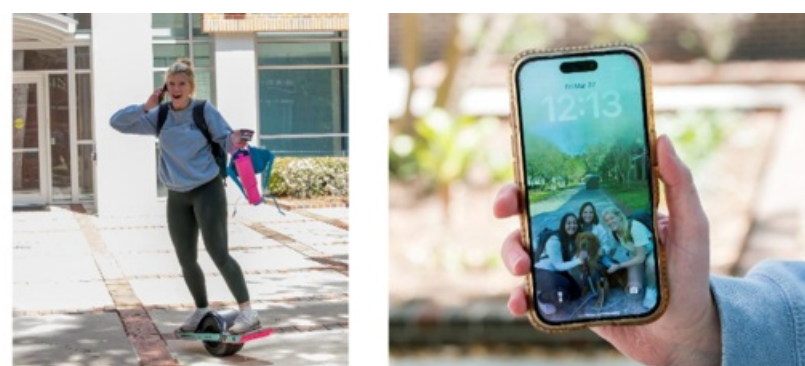
Future doctors, nurses, pharmacists and therapists flock to our therapy dogs every time our teams are on campus at University of Florida in Gainesville and University of South Florida in Tampa. Our Northwest team's recent experience shows the power of our pups' presence. Enjoy this excerpt from team coordinator Russ C.:

A funny thing happened on the way to the forum... oh wait—that's a tale for another campfire.

This particular adventure led us to a fantastic visit with UF students, many from the College of Pharmacy. Just as we were basking in the academic glow, one young woman burst through the doors, leapt onto her OneWheel like a modern-day explorer, and set off—only to slam on the brakes moments later upon spotting our dogs. The sudden stop nearly sent her into orbit, but as she put it, she "had to see the dogs." Priorities: correctly aligned.

She went on to share how much she and her classmates look forward to seeing the pups, then triumphantly produced her well-traveled, slightly battle-scarred iPhone. There, as her background, was a photo of her and two fellow students with Koda from a previous visit—proof that some encounters leave paw prints in more places than just the sidewalk.

Moments like these remind us: we really do make a difference... even if it occasionally involves emergency braking and a near OneWheel dismount.



A Tail-Wagging Milestone: 200 Therapy Dog Teams!



It's a record: we now have more than 200 active Certified Therapy Dogs serving the communities of Mid-Florida!! At our March screening event in Orlando, Tricia Henry and Birdie from New Smyrna Beach successfully navigated the testing stations and became our 200th active therapy team. Tricia wrote, "I want to volunteer with Hearts of Gold because I've seen firsthand the joy, comfort, and unconditional love that Golden Retrievers bring into people's lives and I'm passionate about sharing that same joy with others through therapy work." Well-said, Tricia. CONGRATULATIONS!



Who Knew? The best way to submit health records, photos and questions about printed materials or insurance certificates is by email to hqadmin@grrmf.org. This shared mailbox is monitored by our team of administrative volunteers, eager to be of service! If you have grrmftherappups@grrmf.org in your email contacts, that's the personal email for our Hearts of Gold Director, Ginger Vincent.



Looking Ahead -We're invited to several **Nurses Week Celebrations** at Bay Pines VA Hospital and Clinics in the Tampa Bay area and a **GRRMF Golden Meet Up at Mutts & Martinis** in St. Petersburg next month. As always, please use the VicNet app to view special events and sign up to participate. Want to purchase an extra logo shirt or other items? [Visit our Hearts of Gold store here.](#)



Hearts Connected - We'd love your feedback, stories, photos, video clips or ideas! Share your thoughts with your area coordinator at hgadmin@grrmf.org. Please identify your dog and area in the file name. Stay connected and keep our mission strong!



Email – Don't miss the latest news or important reminders from our therapy team! Please check your spam message folder and add our email domains to your safe sender list.



Therapy Visit Reminders - A post event report needs to be submitted after every therapy/reading visit. No dogs should be off leash during therapy visits. Ensure collars, leashes and vests are clean.

*If this newsletter was forwarded to you and you are not on our [list sign up here!](#)
We'd love to hear from you! Send us your comments and suggestions
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