



HEARTS OF GOLD

Newsletter of Golden Retriever Rescue of Mid-Florida, Inc.

Volume 2, Issue 5

December 1999

A Christmas Wish: A Home for Goldens in Need

All I Want for Christmas . . .

by Spirit, GRRMF Dog #600

My name is Spirit, and I was born in a puppy mill.

When I was very little, a big, mean rat came and ate off my foot. Without a foot, I wasn't worth anything to the puppy mill, so they called Golden Retriever Rescue of Mid-Florida.

I was picked up by a volunteer and taken to a house where a kind lady took care of me. She saw to my every need and told me she loved me every day. Her name is Betty Wyatt, and she kept me by her side night and day. Soon we were the best of companions. But I knew I wasn't going to spend the rest of my life with Miss Betty. There were lots of other dogs at her house, and I watched as nice people came and took them home.

One day, a nice couple came and picked me up. I knew they were nice, because I heard Miss Betty ask everyone interested in adopting me all kinds of questions on the phone. Because she loved me so much, she asked even more questions than usual, which is a

lot! My picture was on the Internet, so I became a celebrity – pretty good for a skinny little puppy with only three feet.

Santa, for Christmas, I want to ask for three things:

First, please bring lots of presents to all the GRRMF volunteers for being so good to all us goldens.

Second, I'd like lots of toys for me and my brother, Cody. My new family adopted Cody from GRRMF a while ago, and we've gotten really close. If you bring me some toys, I promise to share them with my brother!

And lastly, Santa, I really need something special. While I was staying at Miss Betty's, I heard her talking on the phone to people wanting to give up goldens. Sometimes she had to turn them away because there was no room. I saw how sad she was when she couldn't help those dogs. There just aren't enough fosters to help dogs like me. It just makes me whimper and shake all over to think about how lucky I was, and to realize I have brothers and sisters out there who aren't so lucky.



GRRMF's Holiday 'Spirit'

Santa, please bring GRRMF a shelter to help goldens like me. If there was a safe place to bring goldens awaiting foster care and adoptions, they all could find new families as great as mine.

Merry Christmas, Santa!

With much love and kisses,

Spirit XXOOOXX

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GRRMF MISSION

We are a non-profit, all-volunteer organization dedicated to finding new beginnings for homeless golden retrievers. We are an advocate for goldens in situations where they are being abused or neglected and provide intervention and help whenever possible. We seek to educate the general public on responsible pet ownership and the role rescue groups play in society. We continually communicate the importance of spaying and neutering all pets in order to eliminate the senseless destruction of innocent animals.

A Call for Support

The Board of GRRMF is pleased to announce the introductory phase of our capital campaign to acquire a facility for homeless golden retrievers in Florida.

Why do we need a facility? The answer is painfully simple: Too many homeless goldens ... and too few foster homes to accommodate them.

No words can better describe our need than a typical week experienced by the GRRMF admissions team. While you may wish to think we're embellishing our stories to tug at your heartstrings, the sad reality is no embellishment is necessary – these are all true stories, all "typical" in the day-to-day management of our rescue program:

A Typical Week in Rescue:

DAY 1

An owner calls wanting to turn in two unspayed females and one unneutered male he has used in a breeding program in his yard. We have no space and have to make him wait 6 days, risking he will sell them to another backyard breeder to help his finances. Finally, the dogs are taken into our adoption coordinator's already full home because all fosters are full. She lovingly cares for these dogs although she is already exhausted from caring for the other dogs she is fostering.

DAY 2

A woman calls to give up an unspayed female. We have no foster space and can't find a place to board her. We ask the owner to hold the dog while we make room. Two days later, when we call to make arrangements, the owner informs us the dog has been given away. Unspayed, she will potentially be bred and add to the overpopulation problem.

DAY 3

We are notified of a golden in an explosive, abusive situation. When our volunteer arrives, the owner is screaming curses at the golden, which now will only crawl on its belly. Even though this volunteer is getting ready to move in a month, he follows his heart and immediately takes the dog. He will provide a temporary safe haven for the dog while we work to find a new owner or space in another foster home.

DAY 4

A dog we adopted last week is coming back to rescue, because the family's existing dog didn't like him. Luckily, his foster agrees to help out even though he now has the abused dog taken in on Day 3 in his home. We have to adopt out both dogs before the volunteer moves.

DAY 5

A local shelter calls to inform us two beautiful goldens have been turned in – a 3-year-old female and an 8-year-old male. We find a direct adoption candidate for the 3-year-old, but no one wants the older one. We already have a few senior males in the program and no space to take in another, so the 8-year-old stays in the shelter. Our hearts are heavy, knowing he most likely will be euthanized within a few days. This is probably the most difficult part of our work with rescue – turning away a golden in need.

DAY 6

Our veterinarian informs us two dogs we took in last week have tested positive for heartworms. Before we can put them up for adoption, they'll need foster care for at least two months while they undergo treatment. Also, on this day in *The Orlando Sentinel*, there are eight advertisements for goldens – four litters for sale and four adult goldens being sold or given away because they aren't wanted anymore. Since we have no space, we don't even try to contact these people. Every week, the newspaper has similar advertisements.

DAY 7

A family calls saying they're moving to the other side of Orlando. They've decided they don't want to take their 12-year-old golden, whom they've had from a pup, to their brand new house. As usual, rescue is full to the brim. On top of that, families willing to adopt a senior dog are nearly nonexistent. We have to say no. The owner is subsequently seen in front of a local pet store trying to hand the dog off to anyone who will take him.

And, every week, it starts all over again.

We desperately need a shelter facility so we:

- Never turn away an unspayed female that has the potential to be bred.
- Can help all goldens in dangerous or abu-

sive situations without delay.

- Have adequate capacity to take dogs back into rescue from vacationing fosters or from homes where they don't work out.
- Provide a place for elderly goldens to live out the rest of their lives.
- Have space for administrative needs, an adoption center, grooming and storage.
- Provide relief for our overworked adoption coordinator.

It is our dream for the new millennium to raise funds for our shelter as quickly as possible. We need volunteers with experience raising capital, writing grant proposals and helping with planning and procuring or constructing a facility.

If you are interested in helping, please e-mail our capital campaign coordinator, Marcia McGovern, at Capital@grrmf.org or call (407) 332-2840 and leave a message on line 4.

We need all our supporters to consider the needs of unwanted goldens and contribute to the cause. If you would like to help GRRMF jump-start our campaign for a home for goldens, please consider making a gift today.

**THE NEED IS URGENT!
HELP GOLDENS BY INVESTING
IN THEIR FUTURE!**

*– Barbara Durham
GRRMF President*



Donations may be sent to:
Golden Retriever Rescue
of Mid-Florida, Inc.
P. O. Box 1449
Goldenrod, FL 32733
(Please indicate if donations are for
the capital campaign and/or
general operating fund)

Golden Retriever Rescue
of Mid-Florida, Inc.
407-332-2840
email: info@grrmf.org

Visit us on the web at:
<http://www.grrmf.org>



Pay Tribute To Those You Love at Christmas and Insure the Future of Many Golden!

GRRMF is in the initial stages of a capital campaign to raise money for a shelter for the unwanted Golden Retrievers of Florida. In this initial phase, we are offering the opportunity to memorialize our loved ones who have crossed the Rainbow Bridge or to pay tribute to those who are still with us. The purchase of an inscribed brick for the *Golden Pathway to New Beginnings* will display your sentiments for all to see at the new facility when it is built. Your tax deductible donation of \$100 per brick will help build a fine shelter to save and place many more loving Golden than previously possible. If you wish to participate, please complete the order form below.

Gift certificates are available if you wish to give this as gift. Please complete and send the order form and we will send you a gift certificate within a week of receiving it. Please make all checks payable to GRRMF or Golden Retriever Rescue of Mid-Florida.

Please mail form to: GRRMF Golden Pathways Campaign
P.O. Box 621852
Oviedo, FL 32762

Donor Name: _____ Phone Nbr: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

- ☐ I am ordering this as a gift. ☐ I am ordering this for myself or family.
☐ I will provide the inscription ☐ The gift recipient will provide the inscription

I would like to order _____ (number) of bricks @ \$100.00 each. My check for \$_____ is enclosed.

Inscription:

- ❖ One letter per block
- ❖ 13 characters per line including spaces
- ❖ 3 lines per brick
- ❖ Small punctuation marks such as periods, commas, quotation marks do not sandblast well on brick
- ❖ Dashes, slashes, hearts, exclamation and question marks can be used.
- ❖ **Many combinations can be accomplished by two or more bricks placed together, increasing the inscription area.**



holiday memories



Duchess

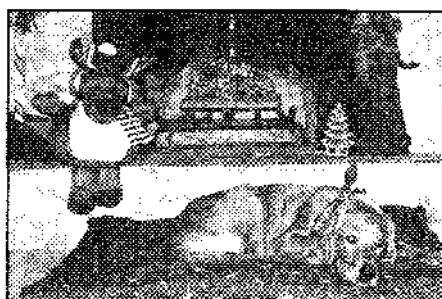
Dave and Mary Heximer wrote: "We thought GRRMF would enjoy a picture of our 'Puppy' (5 yrs). Duchess was adopted in Florida almost 2 years ago. Not only does she enjoy her toys, she loves the cold and snows of Western New York. Happy Holidays! Thanks for such a Great Dog."



Forrest and his new family

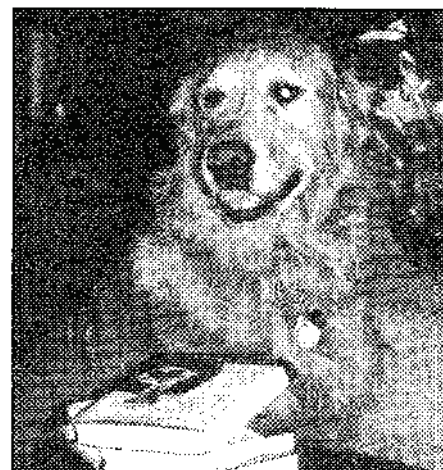
Here's an alumnus, Forrest, getting into the holiday spirit with his new family.

Greg and Linda Fragoza sent this picture of their golden girl, Daisy, which was in their holiday card for 1998.

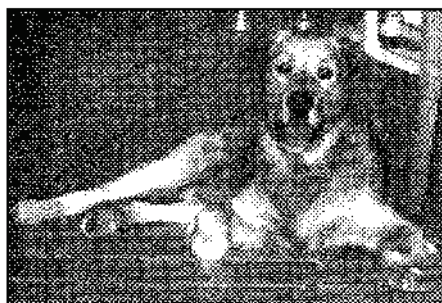


Daisy

Nancy Spears wrote: "Dusty came into Rescue at 7 mos. He was tried out to be a service dog and flunked. He had another owner who kept him outside and he was allergic to fleas. They couldn't afford treatment. We are his 4th family and have had him for 3 1/2 years." Dusty had his 7th birthday on October 29.



Dusty



Cy in his new home

Happy boy! Cy, formerly Dreamer, is happy as a clam in his new home with Anne Marie and Tony R. He's come a long way since being found wandering the streets of Tampa. His mom says Cy is doing great in his obedience classes. Good boy, Cy!

Yummy! Maggie Mac helps herself to an early Christmas present from under Grandma's tree.



Maggie Mac



Splash, one of Isabelle's puppies

We wish all of our GRRMF goldens and their families a very happy and safe holiday season.



Hearts of Gold

by Betty Wyatt, GRRMF Adoption Coordinator

M y very favorite holiday, Thanksgiving, is approaching.

As I sit here at my desk, collecting thoughts, I review the year and express gratitude that under the GRRMF Board of Director's guidance, we made great strides in rescue this year.

To begin the year, we received a grant from the Golden Retriever Club of America that enabled us to forge ahead administratively and purchase some much needed supplies and equipment. The grant helped us upgrade our newsletter and funded three mailings to Florida veterinarians.

It also funded preparation of an information packet to prospective golden retriever owners, which is offered in the classifieds every weekend. If readers follow our guidance, perhaps their new puppy will not become one of the 70 percent that will not live out its life with the original owner.

We also refined our Web page, www.grrmf.org, and our educational committee increased visibility with table setups almost every weekend at local businesses. With our new visibility, which included a spot on the local Fox station – WOFL-TV 35 – requests for adoptions have increased as well as the need to help displaced dogs. The workload is at a nearly unmanageable level for our small group.

Many of the dogs we have placed in loving and hopefully permanent homes this year are excelling in obedience classes, often taking first place at graduations. More dogs than ever are doing pet therapy work with their owners, making a huge difference in the lives of others. Isn't that wonderful?

We are appreciative of the donations that have come in this year to support the 120 dogs received into our program so far our highest number for any year yet.

Unfortunately, we still cannot begin to admit all the needy goldens we are called about. Today is Wednesday, and I have already received requests to take in eight dogs since Monday. There is no available space for them! We triage and do the best we can to save the most needy. For example, because of the overpopulation of our breed, unsprayed females are at the top of the list.

The more we can take into our program, the less goldens that can go on to produce even more unwanted puppies.

Speaking of puppies ... this has been the year of puppies for us. We received many calls from people who could not find homes for their puppies. Others were in such a dire financial situation that they couldn't afford to care for the puppies their adult dogs produced. This disturbing trend of puppies in rescue is an indication of how overbred golden retrievers are in our state – an abundance of supply, too little demand.

I am sometimes asked how we can be so patient with people we encounter who want to turn in dogs. The answer is very simple. We are here to help the dogs – but also to educate. It is not in anybody's best interest for us to judge others.

Just as the need for more goldens to be admitted into rescue has increased, it will be necessary for me to take a break from fostering after the holidays. After eight years of having a house full of dogs most of the time, I'll be visiting family up north and spending more time with my own dogs. An increase in foster homes is essential, and the need to build a home for goldens cannot be stressed enough. Unless we accomplish these goals, you will likely see a decline in the number of dogs we save next year due to limited foster space.

The only way we can accommodate dogs in need is to increase our number of foster homes AND build a home for goldens. The home will not take the place of good foster homes, which are needed to assess the dogs and teach them basic behavioral skills. But it will enable us to provide temporary shelter until foster space is available. And it will provide a place for dogs who come into our program and are unable to be adopted out – such as old goldens who deserve to live out their remaining few years in peace.

Please consider helping us with our dream. If you are not in a position to help us financially, perhaps you can give us some ideas for fundraisers or consider fostering a dog from time to time. Please call our hotline at (407) 332-2840 and leave a message on line 4 if you are interested.

I want to thank everyone who has assisted our adoption team this year – fosters, generous contributors, veterinarians,

transporters, training facilities that provide discounts to our dogs, home visit volunteers, our newsletter team, and our education team members.

We appreciate our animal shelters, which are marvelous about letting us know when a golden comes in so we can refer someone in their area to adopt the dog. We appreciate our president, Barbara Durham, who is a jack of all trades and can fill in for any of us on the various committees as needed.

All the GRRMF board members work hard to meet our goals. You have helped make my job a piece of cake. Thank you. My very best wishes for a happy holiday season for you and your family, both human and canine, as we take on even greater challenges next year.

– Betty



Rescue Wish List

- Digital camera (for adoptee photos)
- Veterinary supplies
- Large dog crates
- Postage stamps
- Large Nylabones
- Small desktop copy machine
- Monetary donations
- Volunteer workers and leaders
- Raffle items for the Annual Rescue Reunion
- Computer and fax machine

And... we wish for a happy holiday and prosperous New Year for all of our supporters!





recent adoptions



By now almost everyone knows the story of **Bayou**, the pretty boy from Louisiana who was destined to be bait for fighting dogs until a Good Samaritan rescued him. Many people assisted in Bayou's transfer to Orlando, and all appreciated his affectionate and gentle nature. He was one of the canine stars when Fox Channel 35 did a story on rescue in October. Two weeks later, the Fox reporter, Donald J., and his wife, Janice, added Bayou to their canine and feline family. What a smart move on their part! Bayou is a perfect playmate and companion for their other dog, Marley. They are always doing something together, even sleeping side by side. A quick learner, Bayou begins formal obedience training soon at Best Paw Forward in Sanford.



Chance and his new family

her assistance in helping this nice family adjust to a new dog.

Dennis came into rescue the week-end of Hurricane Dennis. A cute little 10-week-old, he was a gift from a young woman (she paid \$600 for him) to her father. The problem was her dad lived in an apartment that would not allow large dogs. Dennis is very bright and his new owners, Chris and Vicki M., have enrolled him in obedience classes, and he is doing well. They are a lovely family, and Dennis even gets along with their two cats.



Dennis, with Vicki and Chris

We received many inquiries about **Spirit**, our three-footed puppy from a puppy farm. He was adopted by Gregg C. and Tom E., who adopted Cody from GRRMF a while back. A very tolerant Cody allows Spirit to swing on his tail and chase him through the yard. Spirit has not made up his mind about whether he likes the prosthesis his owners got for his stump, which resulted from a rat eating off his foot when he was just born. He recently graduated top in his obedience class. Spirit was the only puppy who did all nine commands correctly and, as a reward, earned nine dog biscuits!

Tyler, 10 months, began life the hard way. He was tied to a stake, except once a day he was turned loose to run the streets. Neighborhood children threw firecrackers at him, but he tolerated the children just

fine. Andrew P. a young boy, sent in an application. Santa brought him a Christmas golden puppy last year, but she died at the age of 10 months of cancer. This heartbroken little boy saved his allowance for another golden. Tyler was a perfect match for him, and he tells us Tyler, whom he calls Chance, is a great ballplayer.

Cody was rescued from a bad situation by referral. He was adopted by Cathy G., and this skinny puppy is now gaining weight and enjoying life.

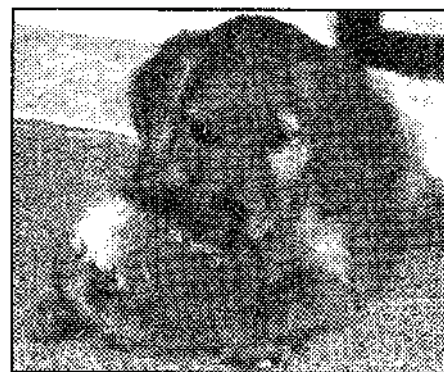
Ariel was rescued from a garage. A young, laid back female, she quickly felt at home with Drew V. and his golden, Viva. They love her.

Missy, 10+ years old, was rescued from Animal Control by a Good Samaritan. She mostly liked to lie around, until her new owners Mary Louise and Todd R. adopted her. They thought she could be a friend for their aged cocker spaniel, whose health had declined following the death of his older cocker brother. Missy's adoption brought the cocker out of his depression, and after Missy was diagnosed with a low thyroid condition and underwent treatment, she became more energetic and playful. This family is happy once again.



Missy and her new family

Isabelle, who gave birth to 10 golden puppies after coming into our program, is now in a fantastic and well-deserved new home. Her new owners previously adopted a dog named Ben from us, and we knew she would have it made if she went to live with them.



Isabelle's puppies were also quickly adopted. Tom and Joanne Hell are to be commended for the beautiful socialized puppies that now are in fantastic homes: **TJ** to Jennifer H.; **Amber** to Jay and Linda S.; **Chase**, now **Dakota**, to Bill and

Sweet little Angel (formerly Betty) is thanking her lucky stars this Christmas that she and her littermates were rescued by GRRMF. Her wish for Santa is that she eventually grows into the great new toys her new owners, Jim and Kathy C., provide and that she'll get to see her mom, Isabelle, at the Annual Rescue Reunion in April.

continued on page 7



Recent Adoptions, continued from page 6

Kay K.; **Star** to Marcia M.; **Betty**, now **Angel**, to Jim and Kathy C.; **Savvy** to Dennis and Norine G.; **Splash** to Robert and Kimberly B.; **Robin** to Varsha D.; **Lizzy** to Amy and Mike; **Lil Joe** to John F. We hope everyone who adopted these special puppies will love and care for them all their lives. The team of volunteers who helped care for Isabelle and the puppies especially hope that all will be sure to attend the Annual Rescue Reunion in the spring so we can see how they are doing! (Hint, hint!)

Romeo II, a senior golden, was rescued from an animal shelter by Robin Williams. With a wonderful, loving disposition, Romeo was adopted by Kathy and Edger A., along with their two sweet daughters. Ava, an angelic child, is disabled. The first night Romeo was with them, he lay down with her on the floor, curled up under her chin and gave her kisses. Ava loves her new best doggie pal.

Donna J was looking for a new dog following the death of her old one. She has one young golden now who is doing pet therapy work.

Scooter immediately took to Donna when she came to visit and it seems to be a great match. When she brought him home, he immediately began to play with Brandy and kissed the cat but didn't know what to make of her horse. He probably decided it was just a big dog, because 5 minutes after being startled by it he paid no attention to it. Scooter, now Zachary, begins obedience classes soon.

Copper, a large, magnificent male, came back into rescue recently when he snapped at a toddler who had harassed him all week and then tried to remove a toy from his mouth. He was adopted by Joseph and Ada V., who have no children or grandchildren. Like some others we know, they seem to prefer the company of dogs!

Gentle **Ben** was taken out of a shelter by Robin Williams. After heartworm treatment, he was adopted by Robert and Joanne S. They already have one golden, Forbes, who is a therapy dog, and Ben will be joining Bob and Forbes as they enhance the lives of others in a facility.

Trevor was turned in when his former family moved to a new home and decided he wasn't welcome inside. He was an absolutely beautiful golden of 7 years with the gait of a show dog. He also was very energetic and needed a home where his humans would be willing to give him the exercise he needed. Daniel and Charlene M. took one look and decided Trevor was the dog for them. He loves to play Frisbee, and when his new owners took him to PetsMart to buy supplies, he walked past every toy until he came to the Frisbees. He selected his favorite and

proudly paraded through store with his very own treasure. Now he gets two Frisbee games a day. It doesn't take much to make this boy happy.

Charlie Boy was seen wandering through a flea market in Ocala for two weeks before a Good Samaritan decided she could leave him there no longer. His paws were raw from walking on the pavement, and he was very hungry. When he was turned into rescue, Dawn A. offered to foster him. He was treated for heartworms and finally given clear bill of health. Now Dawn & Walter have adopted him. He is so loved!



Anastasia, Frank and Sharon

Anastasia is just as regal looking as her

name sounds. She was purchased for breeding purposes, and when her owner lost his job and couldn't afford food, he turned her into rescue. She was adopted by Frank & Sharon C., and they are having a good time together. She even gets to sleep with Frank. What a treat for this former backyard puppy!

Jordan came from the same puppy farm that produced Spirit, Opal and Bradley. His skin was in terrible condition, but with the help of special shampoos, nutritious food and Missing Link supplement, he improved. Jordan has a beautiful head (he is the grandson of a best in show champion) and his personality and temperament are perfect. He loves all people and we love him. When Susan Z. met him, it was love at first sight for both of them, and now he has his permanent home with someone who will continue taking care of his skin and give him the love he deserves.



Jordan and Susan

Ritz was last year's Christmas puppy. When he grew up, he was sent to the back yard where he often escaped. Luckily for Ritz, his people finally gave him up. He was adopted by Janet and Thomas and their two teenagers, who were desperate for a golden after their older dog died recently. Janet said she just had to have a tail wagger meet her at the front door with a toy in his mouth. Ritz can do that just fine! The first gift he received in his new home was a Christmas stocking.

Phoenix was found wandering the streets with an electronic collar embedded in his neck. Phoenix was fostered by the Powerhouse family, who coordinated his treatment for heartworms. They also helped him learn how to be loved. His good fortune continues now that he has been adopted by Glen and Barbara P. He has filled a real need in their lives.

Sport, rescued by Robin Williams, has found a wonderful home with Janice H., who loves him dearly and reports he is adjusting well to his new surroundings. He is so sweet, and his crooked smile is abundant nowadays as he appreciates the love he is getting from his new home.

A reminder to all adoption families: Please remember that you are obligated to follow the terms of the adoption contract you signed with GRRMF. If at any time and for any reason you cannot keep a dog you adopted from us, it must be returned to our organization.



We will acknowledge GRRMF donors, volunteers, sponsors and fosters in our next regular issue. GRRMF volunteers are taking a holiday break, hence our shortened December issue. Please be assured we appreciate all your support. Look for your names in the next issue.





Golden Retriever Rescue of Mid-Florida, Inc.
P.O. Box 1449
Goldenrod, FL 32733

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 310
GOLDENROD, FL 32733

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Golden Retriever Rescue of Mid-Florida Membership Application

ALL memberships/donations are tax-deductible.

Name: _____ Address: _____
City/State/Zip _____ Phone: _____ e-mail: _____

Membership

All levels of membership include a subscription to the "Hearts of Gold" newsletter.

Please check one:

- ☐ General Membership S20 ☐ Voting Membership S20 (must volunteer minimum of 20 hours/year to GRRMF)
☐ Sponsorship S100 (for helping a dog in need – you receive recognition in the newsletter and a story of your dog)
☐ Gift Membership S20 for: Name _____ Address _____

Donation

- ☐ \$_____ to be used for general veterinary care for rescue dogs.
☐ \$_____ to the Woody Fund for care of goldens with difficult medical problems.
☐ \$_____ to the Capital Campaign for a Home for Goldens.
☐ \$_____ for this purpose: _____
☐ \$_____ in memory of _____. Send acknowledgment to: _____
☐ \$_____ in honor of _____

Mail form to: GRRMF, P.O. Box 1449, Goldenrod, FL 32733