



HEARTS OF GOLD

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

Volume 4, Issue 1

Spring 2001

President's Message

by Barbara Durham

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Those of you that contributed to our boarding fund are directly responsible for at least 30 of those dogs who were saved. Through your donations we were able to give them safe haven in commercial boarding facilities until a foster home was available. *You were responsible for saving these lives!*

We also spent a lot of effort working on procedures and staffing. One of my challenges as president has been to take the

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IT'S REUNION TIME!

**GRRMF's 9th Annual Rescue Reunion
Sunday, March 25**

This is our favorite event of the year! Come join fellow golden owners for a wonderful picnic – your goldens are invited, too!

- Beautiful rural setting on several acres of private property in Kissimmee. Easy access from Florida's Turnpike.
- Swimming, agility courses and lots of other activities your dog will love!
- Lots and lots of golden retrievers and their human friends!
- Meet the volunteers responsible for rescuing more than 800 goldens to date.
- Raffles, door prizes, treats and gifts for rescue dogs.
- Come meet new friends with a common interest – goldens!

**DON'T MISS IT!
Details on Page 4**

It's Okay to Cry

This issue, GRRMF has included a wonderful article on a difficult subject. Please take the time to read this helpful and informative article on Page 5. You'll be glad you did, and some day, the information might help you get through the difficult decision of saying goodbye to your best friend. And remember ... *it's okay to cry.*

Golden Retriever Rescue of Mid-Florida
An All-Volunteer, Nonprofit 501(c) 3 Corporation
• Education • Intervention • Spay/Neuter • Adoption

P.O. Box 1449
Goldenrod, FL 32733-1449
For info call: (407) 332-2840
E-mail: info@grrmf.org

All Donations are Tax-Deductible
Visit GRRMF on the Web: www.grrmf.org
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Backyard Safety

by Barbara Durham, President, GRRMF

How safe is your backyard? Have you ever considered the dangers that lurk when leaving your dog unsupervised outside?

Through our adoption screening criteria, GRRMF turns down a lot of well-meaning people who leave their dogs in the yard when they are away from home or provide free access to the backyard through a doggie door. We also turn them down if the dog might be left in the backyard for long periods of time when the owner is home.

Why this policy? Call it years of lessons learned. Goldens are sporting dogs and need close supervision when outside – even in a fenced area. We do not budge on this issue, because the safety and well-being of our goldens is at stake. Too much love and money (our donors') are invested in these dogs to put them at risk. Also, many of our rescues have acquired some bad habits – like fence jumping – so they are especially at risk if unsupervised.

At first, we weren't strict on this issue, but we soon learned. We've had rescue dogs turned back in after they escaped their yards and were found running loose. We've lost dogs who ate something poisonous (remember the recent article on sago palms?) or were bitten by snakes while left alone in the backyard.

We also get a lot of calls via the GRRMF hotline for "replacement dogs." These prospective adopters are looking to replace a dog who dug out of the backyard, leaped over a fence, escaped via an insecurely latched gate or was stolen.

Risky Business

Consider the risks:

- Goldens are strong dogs who can dig vigorously, and with those webbed feet they are quite the dirt movers. Think again if you trust your dog not to dig under your fence.
- Type of fencing also is an issue. A 4-foot fence is not very secure for containing a golden, unless the dog is old and less physically fit. Horse fencing – agricultural-type fencing with wire attached to poles every 8 feet or so – also is inadequate. A typical golden can escape this type of enclosure in less than 5 minutes through a combination of digging and bending the wire. Dogs should be supervised at all times with this type of fencing. The best type of fencing is wood stockade, at least 6 feet tall.
- Goldens are notorious for chewing – and possibly eating – things they're not supposed to. There are many hazards out there – poisonous plants, pesticides, toys and other articles left on the ground. You may have some in your yard that you're not even aware of.
- What would your golden do if confronted by a poisonous snake? A raccoon? A feral cat? All of these can potentially injure or even kill your dog.

Dogs are not humans

People tend to attribute human qualities to their dogs. "My dog would never leave the yard," or "I trust my dog" are common statements we hear from potential adopters. When I hear this, I wish that for one second these people could have GRRMF's experience and knowledge. By the time you've rescued more than 800 dogs, you've seen it all.

I can't tell you how many calls we've gotten from people sobbing and heart-broken over a dog that has escaped. They almost always say, "He's NEVER done anything like that before" ... and they often believe it is the dog's fault that something bad has happened.

Dogs are not humans. They don't act based on wisdom and logic – they follow their instincts. And their instincts are to dig, run, eat and chase. It is wrong to expect a dog to show good judgment. That's *your* job as caretaker. It is your responsibility – and yours alone – to keep your dogs safe.

Theft rings

There's another, more sinister reason never to let your dog be outside unsupervised: THEFT! You may have heard the recent reports about pit bull dog-fighting rings in Seminole and Orange counties. The people who run these operations typically use docile dogs as "fight bait" to give the pit bulls in training the taste of blood. Where do you think they get them?

Remember when I said we've seen it all? A year or so ago we rescued **Bayou**, a lovely young golden from

Louisiana. Bayou was going to be fight bait for a pit bull ring. Luckily, he was seized from the property and a Good Samaritan got him to us. Can you imagine your sweet golden being ripped to shreds by vicious dogs? My **Rocky** would just stand there and be



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VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

... Behind the Scenes with Cindy Andrews

Many don't realize the work that goes on behind the scenes in a rescue operation such as *Golden Retriever Rescue of Mid-Florida*.

Cindy Andrews is a prime example. As "applications coordinator," Cindy reviews the hundreds of adoption applications received by GRRMF each year and routes them accordingly – either for a home visit, a follow-up call to get clarification on any questions or, in some cases, a written rejection notice to the applicant.

Cindy learned about GRRMF in 1997, when she and her husband, Sandy, adopted their first golden retriever, **Cooper**. When she retired last year from a full-time management career, Cindy decided she would "only do the things I truly love."

"Cindy has been a godsend to our organization," says GRRMF President Barbara Durham. "She has one of the toughest jobs in rescue. I know, because I've done it. It's relentless – those applications never stop coming. No sooner do you get done with a stack, then there are 10 more waiting at the post office. Cindy has transformed our process so it is very timely and professional. She has exceeded my expectations of what a new volunteer could accomplish in taking on this difficult task. In fact, I always tell her she is much better at it than I ever was!"

"Volunteering for GRRMF is just the right thing to do," Cindy says. "When I review Betty's monthly adoption report, it's very rewarding to know I'm part of the team that helps save these incredible dogs."

The Andrews enjoy every minute with Cooper, a former backyard dog with "an abundance of energy," Cindy says.

"He was a wild guy for the first few months and managed to cause considerable damage to our brand-new home. It was my fault – I just couldn't bear to confine him in a crate. I thought he would hate it. Ha! Two French doors and a large section of carpet later, I wisened up to the benefits of crate training," she says.

Now 6 years old, Cooper finally overcame his separation anxiety, and the crate has long since been retired. Cindy

manages his energy level through ongoing obedience and agility training at Best Paw Forward in Sanford.

Clearly, Cooper has come a long way since his days of being tied to a tree, unloved and neglected. Last year, he got a new sport utility vehicle so he would be more comfortable on family vacations. He enjoys periodical trips to Blowing Rock, N.C., and next summer he's going to Colorado. Cooper also gets along just fine with the two cats who share his home.

Cindy says she has learned a lot, too. "Volunteering has given me a chance to meet some wonderful people. This organization has a superb leadership team and many sincere, dedicated individuals who are a delight to work with."



Cindy and Cooper

YOU ARE INVITED!

9th Annual Golden Retriever Rescue of Mid-Florida

RESCUE REUNION ☆

When: Sunday, March 25, 10:00 am

Where: 3056 Partin Settlement Road, Kissimmee, Florida

Who: GRRMF members/supporters and their goldens.
All rescues and non-rescued goldens are invited!
(Friendly dogs only, please)

*YOU WILL NOT WANT TO MISS
THIS SPECIAL EVENT!
GOLDEN RETRIEVERS AS FAR AS THE EYE CAN SEE!
THE MOST BEAUTIFUL SIGHT ON EARTH!*

Many special activities planned for dogs and humans!

- Raffle and Silent Auction
- Golden Goods Booth
- Swimming in Alligator-Free Pond
- Informative Talks and Demonstrations
- Grooming Table for Ears and Feet
- Agility Equipment to Enjoy
- And More!

BRING A PICNIC LUNCH –

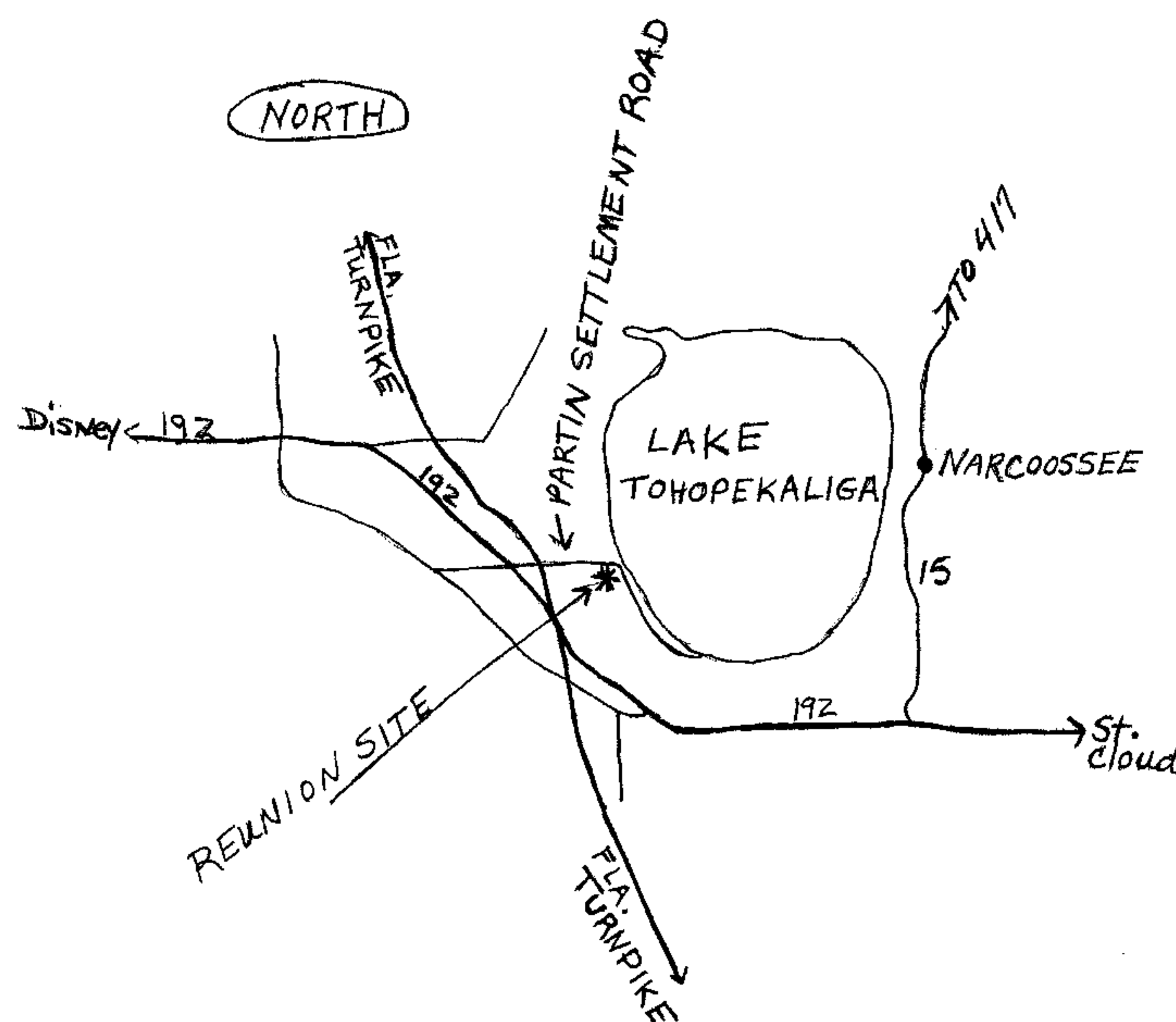
Drinks and sweets will be available for a small donation.

Each official GRRMF Rescue Golden will receive an exciting goodie bag (while supplies last).

Questions? Call the Hotline: (407) 332-2840, mailbox #4
Or e-mail: info@grrmf.org

Golden Goods: We'll have a full selection of golden retriever-related merchandise. We have many new items, so come ready to shop and support rescue with your purchases. Cash or checks accepted. **100% of profits go toward saving goldens!**

What to bring: You, your dog (on leash, of course), your lunch, lawn chairs or blanket to sit on, water for your dog and a crate if your dog would enjoy a "time out" during the day. Also, if your dog likes to swim, towels and flexi-leads are recommended. There are many large oak trees on the property, but you may want sunblock and a hat. Be sure to wear comfortable shoes!



Directions:

Reunion location: 3056 Partin Settlement Road, off Highway 192 in Kissimmee.

Easily accessible from all directions:

From the north – From the FL Turnpike, take Exit 244, then turn left on Hwy. 192/441. Go 1/2 mile and turn left on Partin Settlement Road. One mile down, look for #3056 on the right.

From the east – Take Hwy. 192 through St. Cloud and turn right on Partin Settlement Road.

From the west – Either take the Florida Turnpike or Hwy. 192, turn left on Partin Settlement Road.

**Questions? Call the hotline: (407) 332-2840
mailbox #4, or e-mail: info@grrmf.org**

It's Okay to Cry . . .

The Difficult Decision to End the Suffering

by Pat Miller

I looked up from the front-office switchboard just as the young woman stumbled through the front door. She stood blinded by her tears in the middle of the shelter lobby, immobilized by her distress. I quickly slipped from behind the counter and approached her.

"Can I help you?" I asked kindly, suspecting what she was about to say.

Instead of speaking, the woman thrust her hand forward. I removed the slip of paper from her clenched fingers and read it silently. "I have to put my dog Molly to sleep," she had written. "I knew I wouldn't be able to talk when I got here, so I wrote this note."

Tears welled in my eyes. I reached out to touch her shoulder in sympathy and she flung her arms around my neck, sobbing. "It's okay to cry," I reassured her. I hugged her for a long

have had such a long life with you. Still, it's never long enough ...) Why does she need to be euthanized? (Cancer, I'm so sorry ...)

considered the most humane by the American Veterinary Medical Association and all major animal-protection groups. It is accomplished by

You are doing the last kind thing for him after a lifetime of loving kindness. You are giving him the privilege of a good death.

I worked at the Marin Humane Society for 20 years. Almost daily, owners brought their old, ill, injured and infirm dogs to the shelter so we could end their pets' suffering. It never got easier. Molly and her owner came to the shelter in the last month of my employment there. The woman's pain pierced my heart just as sharply as the pain of the first owner whose request for euthanasia I had heard 20 years before.

injecting an overdose of an anesthesia drug – sodium pentobarbital – into the animal's vein or, in some cases, the abdominal cavity.

After the drug has been administered, the animal lapses into unconsciousness within seconds, and death follows shortly afterward. (It takes a little longer if the injection is done abdominally instead of intravenously.)

If you have ever been anesthetized for surgery, you know what an animal experiences during euthanasia: One moment you are conscious, and the doctor is telling you to count backwards from 100 – and then you're out. The difference, of course, is that you wake up in the recovery room later, remembering nothing of what happened during the relatively short time you were unconscious.

We use euphemisms for the act of ending our pets' lives, because we don't want to say that we killed them. We "put them to sleep." We "send them to Rainbow Bridge." We "lay them to rest." But, in fact, we *aren't* killing them.

Webster's dictionary defines *killing* as "depriving of life." When it's time for your dog to die because of old age, untreatable disease, injury or even serious behavioral problems, you aren't

Anyone who has ever had to make that incredibly difficult decision to end a canine companion's life knows how all-consuming the grief can be – how deeply it penetrates your soul, and how close to the surface the pain lingers, even years after the loss.

moment, then, with my arm still around her shoulders, I gently guided her to a small room just off the lobby and sat next to her. With as much compassion as possible, tears spilling down my cheeks, too, I asked her the questions that had to be answered, and filled out the necessary form. What kind of dog was Molly? (Oh, Pomeranians are wonderful dogs, I have one myself. I know how hard this must be for you ...) How old is she? (Eighteen years? How lucky she is to

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The Last Kind Thing

Euthanasia literally means "good death," from the Greek words *eu* ("good") and *thanatos* ("death"). Euthanasia by injection is the method

"A dog is the only thing on earth that loves you more than he loves himself."

Josh Billings

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It's Okay to Cry, from page 5

depriving him of life as much as you are giving him a gift. You are relieving his suffering and easing a passage that every living creature will eventually and inevitably face.

You are doing the last kind thing for him after a lifetime of loving kindness. You are giving him the privilege of a good death. Euthanasia – it's a good word.

Quality of Life

There are a number of factors that enter into the decision to euthanize your dog, but they all relate to quality of life. Quality is a very subjective measure, and one that you, as the person closest to the dog, will know better than anyone else, as long as you can be honest with yourself. As a culture, we tend to be in denial about death – driven to prolong life at any cost, even at the price of pain and suffering. We have made great advances in medicine, so we are capable of prolonging life far beyond what was once imaginable. The fact that we *can* do it, however, doesn't always mean we *should*.

When you are contemplating euthanasia, be honest with yourself. Is Molly still enjoying life? Can she still do the things she loves to do – like accompanying you on walks, sleeping on your bed, going for rides in the car? If she is in so much pain that she can't walk comfortably, or if her incontinence requires that she stay outdoors although she has been a house dog all her life, she will be confused and unhappy about the changes in her routines. An occasional bad day may not mean that her time has come, but if the bad days outnumber the good and the quality of her life is clearly deteriorating, you may be acting more in your

own interests than hers by keeping her alive.

The quality of *your* life is, of course, an important consideration, too. The cost of some new treatments can be steep. Although it might be worth it to you to go into debt to pay for treatment that will improve the quality of your dog's life for years to come, it may not be reasonable to pay

"Hallowed Be Thy Name"

*Do not stand at my grave and weep,
I am not there, I do not sleep,
I am a thousand winds that blow,
I am the diamond glints in the snow,
I am the gentle autumn's rain,
When you awaken in the
morning's hush,
I am the swift uplifting rush
Of quiet birds in circled flight,
I am the soft stars that shine at night.
Do not stand at my grave and cry,
I am NOT there, I did not die.*

thousands of dollars for therapy that will give Molly only a few more months, under increasingly difficult conditions.

If you can afford it and Molly is comfortable during the course of treatment, by all means, do everything you can for her. If you can't, or if Molly is suffering, then euthanasia is the right decision. It's your choice, however. It is easy to feel guilty about not spending every last dime you have to keep her alive, but if doing so means neglecting your own needs or those of your family members – humans and nonhuman – then it is appropriate to let Molly go sooner, rather than a little later.

Even a decision to euthanize a dog for behavioral problems is a quality-of-life choice. The two most common behavior challenges that lead to

euthanasia are aggression and separation anxiety. Both can sometimes be resolved through appropriate behavior-modification programs with a veterinary behaviorist or skilled behavior consultant. The programs can be long-term and costly but are often – although not always – successful. If you have the resources, by all means pursue behavior modification. If you don't you may be putting the safety of family members and friends at risk, or allowing your house to be systematically destroyed. Your quality of life is deteriorating, and so is your dog's.

A dog with an aggression problem is frequently stressed beyond his level of tolerance, so he snaps – quite literally. Aggressive dogs tend to get banished to solitary confinement so their owners don't risk the moral and legal consequences of having their dogs bite someone.

Dogs are pack animals; the more your dog is isolated from you and the rest of your family pack, the lonelier and more stressed he is likely to become. Fifteen years on a chain or in a pen in the backyard is not quality of life.

Dogs with separation anxiety are extremely stressed anytime they are left alone. Imagine having such an overwhelming panic attack that you destroy things and even mutilate yourself. Not quality of life.

If behavior modification combined with some of the new drugs available are not effective, and you can't find a new home for your dog or an alternative to leaving him alone such as doggie daycare, euthanasia may be the only reasonable way to save you and your dog from spending the next 15 years in a constant state of stress.

Knowing When

When you know in your heart that it is time for euthanasia, don't let anyone

Continued on page 8

*"You think dogs will not be in heaven? I tell you, they will be there long before any of us."
Robert Louis Stevenson*

Capital Campaign

Progress Report

GRRMF's Capital Campaign to build a freestanding shelter is moving forward, with plans continuing into the New Year and beyond.

2000 Recap

- Marcia McGovern, GRRMF volunteer and owner of two rescued goldens – Rascal and Clover – takes the reigns as Capital Campaign coordinator.
- The “Golden Pathways to New Beginnings” fund-raising effort is started. The “pathway” will contain inscribed bricks that line the walkway into the new facility. Inscribed bricks are available for \$100 each, and hundreds have already been sold. Most members have chosen to memorialize or honor beloved goldens or family members. Order forms are still available – see contact information below.
- A Silent Auction at the Annual Rescue Reunion in March nets more than \$1,000 toward the campaign.
- GRRMF holds a giant garage sale in May, with items donated from members and others. More than \$1,000 is raised.
- The Fall Diamond Bracelet Raffle is a great success, raising more than \$6,300 for the campaign.
- GRRMF goes into the Christmas tree decorating business, placing several trees in local veterinarian offices with handmade golden retriever ornaments patrons can “purchase” for various amounts.
- Planning for the new facility begins. The GRRMF Board hopes to build a home-like facility, with individual pet “apartments” rather than bare kennels. The concept has proven very successful in numerous shelter organizations, such as the San Francisco SPCA's “Maddie's Adoption Center” (for a virtual tour, log on to www.sfspca.org). Preliminary plans are drawn, and a Request for Proposal is sent to several architectural firms to draw up detailed blueprints.

Looking Ahead in 2001

- A Feasibility Study is planned for first quarter. This packet of information will educate prospective donors – specifically corporations and other large donors – about GRRMF. It also queries them on whether they would be interested in participating as a “cornerstone” donor.
- Once an architectural firm is selected, the team will begin drawing up detailed plans. Plans will be scalable –

so GRRMF can build the facility in phases.

- With the help of other volunteers, Marcia plans to submit several grant proposals over the course of the year to secure additional funding for the facility.
- GRRMF currently is researching suitable sites in the Orlando area. Ideally, the property will be several acres in a rural setting, preferably with an existing house that can be converted into a caretaker residence.
- A repeat of the Silent Auction is planned for the Annual Rescue Reunion March 25.

Watch the newsletter for future updates, as GRRMF's Capital Campaign gets into full swing this year!

Marcia is always looking for volunteers. For more information or to volunteer, contact the Hotline: (407) 332-2840, Option 4, visit the Web site: grrmf.org, or e-mail: capital@grrmf.org. As always, all donations to GRRMF are tax-deductible. ♥ ♥ ♥

2001 Membership Drive is Under Way! **Help us save even more precious "gold" this year**

Your \$25 annual membership is tax-deductible and will ensure you continue to receive this informative newsletter. And you'll have the added satisfaction of knowing that an unwanted, sick or abused golden will be helped through your donation.

Renewal notices were mailed in January. Please return yours today, or simply complete and mail the form on the back page of this issue of *Hearts of Gold*.

We can't do it without you! Memberships provide a significant portion of our revenue, and we will not survive without your support. Our members are the reason we're able to save all these goldens:

Dogs Saved by GRRMF

1991-1992	29
1993	68
1994	69
1995	65
1996	82
1997	74
1998	110
1999	135
2000	180

It's Okay to Cry, from page 6

talk you out of it. If your veterinarian tells you he can keep Molly alive for three more weeks with a new treatment, but your resources are stretched thin and you have already mentally prepared yourself for her death, you don't have to succumb to the "life at any cost" temptation.

Your best friend may tell you that Molly doesn't look so bad, but follow your own instincts. She doesn't know Molly like you do. She may not see how depressed Molly is, or understand how humiliated Molly feels when she soils herself. You know what's right for your dog.

Personally, I make the decision when I know that the end is inevitable, but when my dog is still enjoying life. I want her last days to be good ones. When I see the bad days starting to outnumber the good, I try to choose a good day for her final one, so that in my last memories of her, she still has some wag in her tail and sparkle in her eye.

watching their dogs die – that their very presence will be upsetting for their dogs at a time when they want to calm and comfort them. The right choice is the choice that is right for you.

Discuss the procedure with your veterinarian long before the time is near, when you are able to be somewhat less emotional about it. Ask if he will let you be present. If he won't, and it's important to you to be there, ask him to refer you to someone who will allow you to attend.

Some veterinarians will euthanize your dog for you at your home – a comforting choice, especially if Molly isn't fond of the vet's office. If you choose this approach, you won't have to worry about driving home in a distraught frame of mind, and Molly can die in the comfort of her favorite room or her own bed.

If you take her to the vet's office or an animal shelter, take along her bed or a favorite blanket. That way, even if you don't stay with her, she will have

"He is your friend, your partner, your defender, your dog. You are his life, his love, his leader. He will be yours, faithful and true, to the last beat of his heart. You owe it to him to be worthy of such devotion."

— Unknown

anyone mentions the word "chamber," go elsewhere.

If you choose to be present, a technician or veterinarian should explain in detail what you can expect: that death will come fairly quickly once the solution is injected; that Molly may have involuntary muscle reactions after she is unconscious, including some vocalization such as crying or howling and that this does not mean she is in pain; and that she may void her bladder or bowels.

If you're not going to be present, make sure the euthanasia will occur as soon as possible after you leave. You don't want her left alone in a cage all day, or longer.

Wherever and however you decide to proceed, the facility's staff should take the time to explain to you what will happen. If you get the explanations in advance, you will probably be in a better frame of mind to hear and understand.

When the dreaded time draws near, be kind to yourself. Take some time off from work. Surround yourself with people who understand and support your decision. Or spend some time alone, if that feels better to you.

Do one special last thing with your dog – a short walk to a favorite shady tree. A picnic. Give her a long massage, handfuls of her favorite treats. Do whatever special things the two of you like to share the most. Take the time to say goodbye in a way that you would like to remember.

Take the time to say goodbye in a way that you would like to remember.

Be Kind to Yourself

Weeks, or even months prior to Molly's last days, begin to make your plans. As difficult as it is to do, it's even more difficult when her death is imminent.

Think about whether you want to be present during the procedure or not. I have tremendous respect for owners who want to be with their dogs until the last moment. It's not an easy thing to do, but I also feel that I don't want my animal companions dying in the company of relative strangers. I want to be there for them.

On the other hand, I also have great respect for owners who recognize that they can't deal with the trauma of

something nearby that is familiar to her.

Many shelters and vets offer an "owner present" euthanasia service. Some shelters are exceedingly skilled and compassionate; shelter euthanasia technicians sadly must euthanize animals in far greater numbers than most veterinary staff, so they have ample opportunity to be good at it.

Other shelters aren't well-equipped or may be the type of environment where you might not be comfortable taking your dog. Again, investigate well in advance, so you know whether it's an acceptable option for you. Of course, insist on euthanasia by injection – if

"You are his pal. That is enough for him."

Jerome K. Jerome

Continued on page 17

Hearts of Gold

by Betty Wyatt, GRRMF Adoption Coordinator

Saying Goodbye

As a registered nurse with 40 years experience, I've had my share of dealing with death. I've lost beloved patients, and I've spent time trying to help the grieving families. As a lifetime dog owner, I've also lost my share of canine family members – I currently have 20 boxes of ashes waiting to be buried under a bed of roses someday.

Does it ever get easier? Sadly, no. However, there are things you can do to help you get through the loss of a pet. For this column, as an accompaniment to the excellent article by Pat Miller, "It's Okay to Cry" (see page 5), I thought I would share some of my thoughts and

methods for preparing for and coping with the loss.

The impending death of a loyal pet who has taken over our hearts and our home can be a heartwrenching experience. For many of us, it is almost as tragic as losing a human family member. It is my hope that something I say will help you when it's time to say goodbye.

How will you know when it's time? It's a difficult decision – even for the most seasoned of us. Trust yourself – if you are intuitively in touch with your pet, you will know.

I will never knowingly allow my dog to be in pain, and of course, neither would you. Sometimes, dogs will pace and pant as they begin suffering, but goldens are stoic dogs who are dif-

ficult to read. It's hard to tell when they are in pain. However, it is my responsibility as a pet owner not to procrastinate when my dog tells me it's time – to do so is a violation of the dog's trust.

I always discuss the issue with my veterinarian, who offers guidance that I treasure as I prepare to give my dog perhaps the greatest gift: removing pain. This is one of the reasons why it is so important to find a veterinarian that you trust, and to build a relationship with him or her before this service is needed.

In rescue, we have to say goodbye to approximately five dogs a year due to physical or behavioral problems. Most of the time, I am with them when they die. To help me get through these times, I've created a ritual. Maybe

Continued on page 10

the rainbow bridge

Molson, a gorgeous and well-behaved golden, was adopted at the age of 7 by Leah Wright and her family. Molson was so wonderful, he inspired the Wrights to volunteer as fosters. GRRMF thanks the Wrights for giving Molson a home when he needed it most and for sharing their love with him for the past five years.

Pluto was rescued at 9 years of age from the humane society by Jim and Allola McGraw. This good-looking fellow fit right in with their family. His personality couldn't have been better. He became paralyzed in his final years, but Pluto still smiled and wagged his tail. Recently,



Pluto

when complications set in, the McGraws had to say goodbye to their big guy – in their home and in their arms. He was 15.

Pacer, formerly **Quattro**, was adopted by the Niedich family 7 years ago. He was a terribly frightened and timid little golden, and it took a family like Laura and Dick to bring him around. Pacer died too soon and is very much missed. We are grateful that he was able to spend his life with such a special family.



Pacer, in 1998

Hearts of Gold, from page 9

it will help you.

First, make the last day or days together special. Many years ago, I remember taking my first golden, Holly, for a stroll around a duck pond on our way to the veterinarian's office. It had been one of our favorite places, and I got to see her smile one last time. If the dog is physically able and has enjoyed playing ball, I always have a last game together. Sometimes, a velcro-type dog will just want to cuddle. If so, we do that ... just the two of us. He can have as much of my time as he wants, and I treasure it. I know the habits of my dogs, and it's easy to know what to do for them. I'm sure you feel the same about your dog.

Next, the dogs enjoy a specially prepared last meal together. Depending on the condition of the dog, I usually serve him a steak or hamburger. I have enough hamburger for all the dogs to share the meal, as we celebrate the life of the one who will soon transition.

I also snip a little fur and put it in a safe place. I'll attach it to the box of ashes later.

On the day of his death, I sometimes give the dog a mild tranquilizer. I want him to be relaxed, not nervous as he walks through the vet's office. If possible, I pay in advance for the procedure and make arrangements for disposal – I prefer a private cremation.

When we arrive, the staff escorts us to a private room and leaves us alone for 15 or 20 minutes. I like that. I talk to the dog about the wonderful times we've had together, and what a treasure he has been for me. I send some messages with him for Holly, Heather and other dogs who are waiting at the Rainbow Bridge. From the time we enter the room, I stroke him. I like to think that the last thing he feels is my touch ... and my love.

Finally, the procedure takes place. The transition is surprisingly fast and easy. I feel relieved that it's over and

that he is no longer in pain. My vet gives me permission to stay with the dog as long as I want – I am never rushed and am left alone with my dog.

Now, I am ready to cry ... and I do. When I come home, all the little rescues, so full of life, are pounding their crates with wagging tails, ready for a grand welcome. They remind me that I am still here for them and they are here for me ... and life goes on.

Next, if he has been my dog, I bring out the photo albums. Sometimes, I add some more photos and write some notes. I take this time to reflect on the life we had together. This is good closure for me.

I also send a donation to my favorite charity – GRRMF – in memory of my companion. I know he would enjoy knowing that another golden was helped in his name. Some people purchase a brick for our new facility and have the dog's name inscribed on it. Others plant a tree or create a "memory stone." All of these gestures bring a sense of permanence – now there is proof that your dog will live forever.

There is just one more point I want to make. Many people tell me they feel guilt after their pet dies. Did they euthanize him too soon, or not soon enough? Was there more they could have done for him, etc.

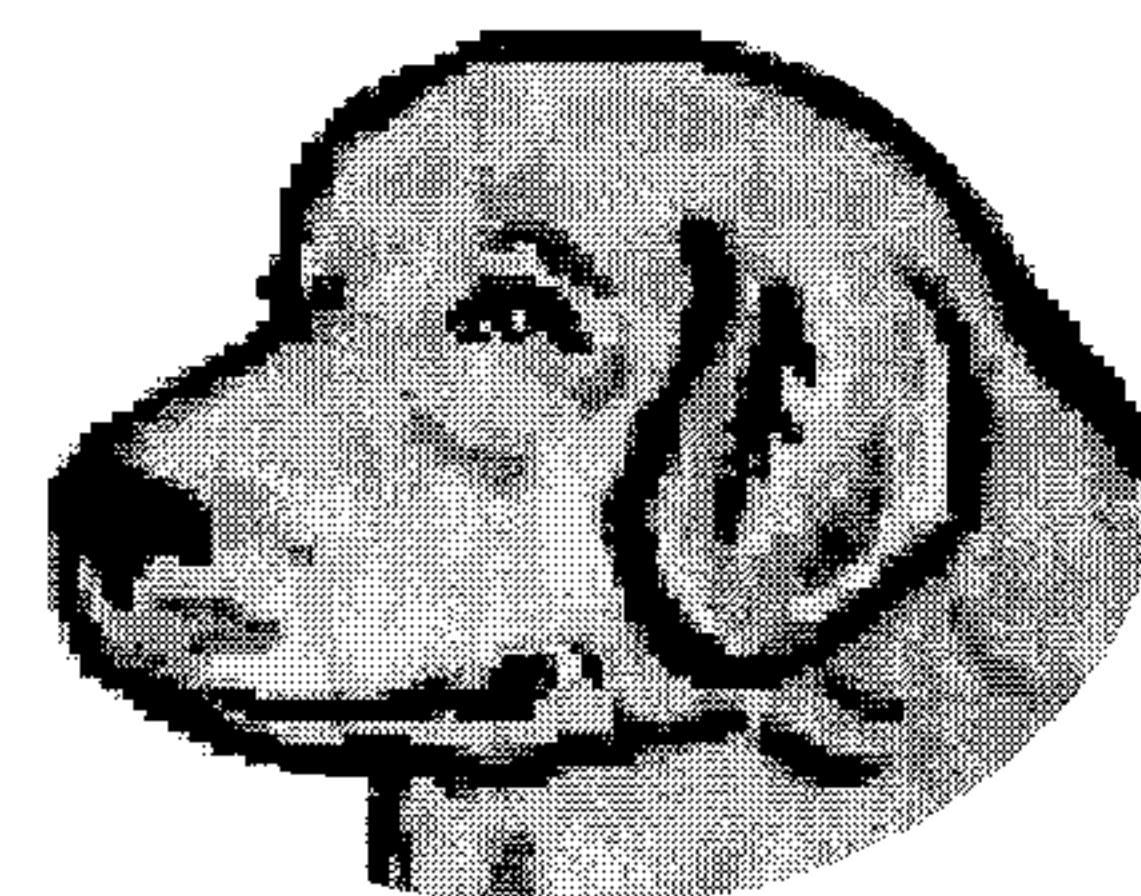
I went through this myself with Heather. She experienced several days of vomiting, and when the veterinarian performed surgery, he found cancer. Just the week before, she seemed perfectly normal, playing and eating with gusto. I couldn't figure out how I didn't notice the change. Because I was both a professional nurse and dog owner, I had a sense that "I should have known."

Well, my vet gave me a good talking to, and I soon realized how unrealistic my feelings were. Like any good, caring dog owner, if I had known Heather was suffering, I would have done something about it. Her death

wasn't due to any negligence on my part – we all do the best we can. It just isn't worth second-guessing yourself. If you take good care of your dog, feed her quality food, give her good medical care, keep her safe and provide plenty of love, there is absolutely no reason to feel guilty.

We all have our own rituals for dealing with the loss of a loved one. I hope that by sharing some of my own experiences, I have been able to help you begin thinking about your own. As always, I'm more than willing to discuss this subject with any of our members. Feel free to leave me a message at (407) 332-2840 mailbox #3, or e-mail me at goldensunbird@aol.com.

– Betty



Reading List:

- *Preparing for the Death of Your Pet*, Myrna Milani, DVM
- *When You Can Walk on Water, Take the Boat*, John Harricharan (J.H. Enterprises, Marietta, Ga.)
- *Living with Death and Dying*, Elizabeth Kubler-Ross (Macmillan Publishing)
- *Emmanuel's Book I & II*, with Pat Rodegast (Bantam Books)

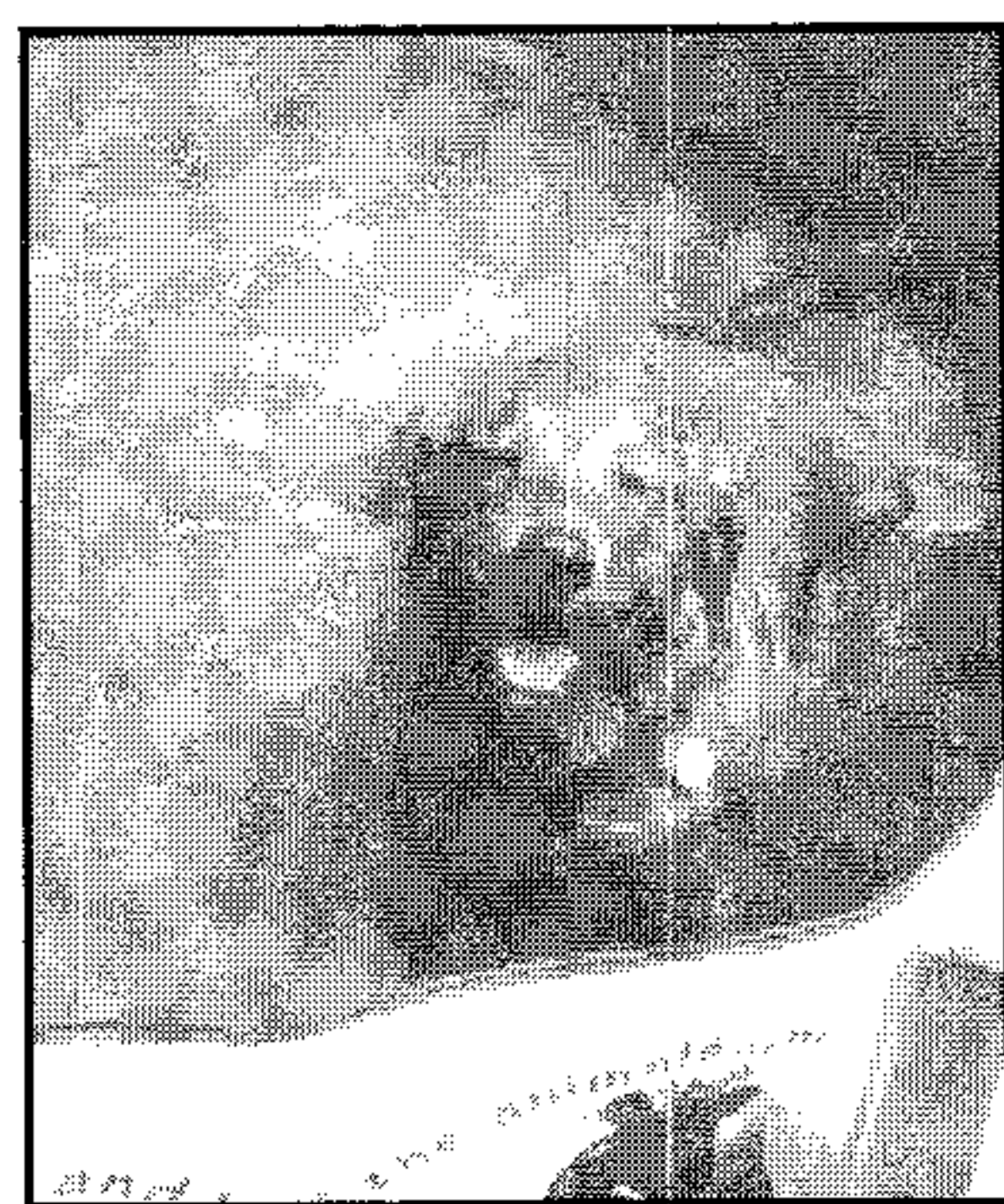
Support Hotlines:

- University of Florida: (352) 392-4700, then dial 1 and 4080, 7-9 p.m. eastern
- The Delta Society: (425) 226-7357
- Cornell University Pet Loss Support: www.vet.cornell.edu/public/petloss

r e c e n t a d o p t i o n s . . .

Barney, a beautiful red boy, was tied to a stake until his owners turned him in because they were moving. He was matted and had an ear infection. This mellow fellow's life has turned around. He is now with a family who loves him very much. Andrew and Anita M. couldn't be happier with their big boy.

Roxy I was just a puppy when she found her way to Judy A. Roxy was given up due to marital problems with her humans. Judy fostered Roxy and took her to obedience school. They bonded, and Judy adopted her.



Babe

Six-year-old **Babe** came to us from South Brevard Humane Society. She was given up when her owner lost her home due to mounting medical bills. Babe was adopted by Gail T. for a playmate for her 17-year-old golden girl, Goldie. They are best buddies and perfect for each other. As this picture shows, Babe loves the water. Gail says she can't even wait until the pool is full before jumping in!

Sammi and her six puppies, along with two other adult goldens, were turned in by a backyard breeder who decided to "go out of business." This little cutie was adopted by Bill and Susan W. They think she is just great.

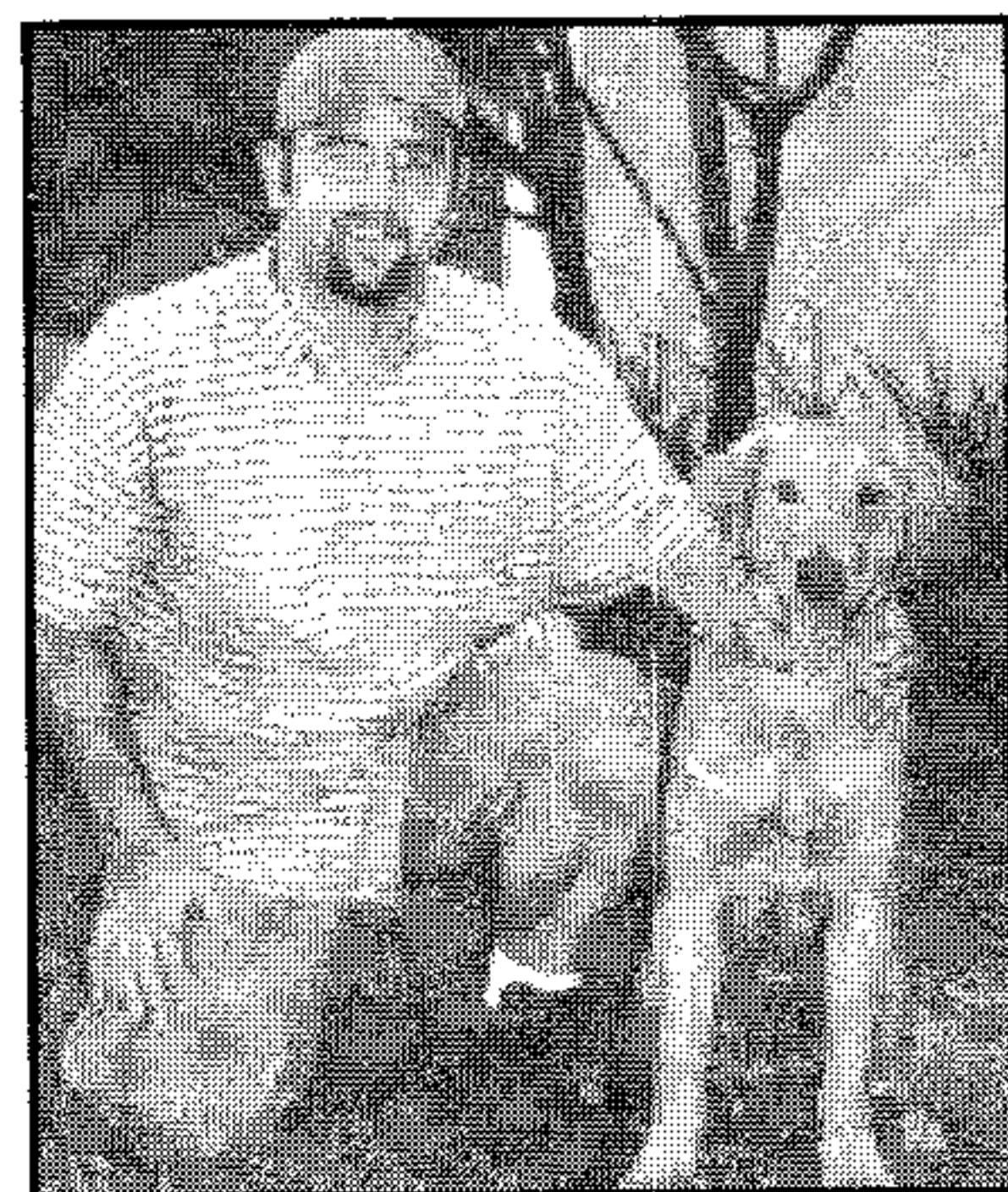
Roxy II, 8 months, was given up because she reportedly "growled" at a child. She was adopted by Ruth and Jerry C., who tell us she has been nothing but friendly with everyone she comes



Roxy with Ruth and Jerry

in contact with – even the cat. In fact, Roxy and Suzy the cat are best buddies, playing together constantly. Ruth says Roxy loves nothing more than a good game of fetch and curling up at her human's feet.

Trevor was turned in because he was too much trouble and kept escaping from the yard. A bright



Trevor

and attractive 1-year-old, Trevor was adopted by Matthew and Ann Marie W. Matthew is a dog trainer. They plan to have lots of fun with Trevor in agility classes.

Cameo, a very well-trained middle-aged golden, was turned in because of a child's allergy. The Rev. Robert and Marijane R. saw right away what a treasure she was. They are delighted with the antics of their precious new golden.

Jenny I, a senior female, was just not wanted any longer. This charismatic little girl endeared herself to all humans, but didn't care much for cats. She was adopted by George G., her foster dad, and his two canine pals.

Brody was in a bad home situation when he was rescued and fostered by Nancy C. A well-behaved, laid-back young fellow, Brody enjoys playing with anyone who is interested. He was adopted by Sandy and Mike S.

Clyde came from an animal shelter and was boarded at Amberwood Kennels in Lakeland. He was 30 pounds overweight, and his foster humans nicknamed him "Wide Clyde." The name just doesn't fit anymore, as he is a wonderfully trim and handsome fellow now. Clyde was adopted by John and Mary S., who tell us he's the best dog they've ever had. He has perfect manners, is very gentle and is great company to John on his long daily walks.



Clyde and new family

Percy also came from an animal shelter. This poor little fellow was terrified of leashes and men. He made great strides while in foster care and was adopted by Laurie B. as a companion for her golden. Percy has gotten over many of his fears and enjoys taking daily walks with his new family.

James, 6 months old, came to rescue when his owner had to have back surgery and couldn't care for a puppy. This pretty boy was adopted by Merle F. as a playmate for her two female goldens.

Rufus, an older dog, was a stray. This lovely, well-behaved dog was adopted by John F., who lost his elderly golden to cancer before Thanksgiving. John loves Rufus very much.

Continued on page 12

Recent adoptions, from page 11

Pretty **Laura** was turned in because of a divorce. Neither party wanted her. She quickly found a wonderful new home with Caryn and Ken K.

Roscoe was rescued and adopted by Rob and Lori W. He is their fourth golden, and all get along very well together.

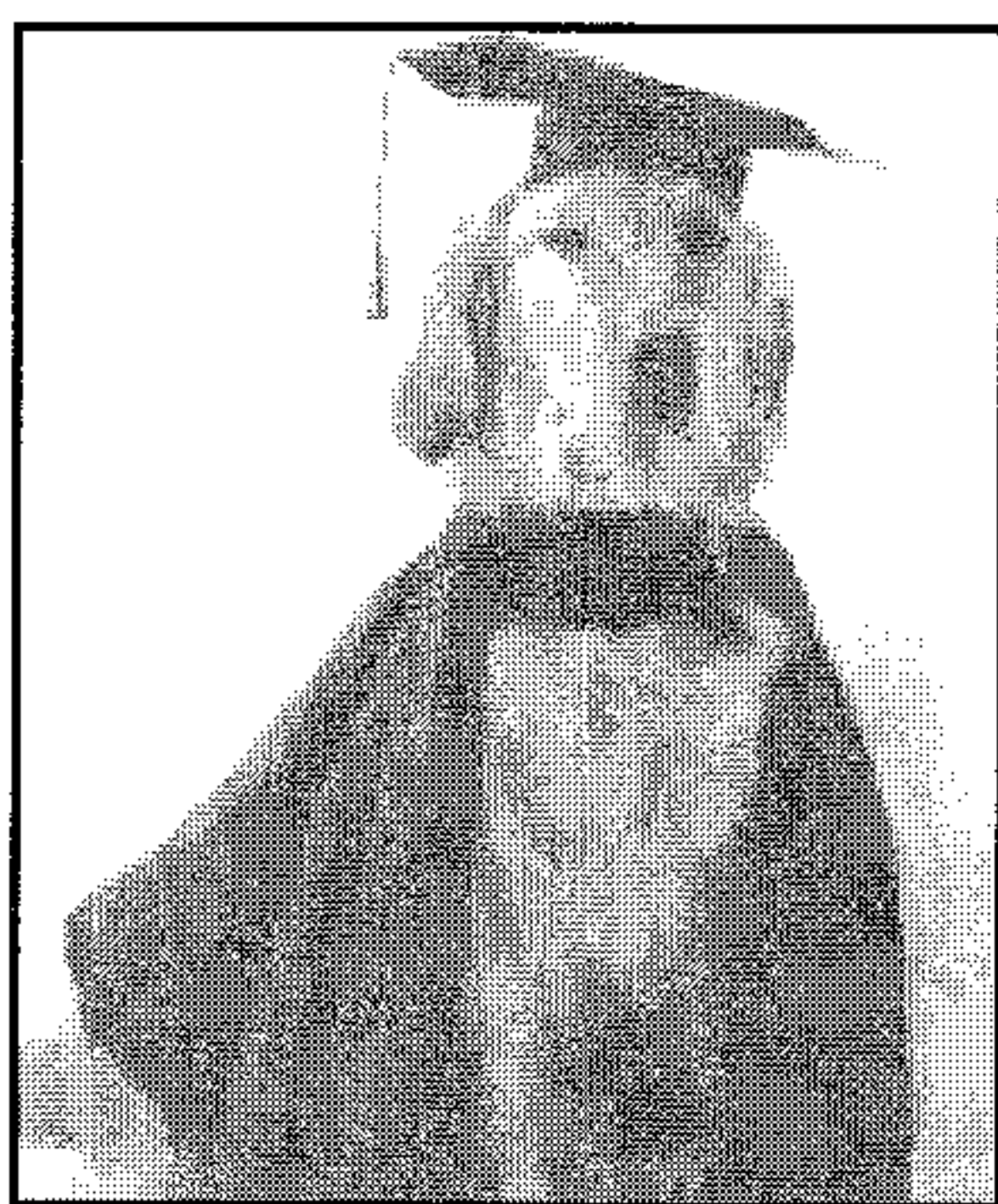


Chewy

Chewy was rescued from a bad situation by a family who couldn't keep him and called GRRMF. Ken and Melanie W. fostered Chewy. They thought he was fantastic and decided to adopt him. Melanie reports Chewy is happy and adjusting well to his new forever home.

Baron McKenzie was given up because of a child's allergy. A handsome fellow with perfect manners, he was adopted by Shelly and Joe A.

Copper was once a stray. He was taken in by a Good Samaritan who kept him for nearly a month until we could find a home for him. Copper is very handsome and well-behaved – two very desirable traits. Richard S. came forward and offered to give Copper the home he deserves. They are a twosome now, always going somewhere together.



Preston on Graduation Day

Preston was rescued from an animal shelter and boarded at Amberwood Kennels until he went to his foster home with Suzanne and Tony R. When Adoption Coordinator Betty Wyatt called one day to say she thought she had a home for him, Suzanne and Tony decided they loved him too much to let him go. Preston shares his new forever home with former rescue Tyler and two canine sisters plus a GRRMF foster. He helps educate the public at PetsMart Education days and just graduated TOP DOG in his class at Courteous Canine. He hopes to become a Canine Good Citizen and therapy dog, so he can brighten the lives of others as he has done for his humans.

Jenny II was rescued from animal control and fostered by John and Gail Pfohler. Because of her gray face, Jenny was

immediately sent to the top of the "to be euthanized" list at the shelter, when a worker decided to pull her aside and call rescue. John and Gail went the next day to pick her up, and a veterinarian's checkup revealed she is only about 6 years old. The Pfohlers fostered Jenny and quickly learned she was as sweet as they come – no faults whatsoever. To think that this angel was going to be put down! Jenny was recently adopted by Tim and Jane V. She even gets along fine with their parrots, who call out to her, "Come here, Pretty Jenny!"



Jenny and her new dad

Traveler was turned in by his owner when her new boyfriend moved in. The boyfriend's dog didn't care for Traveler, and Traveler was banished to the back yard. George and Clair E. adopted him. They've promised Traveler he can spend the rest of his life inside – no more lonely backyard life for him!

Benjamin came from an animal shelter. This fine golden was adopted by Ron and Darlene K. They have indicated they'd like to be a foster home, so Benjamin can look forward to having playmates to share his life with.

Aspen was a resident of the Melbourne animal shelter when rescue was called. This beautiful 1-year-old was adopted by Michael and Donna S.

Captain, a senior golden, also came from a shelter. He was adopted by Emory and Susan K. as a companion for their senior dog.

Jeffro came from an animal shelter and was boarded at Amberwood Kennels in Lakeland. Well-behaved and handsome, he was adopted by Michael C. and Ginger W., who own a business making and selling natural pet products. Jeffro, now called **Dexter**, should live many healthy years with these nutrition-minded and healthy-lifestyle practitioners. His humans say Dexter is "just a joy." They couldn't be happier with their new boy.



Jeffro with GRRMF volunteer Laurie Colombo



w a g s a n d b r a g s

Alumni News

We want to thank all who took the time to send cards and photos during the recent holidays. Our hard-working volunteers love hearing about the accomplishments and antics of our former rescues. Although we can't run all the updates in one issue, watch future issues and our Web site as we continue to give you news of the hundreds of rescues that have come through the program.

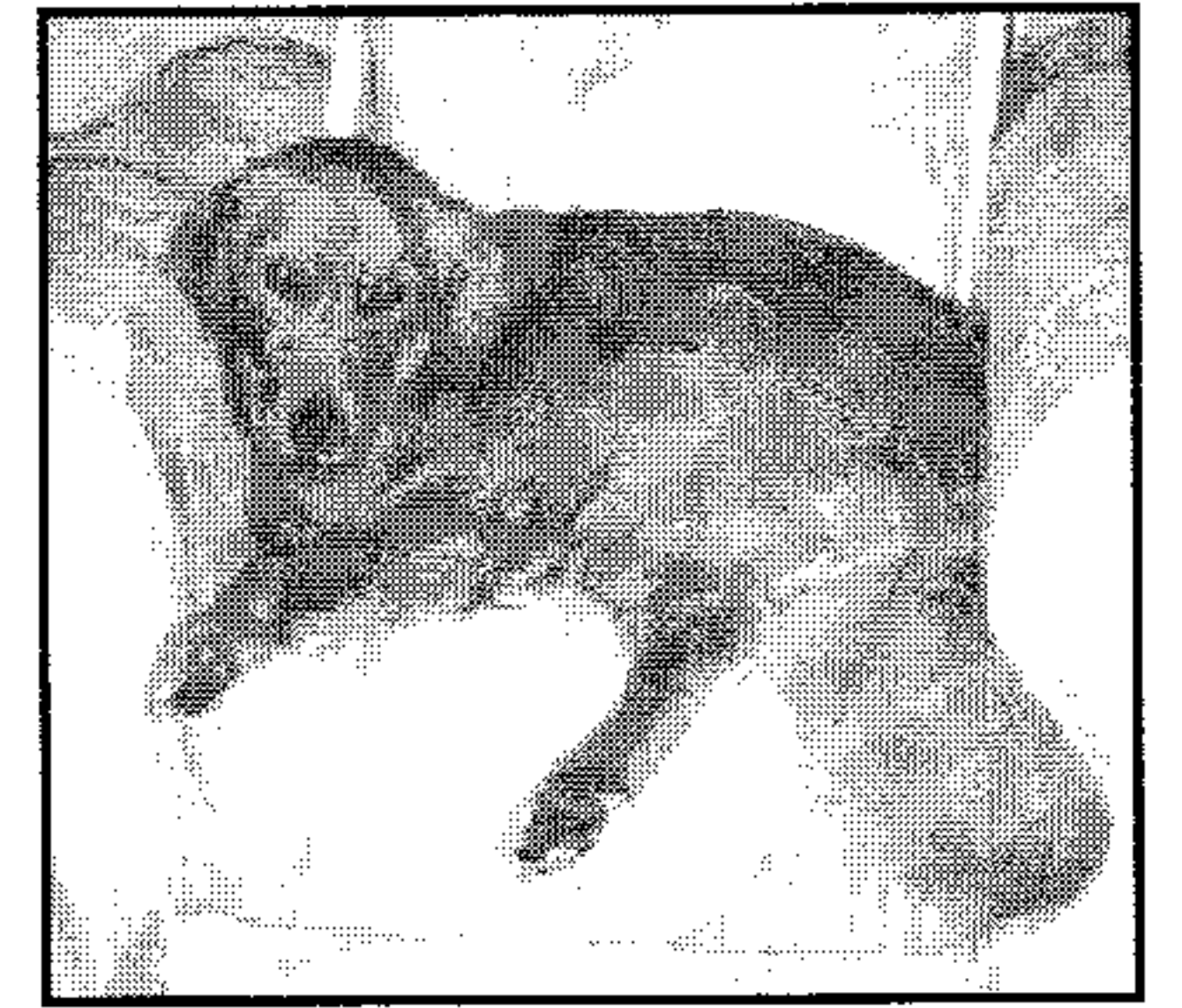
Abby, one of GRRMF's first rescues, is doing well in her New Jersey home. Mary and Tom Macmanus report she is "enjoying life" as she slips into her senior years. Abby still likes to run, but they have to limit her activity due to stiffness. "She has added so much to our lives all these years. Thank you so much for making it all possible," Mary wrote.

A nice note from Ed and Pat Howie says that **Clancy**, formerly **Geoffrey**, is doing well. The Howies adopted Clancy to help fill the void left by their previous GRRMF golden, **Tracy (Lacy)**, who died last year. "Clancy has brought a lot of love and joy to a once very sad house. We needed him more than he needed us," Ed wrote. Pat also mentioned that Clancy was great comfort to her when Ed underwent bypass surgery recently. What does Clancy love most? Belly rubs and lots of love – a true golden!

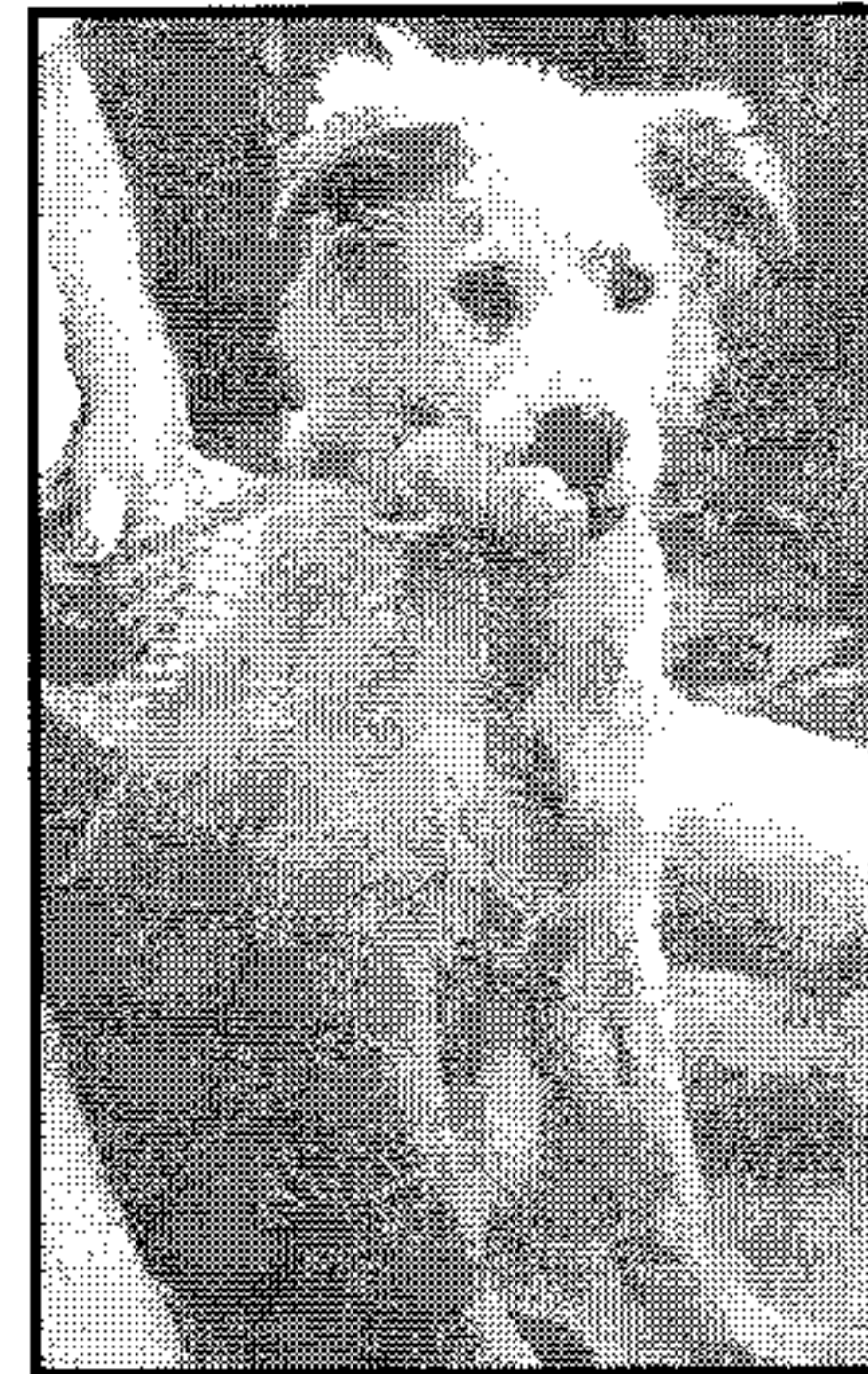
PLEASE NOTE: Ed also wrote of an important lesson learned from Tracy. When traveling, the Howies usually medicate their Lhasa apso, Hank. One evening, after traveling all day, Hank was unable to calm down at the motel. The Howies gave him another dosage of his medicine, then went to bed. They were awakened later by Tracy, who was whining and nudging Hank as he lay on the floor. Ed rushed over, and Hank had no heartbeat. Thankfully, Ed knows CPR and was able to revive him. Later, the emergency veterinarian confirmed that the dosage they'd given Hank was appropriate – except the medication was old. His best guess was that the medicine had increased in potency with age. Ed wanted us to share this information, to alert readers to the possible dangers of prescription medication as it ages.

Jessy, one of Isabel's puppies, is doing well in her new home in St. Petersburg. She and her canine sibling, Bailey, enjoy their days roughhousing and playing. Both are set to begin obedience training soon.

Marley is enjoying his new life as couch potato with Leanne Rubin.



Marley



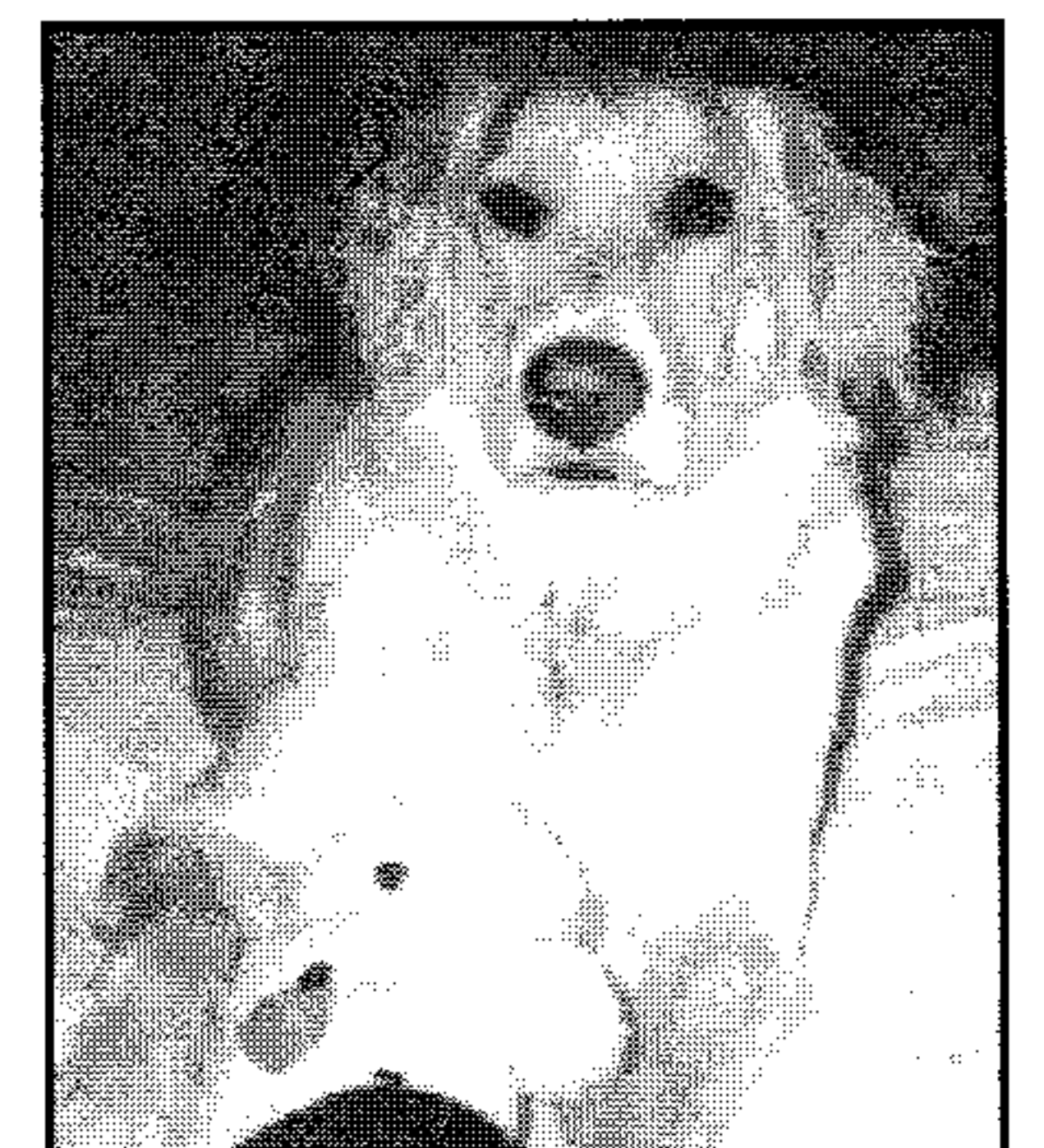
Nancy/Tesla

Little **Nancy**, now called **Tesla**, is enjoying life with her new owners, Toby and Tracy Swaford. She gets along well with her canine sibling, and is slowly learning not to chase the cats.

Winnie, now called **Hannah**, loves her new home she shares with Pam Ellis and a dog named Sailor. Hannah especially likes swimming in the pool, laying on the couch and visits to her grandma's house, where she gets to play with her two canine cousins. Oh, and she's taking full advantage of the soft, warm bed she gets to sleep in every night with her mom!

Cy, formerly **Dreamer**, recently enjoyed a "first anniversary" party in his honor. He and the dogs in his obedience class quickly gobbled up the cake his owner, Ann Marie Roberts, brought. Cy enjoys ongoing obedience and agility classes, and Ann Marie says he is "almost" as spoiled as her other golden, Nala.

Darby is enjoying the good life with owners Sheila and Mark Quinton. Now 3, Darby has calmed down considerably. He doesn't bark or chew and loves to "kissy" everyone. He has made many friends on his daily walks through the neighborhood.



Darby at Christmas 2000

Continued on page 14

Wags and Brags – Alumni news, from page 13

We received a nice note from **Roxi**, who was adopted by Debbie McGhehy last year:

Dear GRRMF:

It's me, Roxi. I wanted to give you an update on what I've been doing since I got adopted this year. My new human is quite taken with me ... Well, o.k., I kind of like her too!

My latest adventure was forming a team called "Roxi's Rockets" to participate in a walk to raise money for the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. My dream is to be a spokesdog for rescue, and Mom thought this would be a great way to start. There were eight of us dogs, all breeds and sizes. We raised a total of \$1,570. We had a blast! There were lots of other goldens there, too. I'm really proud of my team for all the money we raised.

The day after the pet walk, Mom and I went to the parade of rescues. We met another one of Betty's dogs there. His name is Prancer, and his mom's name is Julie. She calls him Prancer Man, and you can tell how much she loves him. Aunt Julie is getting Mom and me involved in rescue. I am finally living my dream!

See you at the reunion!

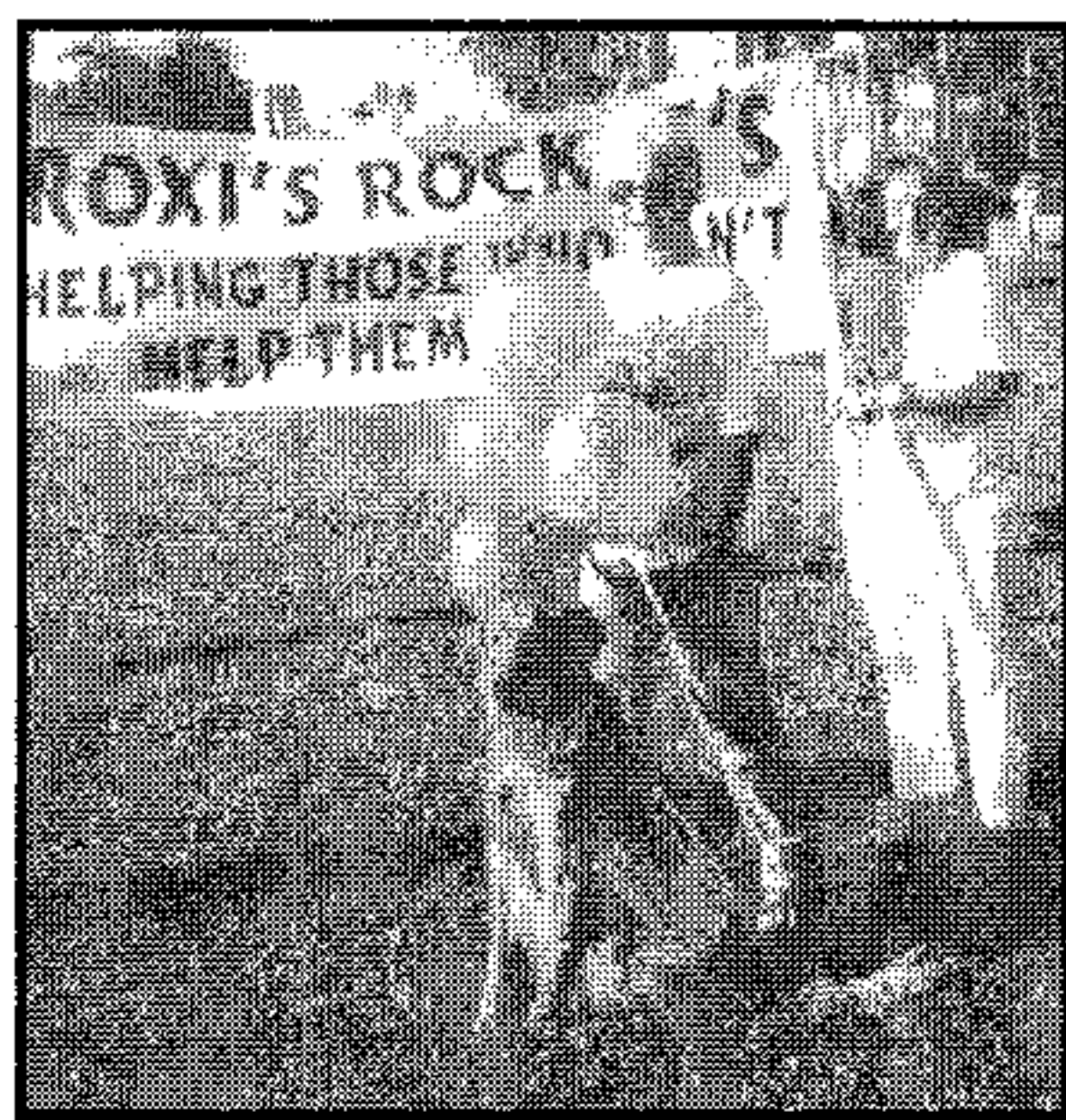


Roxi



Way to go, Clover!

And for my next trick: You may remember this perky girl – **Clover** was featured in a newsletter last year with three tennis balls in her mouth at once. Always the ambitious one, little 55-pound Clover now performs this neat trick on a daily basis. Owner Marcia McGovern still insists Clover is self-taught ... and obviously very proud of herself!

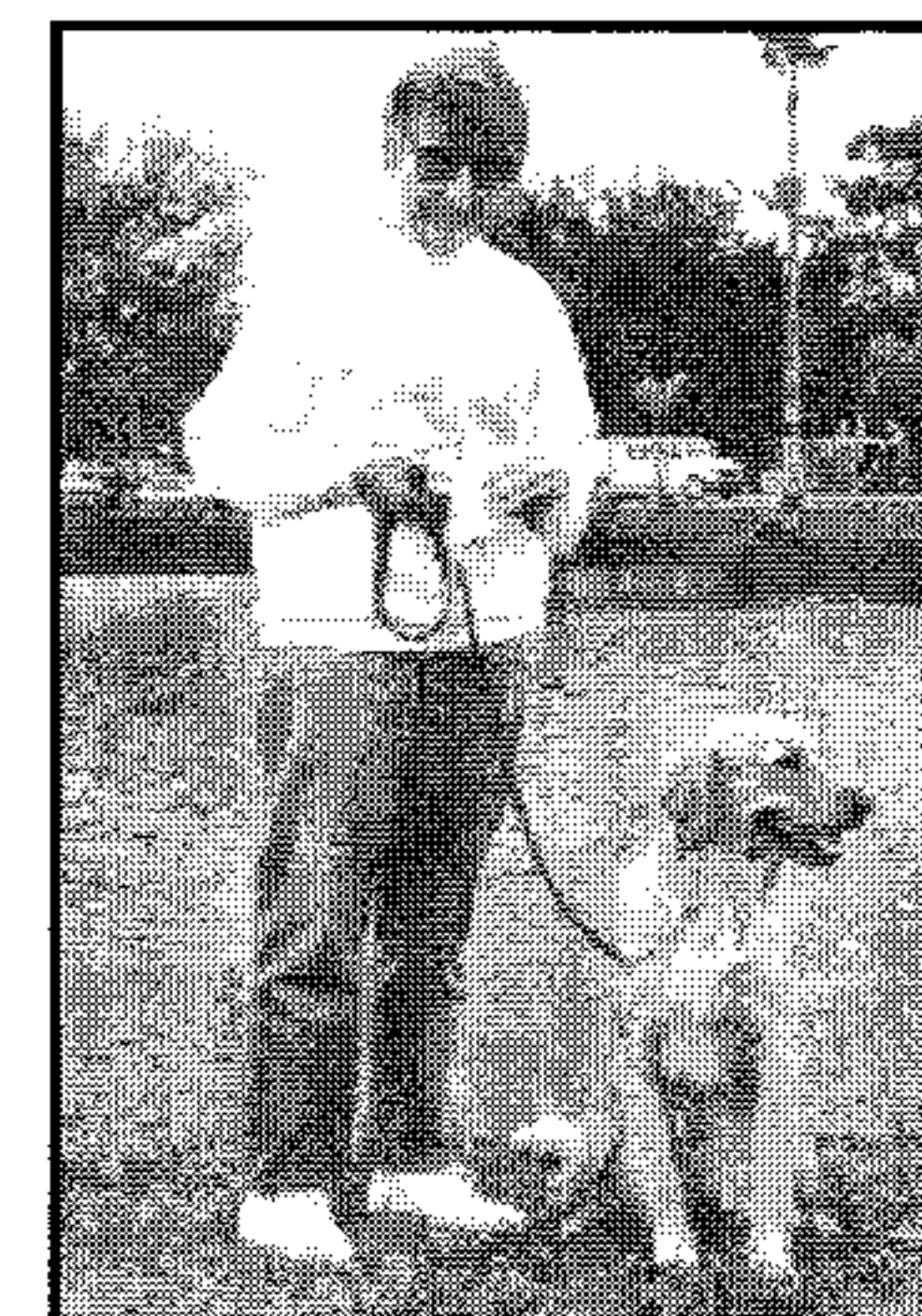


Roxi and her "Rockets"

Wild and crazy **Amber** would have been labeled "unadoptable" by many shelters. But after a few months with foster parents John and Gail Pfohler, who taught her some manners, Barbara Gusinger from Sarasota decided she couldn't live without her. Barbara registered Amber with the AKC and has joined the show circuit. The first day, Amber scored a 182 for her first leg toward a CD title and on the second day scored a 190.5 for her second leg and a fourth place. She missed second place by ONE point! Amber needs only one more leg to get her CD title and will then go down forever in the AKC registry as Lady Amber CD. What a turnaround – Taming of the Shrew, canine-style!

Reminder: Did you know that you can get an AKC number for your rescued golden, even if he or she didn't come with papers?

Donna Johnston wrote recently with an update on **Zachery** (originally **Scooter**). Zachery won several medals, including the overall Gold Medal, at a recent "Doggie Olympics" event. "I was bursting with joy and so proud! I never imagined that he would win the entire event," Donna wrote. Zachery enjoyed the competition so much that Donna has started him in agility classes.



Barbara and Amber



Brandon on the right, dressed as a bumblebee, and his pal, rescue golden Duke of Windsor in his pumpkin costume, during a nursing home visit in October.

Brandon has been busy since he was adopted by Nancy Abbott. He's completed both basic and intermediate obedience training, placing fourth in his most recent class. Brandon then went on to complete his Canine Good Citizen and Therapy Dog International Tests. Brandon and **Duke of Windsor**, who was adopted last year by Marilyn Metcalfe, now visit nursing homes several times each month. These best buddies are a real hit with the seniors!



Golden Friends . . .

Donations ...

Barbara Brooughton; Central Florida Community School Kindergarten; Linda Cohen; Penny & Don Dalton; Liz Damas; Nancy Day; Kimberly Demeter; Jim Disser; Barbara Durham; Pamela Ellis; Bud & Lynn Eustace; Adel & Doria Fahmy – from JOEY; Steve & Susan Fahs; John Foss; Susan Fulenwider; Jordan German; Suzanne Hogan; Lillian & Ed Howie; Christi Hymel; Susan Kalush; James & Therese Kamis; Dawn Kelly; Christina & Roger Leggatt; Stuart & Grace Longworth; James McCartney; Sandra McVittie; Catherine & Clyde Mollon; Shari Mullen; Glenn & Barbara Paul; Jan Pfeifer; Lee Ann & John Planz; Ellen Prekop; Barbara Reems; Lisa Servello; Robert Shappell; Wayne & Randi Shoemaker; Jennifer Smith for Donald Diele; Tracy Stetzinger; Jan Stevens; Sandra Stockman; Joan Strickland; Pam Strickland; Nancy Anne Thorne; Jane Van De Walker; Jeanne Villari; James & Judy Weiss.

Woody's Fund ...

Wendy Jackson; Diane & Mark Kingman; David Lowerhouse; Walter Miller, M.D., for Mandy's ear surgery; Mary Anne Tradelius; Deborah Wilson - in honor of Freeman.

For Sherman ...

Sally Anne Rowland; The Students of Sarasota Middle School; Lisa Trautman; Nancy White.

For Levi & Pals in

Response to GRRMF's

"Goldens Galore" Flier ...

Liz & Mike Damas; Jodee Deen; Bobbi Halle; Patti Hatton; Teresa Ingram; The Iveys; Amy Nolan.

In Honor Of ...

Betty Bell – Ellen & Bob Barr
 Bullet – Carol Atkinson
 Jan Jennings, Elsa & Casey – Christine MacPhail
 Carol & Mike McKee – Douglas & Barbara Gieger
 Patrick – Jerald & Vivian Rosen
 Suzanne Rider – Stephen Flannery
 Sarah Sleight – Marilyn Azzolino
 Sandy & Mike Sumner & Betty Wyatt – Lois Lippman
 Tyler – Virginia & Dick Withington
 Betty Wyatt & Suzanne Rider – Colleen & Rick Sosteri

In Memory Of ...

Pluto – Jim & Allola McGraw
 Milton "Andy" Anderson – Nancy & Dick Spears
 Champ – Tracy & David Lamoreaux
 Kelly – Sue Hallenbeck & Bill Holland
 Kelly & Molly – Jim & Allola McGraw
 Meggie – Melanie Wagner
 Mollie – Nancy & Steven Vorhis
 Reuban Valentino – Allyson Friedman
 Teddy Bear – Audrey Myers
 Pacer – Dick, Laura, Matt, Scott, Oreo and Chip Neidich

Boarding Fund ...

Mark & Lisa Dennett; George Geibel; Golden Retriever Rescue of South Florida; Paul & Lois Lippman – from Mickey; Patricia Matthews – in honor of Freeman; Pat & Henry Mayer; Michael & Carol McKee; Judith & Paul Richter; Bonnie Starke; Richard & Virginia Withington.

Sponsorships ...

Frank Andrews; Bill & Maddie Becker; Tom & Marian Blet; Sharon Friel Carroll; Marilyn & Michael Counen;

Continued on page 16

Backyard Safety, from page 2

eaten alive. It makes me sick to think of what would have happened to Bayou had someone not intervened.

Today, Bayou lives the good life with Donald and Janice Jones. You may have seen them on Fox 35 News. Donald is a reporter, and Janice is a meteorologist. Every time I see them on TV, I think of Bayou. I'm thankful that Bayou is waiting for them when they get home, and that we were lucky enough to save him.

Stolen dogs also are sold to research laboratories. These people are professional dog stealers – many of them literally steal dogs for a living, and they tend to target certain types of dogs. Goldens are friendly dogs that will go with almost anyone. They are also VERY desirable for research. What a terrible way for your dog to end up – sacrificed for medical research.

Are we too cautious? Do we screen out too many people with our "rules?" The GRRMF board doesn't believe so. We love these dogs too much to take a chance that they may end up running the streets, hit by a car, poisoned or stolen. They deserve to have a long, happy and safe life – that's our responsibility as a rescue group.

Please consider the safety of your backyard, and remember, NEVER leave your dog in the backyard unsupervised – whether you are home or not. Periodically inspect your fencing and gates to make sure boards haven't rotted and gates are securely latched. This way, you will know you are doing everything you can to avoid the heartbreak of losing your dog.

♥ ♥ ♥

Golden Friends, from page 15

Nick & Gillian Forlando – in memory of Sam; Teresa Ingram; Diane & Mark Kingman; Michael & Melissa Nurrenbrock; Richard & Virginia Withington.

Capital Campaign ...

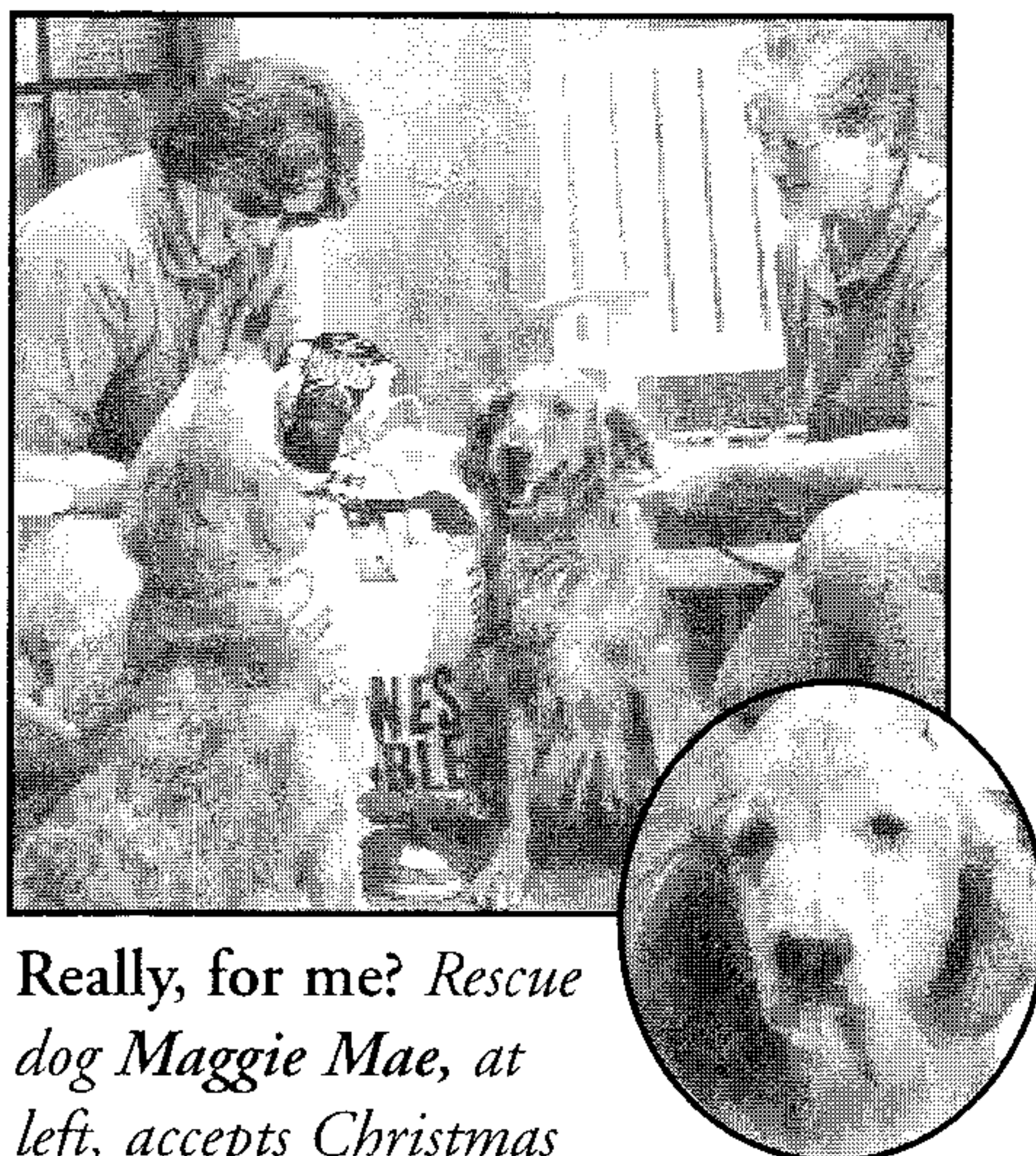
Diane & Mark Kingman; Sandra Lagana; Chris & Vicki Middleton; Charlotte & John Quercia; Raymond & Linda Sharp; Carol Stransky.

Fosters ...

Judy Ackerman, Shelly & Joe Antonucci, Marti Conness, Jim & Kathy Coppinger, Penny & Don Dalton, Barbara Durham, Robin Edwards, Linda Fike, George Giebel, Al & Betty Halpern, Tom & Joanne Hell, Kelly & Chris Keeler, Marianne Klingel, Bob & Anna Maufray, Marilyn Metcalfe, Gary & Julie Mink, Bob & Sharon O'Keefe, John & Gail Pfohler, Tony & Suzanne Rider, Ellen Schnabel, Sandy & Mike Sumner, Gail Treeza, Kim Wilkerson, Dennis & Robin Williams, Leah Wright.

Thanks!

- Dog supplies, toys, treats, etc., during the holiday season: Deborah McGhehey, Roxi & Friends; Ellen Pavlik; Barbara Durham; Ellen Schnabel; Pam Jones; Leann Rubin; Mike & Carol McKee; Susan Keesler; Deborah Wilson & Patricia Matthews; Merle Fairbanks; Sharon Fahmy & Kevin Evetts; Jim & Allola McGraw; Kathy Coppinger; Betty Wyatt; Ashley Heath; Lillie, Beatrice & Cynthia Carhart.
- Special thanks to Roxi and her human, Debbie McGhehey. They sent a big box of individually wrapped treats and toys, all given in the names of their friends and family. Roxi's note said they always give Christmas presents to their animal buddies, but decided that this year



Really, for me? Rescue dog Maggie Mae, at left, accepts Christmas gifts from former rescue humans, Deborah Wilson and Patricia Matthews. Always appreciative of GRRMF for helping him find a new lease on life, Freeman stopped by with two shopping bags full of goodies for current rescue dogs. Sweet Maggie Mae is still waiting to find her forever home ... is it with you?

they'd give them to "those that are less fortunate than us." A noble gesture, Roxi, and one that was greatly appreciated by the dogs currently in rescue!

- Dr. Bill & Maddie Becker, for donation of a dog crate, bed and baby gate.
- Cyndy Coulombe for shampooing rescue dogs weekly.
- Home visit volunteers: Cindy Andrews, Shelley and Joe Antonucci, Ellen Bartkus, Pat Chesley, Gregg Childs, Barbara Durham, Ann Fitzpatrick, Susan Fulenwider, Joanne Hell and the West Coast Volunteers, Carol McKee, Gail Mertz, Laurel O'Connors, John Pfohler, Suzanne Rider, Anita Ruth, Kathy Salisbury, Rich and Colleen Sosteri, Nancy Spears, Kathy Spilker and the East Coast volunteers, Sandy Sumner, Mary Toto, Liz Waldschmidt.
- For transporting dogs: Marcie Caldwell & Jim Gallagher, Dr. Bill

Becker, Nancy Spears, Kristin Anderson, Suzanne Rider, Sharon O'Keefe, Vann and Sally Frazier, Cyndy Coulombe.

- Sally Anne Rowland's "Mum," Anne Newman, for crafting cute little doggie bandannas, which GRRMF volunteers sell at educational days. Proceeds are donated to rescue.
- Patti Sarrano, for her wonderful write-ups for our Web site and for responding to guestbook inquiries.
- Tim Guy, webmaster, for setting up and maintaining our site – grrmf.org.
- Angelica Steinker of Courteous Canine in Lutz, Fla., for helping train rescue dogs with Suzanne Rider.
- Anne Marie Roberts for inviting us to come to her school and do an educational session on rescue, and Nancy Spears for leading the session.
- Kristen Anderson for donating a printer.
- Marie Pacheco for helping with the hotline.
- Newsletter team: Carol Glaros, designer, and Carol McKee, editor.
- To the many veterinarians who help GRRMF:
 - Drs. Rick Rubinstein & William Ehlers, Tusawilla Oaks Animal Hospital
 - Dr. Michael Schroeder, Animal Hospital of Treasure Island
 - Dr. Charles Steiner, Wickham Road Animal Hospital, Melbourne
 - Dr. Rachael Beckett, Jackson Veterinary Practice, St. Augustine
 - Dr. Constance DiNatale, Veterinary Acupuncture, Winter Park
 - Outback Animal Hospital, Polk City
 - Livingston Animal & Avian Hospital, Lutz
 - Bright Cross Animal Clinic, Venice
 - Dr. Martin Neher, Palmer Ranch Animal Clinic, Sarasota
 - All Creatures Animal Hospital, Lutz, Fla.

♥ ♥ ♥

*It's Okay to Cry, from page 8***Your Final Farewells**

After the procedure is over, the veterinarian or technician should use a stethoscope to confirm that the heart has stopped beating. You should be offered the opportunity to stay alone with the body for a time if you choose, to say your final farewells.

You probably will have already made disposal arrangements when you were making the appointment. Some owners opt for a general disposal, which means that the body is either sent to a landfill site or tallow works, or sometimes cremated with a large number of other bodies. Many owners want their dogs' remains returned to them.

In many areas, you can arrange for a private cremation and have the ashes returned to you in an urn. Some owners keep the ashes, others scatter or bury them. Private cremations tend to be the most expensive choice.

If you have a suitable location on your own property (check local zoning laws) or have made arrangements with a pet cemetery, you can bury your pet.

It may be a comfort to you to have a ceremony for your pet, either by yourself or with friends. Light candles, write a poem, scatter her ashes, bury her body, frame and hang a photograph, send a donation in her name to your local animal shelter or rescue group – there are thousands of ways you can honor her life after her death. Choose the one that feels best.

It's Okay to Cry

There is no question about it – the death of a close friend is a huge loss, whether the friend is human or canine. Sometimes people who have never known the joy of a close bond with an animal fail to understand the depth of the loss. They may downplay the importance, or tell you to “get over it, it's just a dog.” Pay no attention to them, and pity their ignorance. *You have every right to grieve the loss of your friend.*

In fact, it is widely known that the loss of a beloved pet triggers the same stages of grief as those identified by Elizabeth Kubler-Ross and other psychologists in connection with human death and dying. These stages of grief include: *denial* (when we refuse to accept that Molly is going to die); *bargaining* (when we try to make deals, sometimes with a supreme being, if Molly would only continue to live); *anger and blame* (why didn't the veterinarian find the lump during her last checkup?); *guilt* (if I had a better-paying job I could have afforded that expensive treatment); *grief* (pure, unadulterated pain); and, finally, *acceptance*.

You may go through all or only some of these stages. You may pass through some of them quickly and linger in others for a long time. Know that they are all normal feelings, and if

“The best place to bury a good dog is in the heart of his master.”

B. H. Lampman

you feel yourself unable to cope, seek help.

Find sympathetic friends who understand your pain and let them support you. Find a grief counselor. There are pet-loss counselors in many communities who are skilled at helping you work through your pain.

Someone once said of dogs, “Their only flaw is that their lives are too short.” How true that is. Yet, I tell myself that if they lived as long as we did, then we wouldn't be able to share our lives with as many wonderful dogs as we do.

Every time one of my canine friends starts graying around the muzzle, clouding in the eyes, and slowing down on our walks, I start to steel myself for the inevitable. I pray that she will die peacefully in her sleep, but I know that I will probably have to make the decision to do that one last kind thing for her. And always, I remind myself that it's okay to cry.

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Old men miss many dogs

Old men miss many dogs.

They only live a dozen years, if that,

And by the time you're sixty, there are several

The names of which evoke remembering smiles.

You see them in your mind, heads cocked and seated,

Or sleeping by the fire by nights

And always dying.

You are young but they are old. They go,

The German shepherd and the poodle,

The basset hound and mutt.

They are remembered like departed children

Though they gave vastly more than ever they took,

And finally you're seeing dogs that look like them.

They pass you on the street, but never turn

Although it seems they should, their faces so familiar.

Old men miss many dogs.

— Steve Allen

Jaxon and the Great Stromboli Caper

by Sandy Sumner

Jaxon was living the good life. His new home, with his mom, Marie, and her family was more than he could have hoped for. He was top dog in the house and life was full of love and dog biscuits.

Jaxon gets to watch when Marie makes her special Italian dishes and, once in a while, he gets to sample some of them. One day, Marie was making stromboli, an incredibly good dough filled with cheeses and pepperoni. These were for company, so she used the extra special cheese – and lots of it. Like a good boy, Jaxon laid nearby keeping an eye on things.

Marie's son came home and offered to take her for ice cream. Since offers like these are rare with teenage sons, Marie jumped at the chance. The strombolis were half-done (one was cooling and the other just needed to be put together and baked), so she figured she could finish them up when she got back with plenty of time to spare. Mistake!

About an hour later, Marie came home to finish the stromboli. Oh no! The baked one was gone ... as was the pepperoni, a pound of cheese and all the uncooked dough.

Her first thought was that someone had stolen them. She was in a panic and ran to the living room to see if the

TV and stereo were still there. They were. Completely confused, she went back to the kitchen. That was when she noticed Jaxon was nowhere to be found. Nor had he greeted her when she arrived home, as was his usual routine.

Marie found Jaxon in the other room with a stomach so distended it looked like he had swallowed a pillow. Of course, it wasn't a pillow but all the missing food from her kitchen – including the raw dough, pepperoni and cheese! He managed to thump his tail when he saw her, but didn't bother to get up. Moving that stomach was just too much effort.

Once Marie determined he was O.K., she got plenty mad, but she also realized it was her mistake. She got the last laugh, though, when Jaxon spent the next day in the back yard "moving the strombolis through his system." Both Mom and Jaxon learned a lesson from that little caper!



The Stromboli King: *Don't let this innocent face fool you - Jaxon loves his Italian food!*

♥ ♥ ♥

Fun Times at Educational Days

GRRMF volunteers enjoy participating in educational days several times each month.

John Pfohler, West Coast GRRMF volunteer, sent the photo at right from the "K-9 Christmas" event sponsored by the Manatee County Parks Department. They had a big turnout, with several rescue groups participating.

"Educational days are great fun for the dogs and for us, and volunteers are doing a wonderful job spreading the word about golden

retriever rescue," John says.

Special thanks to Sally Anne Rowland for doing such a nice job decorating the table (thank you, dollar store!).

Educational days are a nice way to spend a few hours with your canine companion, socialize with other dog lovers, and you'll be supporting a worthy cause while you're at it. To find out more about participating in upcoming events in Orlando and other Florida areas, please call the Hotline and leave a message: (407) 332-2840, Mailbox #4. Or e-mail: info@grrmf.org.



Hey, look at us! *Sally Anne Rowland, right, and golden friends spread the word about rescue at a recent educational day.*

President's Message, from front page

knowledge of our most experienced people and translate it into forms and procedures so that new volunteers could learn how to do things. We are building teams of volunteers to do tasks that were previously done by just a few people. As of the end of 2000, we have a whole team centered around adoption application screenings, with a defined process for them to follow.

In 2001 we are going to explode our volunteer staff as we continue to grow the team approaches. Right now we are seeking volunteers to help in the following areas:

- **Call team volunteers.** These volunteers work with the adoption application coordinator to make screening phone calls to potential adopters. We need people who are good at phone interviewing and extracting information from people. They must be professional, courteous, but skeptical. There are a lot of nice people out there that have no business getting a dog and are clueless about what it takes to own one. Call team volunteers have to see the difference between "nice" and the reality of how the person would care for a dog in his or her home.

New Educational Day Locations

We are looking for volunteers for monthly education sessions in Ocoee, Oviedo and Lake Mary. We also would like to start some type of education sessions in the Melbourne area, either at PetsMart or another location. Please let us know if you are interested!

- **Home visit volunteers.** Once an application makes it through two levels of screening, we decide if we should go further with a home visit. Everyone who adopts from us gets a home visit. It's a great way to evaluate the prospective family and home environment. For example, on one home visit, we discovered two chow dogs tied in the backyard that the applicant "forgot" to mention. Just a minor detail! Home visit volunteers need to be professional and knowledgeable about our program. We have a training packet just for home visit volunteers.
- **Adoption application screening volunteers.** We are seeking volunteers in the Oviedo area to assist our adoption application coordinator in screening applications. The volume of applications has skyrocketed, and Cindy Andrews needs

some help. (Be sure to read more about Cindy and her role with rescue on Page 3.) Volunteers for this position must have good intuitive skills and be able to evaluate applicants against our written placement guidelines. You have to have the ability to say "no" and make good decisions.

- **Admissions volunteers.** We need staff to work our admissions hotline, interviewing people who want to turn in dogs. Knowledge about dogs and the ability to do a thorough job interviewing people and assessing the dog's situation are important.
- **Education volunteers.** We are starting educational days at three PetsMart locations in the Orlando area in the next month or two: Oviedo, Ocoee and Lake Mary. We need staff and their friendly goldens to help work these events talking to the public. (See Page 18 for more details about the fun our educational volunteers have.) We also need team leaders for the Oviedo and Lake Mary locations who would be willing to take responsibility for scheduling volunteers.
- **Capital Campaign Committee volunteers.** We need grant writers and anyone else who has experience or interest in fund-raising activities. As we kick our campaign into high gear this year (see Page 7 for an update), the need for more volunteers will be critical.
- And of course – **FOSTERS!** We need more foster homes for the increasing amount of goldens needing to come into our program. Rescue pays for medical expenses. All you need to do is supply lots of love and support while the dog awaits adoption ... Please consider fostering today.

As always, a big thank you goes to our volunteers who work so hard. We are thankful for each and every one of you, and the goldens in our program owe you their lives.

Until next time!

Barbara

How to Help

If you are willing to help on our team and want to apply for these positions, please e-mail us at info@grrmf.org, give us a call at 407-332-2840 mailbox #4, or write us at:

GRRMF
P.O. Box 1449
Goldenrod, FL 32733



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

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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 \$25 ☐ Voting Membership \$25 (must volunteer minimum of 20 hours/year to GRRMF)
☐ Sponsorship \$100 (for helping a dog in need – you receive recognition in the newsletter.)
☐ Gift Membership \$25 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. (\$100 donation will purchase an inscribed brick to be placed at the new shelter.
To order an inscribed brick, return this form with your \$100 donation or call the GRRMF Hotline: 407-332-2840, Mailbox 4.)
☐ \$ _____ to the Boarding Fund to help house goldens on a temporary basis until a foster home can be located.
☐ \$ _____ for this purpose: _____
☐ \$ _____ in memory of _____. Send acknowledgment to: _____
☐ \$ _____ in honor of _____

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

A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Division of Consumer Services by calling toll-free 1-800-435-7352 within the state.

Registration does not imply endorsement, approval, or recommendation by the state.