



HEARTS OF GOLD

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

Volume 6, Issue 2

Summer 2003

2003 Reunion:

Some 100 dogs & their humans braved the rain to attend this year's reunion - recap on page 15.



Bufo Toad Toxicity:

Don't let your dog kiss this toad! Details on page 13.



Lovey goes home:

Lovey is one of many recently adopted goldens. She's a special girl -- but then, aren't they all? See our Recent Adoptions on page 3.



Far to Go: A Very Special Dog Named Fargo Needs Our Help!

When the call came from Seminole Animal Control a few months ago about a stray golden, a GRRMF volunteer was dispatched in short order.

What she found was a scrawny and scruffy adult golden with a personality worth the weight of five goldens. No surprise to us, Fargo was heartworm-positive. We authorized treatment, and soon Fargo was settling in at his new foster home.

Like everyone else who meets Fargo, his foster mom fell in love with his sweet disposition and cuddly nature. Hard to believe no one wanted this wonderful golden who had so much love to give! But we were soon to learn that Fargo still had "far to go."

Fargo's back legs were weak, and he seemed to have difficulty getting up. Our first suspicion was hip dysplasia, a common problem in large-breed dogs, but x-rays revealed a very healthy set of hips. The GRRMF board agreed to send Fargo to Affiliated Veterinary Specialists in Maitland for a workup.

What we learned was that Fargo has a spinal condition, most likely from an injury, that is putting pressure on the nerves in his lower back and legs.

We'll never know what happened to him, but just like any human with a serious back injury, Fargo is in a great deal of pain, and probably has been for a long time. As a result, his muscles are atrophied and weak.

Fargo needs back surgery to help him lead a full and active life. He is only 5 years old and otherwise is in good health. Best of all, he has the golden personality that we all love and cherish.

Some people would have euthanized Fargo, but our board couldn't look into those warm, brown eyes and not give him a second chance.

If you could find it in your heart to send us a small donation - even \$5 - we are pooling our resources right now to

fund his surgery. GRRMF is a nonprofit organization and relies solely on donations to survive. It doesn't take too many cases like Fargo to deplete our limited resources.

We need your help to send Fargo on his next journey - to a forever home where he can be free of pain and lavish his new family with a lifetime of love and devotion.



**Please help me: My name is Fargo.
This picture was taken when I was
rescued from the shelter.**

**I haven't had such a great life,
but my friends at GRRMF
say they're going to help me feel better.
I sure hope so - I have so much love to give!**

Yes, I want to help Fargo! Enclosed is my donation for \$ _____

Name _____ Address _____ City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ E-Mail _____

**All donations are tax-deductible, and contributions will be listed in the next newsletter.
Mail completed form and check to: GRRMF, Post Office Box 1449, Goldenrod, Florida 32733.**

President's Message

by Barbara Durham

It's that time of year again - to get our goldens in shape! Time to get off all that weight from eating too many Christmas biscuits and get ready for the summer season.

Speaking of feeding your dog ... we heard from many of you on our Annual Adoption Followup Forms. Thanks to all who took the time to send in these forms and let us know how your dog is doing.

I did notice a trend on the forms related to choice of dog food that I thought I would address. Most folks try to pick a good dog food for their beloved goldens. However, be aware: Some major dog food companies have developed marketing campaigns that make their food sound like it's made from healthy ingredients when, in reality, it's less than optimal.



These ads can be very confusing if you don't know much about dog food ingredients and what to look for. On the special insert called "Feeding Your Golden for Optimum Health and Longevity", we've included some basic guidelines for selecting a dog food, including a close look at different types of ingredients. I'm amazed at how many people never flip the bag over and actually read what's in the food they feed their dogs.

So-called new "holistic" dog foods are receiving a lot of hype - and basically the only thing that makes them holistic is that they aren't preserved with cancer-causing chemicals like many other dog foods. That doesn't mean the remaining ingredients are "holistic"!

For example, let's look at Purina's new product called Beneful. The bag has pictures of nice, fresh vegetables on it. But read the first few ingredients: Ground yellow corn, chicken-by-product meal, corn gluten meal, whole wheat flour, beef tallow preserved with mixed-tocopherols (source of Vitamin E), rice flour, beef, soy flour, sugar, sorbitol, tricalcium phosphate, water, animal digest, salt ...

When the first ingredient in a food is a grain - such as "ground yellow corn" above - that's the largest ingredient in the recipe. And remember, dogs are carnivores! Reading on, by-products can be pretty nasty stuff, corn gluten meal is a low quality ingredient and this food has sugar, sorbitol and salt in it. Beef tallow is often a low-quality fat that is a by-product of processing meat. And if that doesn't turn you off, "animal digest" is the entire digestive tract of the animal -- including what's in it. Yuck.

Also view the first few ingredients of Science Diet's new "Nature's Best": Brewer's rice, ground wheat, turkey meal, animal fat (preserved with mixed tocopherols and citric acid), corn gluten meal, soybean meal, dried beet pulp, beef, peas, carrots, chicken liver flavor, vegetable oil, dried egg product, L-lysine ...

This food also has a lower quality grain as the first ingredient. Brewer's rice is a byproduct of the brewery industry - not whole brown rice. The second ingredient is also a grain -- ground wheat. It's not until the third ingredient that there is any kind of meat.

"Animal fat" also can be fats from various low-quality sources. Finally, notice how far down on the list those wholesome-looking fresh veggies from the packaging are.

One option for feeding your dog more veggies is to start with a high-quality dog food and add a few steamed or canned veggies (such as no-salt-added green beans, sweet potato, canned pumpkin or carrots) yourself.

Lastly, many folks are feeding "light" dog foods, trying to get weight off their dogs. We admire you for your concern for your dog! However, please be aware that some of these foods are FULL of fillers. For example, Science Diet Prescription R/D has the following among the first few ingredients: corn meal, peanut hulls 28.2% (a source of fiber), chicken by-product meal, soybean meal, soybean mill run, chicken liver flavor, dried egg product, vegetable oil, taurine, L-carnitine, preserved with BHT, BHA and ethoxyquin, minerals ...

I want you to really focus on what these ingredients are telling us. The food is 28.2% PEANUT HULLS. I don't know about you, but feeding my dog peanut hulls and paying a lot of money for it isn't my idea of a good way to spend my money or feed my dog. Also, this food is preserved with the chemicals BHT, BHA and ethoxyquin which are preservatives. We recommend feeding a slightly smaller portion of regular dog food - see our recommendations in the insert - and supplementing with no-salt canned green beans to lose weight. Green beans are very nutritious and filling, without adding calories or fillers.

Finally, I'm not trying to knock any one dog food company, because there are many good options out there, too. My purpose is to help our readers become more informed when deciding what to feed their dogs.

Here is my advice to each of our adopters: Please read your dog food ingredients and ask us if you have any questions. We believe that feeding a good food is important and it's often not any more expensive to do so. We are very interested in the long-term health of your golden!

-- Barbara, info@grrmf.org or (407) 332-2840 and leave message.

See the special insert in this issue, "Feeding Your Golden for Optimum Health and Longevity," for more information on nutrition.

Recent Adoptions - Summer 2003



Hudson was found as a stray and placed on death row at Sarasota Animal Services when rescue was called. With ears a little too short and a streak of black on the tip of his tail, we knew

immediately he was an "honorary golden." But we also realized we were his only hope, and once volunteers John & Gail P. looked into those big brown eyes, there was no turning back. They took him in, and within a very short time Hudson had learned how to get along with other dogs, live inside a house and behave properly around humans. And we learned that he has that golden temperament we all love - bright, cheerful and eager to please. We're thankful we were able to help this special guy. We received many inquiries about Hudson, and Bill & Arlene are the lucky humans who got to take him home. Here's what Arlene had to say after only a few days with her new best friend: *"I am 100 percent sure this dog is for me. We have bonded big time. He is very smart and wants so much to please me. You were right - with a little guidance, he's turning into a wonderful companion. I love this dog!"*

Jebber found his way to GRRMF through a PetsMart employee in Southwest Florida. His owner was moving into a nursing facility, and Jebber was going to be euthanized if we didn't act quickly. Lisa



and Eric M. answered our plea for help and agreed to foster him. Well, that lasted a few days, and then we received this e-mail: *"I'm sorry to say Jebber is not working out as a foster at Lisa and Eric's. No, they can't foster him any longer, they have to KEEP him!"* According to his vet records, Jebber is going on 15 years - he must have a great hairdresser, because we can't find a gray hair on him! Lisa says she fell in love with him *"in no time flat. What's not to love about a sweet boy like him? He smiles a lot and wags his tail, but the best part is, he gives great hugs and kisses!"* Well, we say those hugs and kisses Lisa's getting are well-deserved! The call came during a difficult week when GRRMF had already fielded several emergencies - we were bursting at the seams and literally did not have any place for him to go. Lisa saved the day - and Jebber's life by answering our plea.

Angie is a very special rescue who touched the hearts of many. She was bought from a pet store and spent the first years of her life outside. When she came to rescue, Angie was skittish and frightened of everything. Then, the worst news came - Angie had severe hip dysplasia. After corrective surgery, Angie faced a long road of recovery through several types of therapy. We are grateful to the many volunteers who helped by fostering or transporting her to her therapy sessions. And most of all, to the wonderful folks at Hip Dog Therapy and Veterinary Acupuncture, who helped Angie recuperate through hydrotherapy and holistic medicine. We are very happy to report that Angie finally has found her forever home with Melissa K., who lost her beloved Chisum, also a former rescue, last month due to a sudden illness. What a lucky girl Angie is! After all Angie has been through in her short life, she deserved a special home. And she got it with Melissa. Angie will get to be the center of attention at both her house and her "grandma's" house, which she visits often.



Brandy, 4-5 years old, was going to be euthanized when her owner moved into a nursing facility. A good Samaritan stepped in and called rescue instead. Lucky for us - this pretty girl is nothing but "sugar and spice, sweetness and nice" - she loves attention and will give you "the paw" whenever you stop petting her. And with those big brown eyes, she is irresistible! Brandy is about 20 pounds overweight, but her new humans, Laura & George G., are committed to restoring her girl-ish figure with a quality diet and exercise. Brandy's favorite treat is raw carrots, and she loves her new food with green beans. She enjoys her daily walks more each day and is overcoming some of her shyness, although she is still very sensitive to new "adventures" - like the day she got her first bath. *"She wouldn't move, so we had to put her in the tub and then lift her out. She wouldn't shake, either, so she was soaking wet and we were slipping all over the place trying to get her out of the tub ... what a riot,"* Laura says. We're delighted that Brandy has found such loving and tender new humans (with a good sense of humor to boot) willing to help her lead a healthy and fulfilling life.



Nora was a stray found around Christmas time. Shy and sweet, she was fostered by Sandy S. and her canine crew, who thoroughly enjoyed watching as Nora's personality began to blossom. She found a home with Pat M. and Deb W. and their former rescue, Freeman. They have become quite the family with trips to the dog park, romps in the back yard and the two goldens sharing their water bowl and toys. Sweet Nora (at right in photo) could not have found a better home.



Victory was relinquished when his former owner could no longer afford to care for him. He was overweight and had skin problems, both easily corrected with a little TLC. Victory

went on a diet and lost his extra weight. He learned to channel his exuberance into positive play and became the perfect house dog. He was adopted by Karen W. and her canine buddy, Jake. Karen says that Victory, now called Tucker, has been the perfect addition to her family. He even has taught Jake how to walk nicer on leash!

Scout came to us from the good folks at Sarasota Animal Control. Heartworm positive and unsplayed at 8 years, this little stray might as well have come in with a sign that said "unadoptable." The world would have been a sadder place if Scout had been euthanized. What a treasure she is - wonderful temperament, playful, well-mannered and very petite at only 50 pounds. Scout was fostered by Linda and Bill Fike and adopted by Sue M., who is enjoying every moment she shares with her new best friend.





Kelly was adopted many years ago and was recently turned back in. We learned that she had been kept outside, which our adoption contract clearly forbids. Aside from some needed

housetraining, she is perfect in every way, according to her new forever mom, Debbie B., who calls her Maddie. This recent note from Kelly/Madison's owner tells it all: *"On Feb. 1, I had to put to sleep my 14-year-old golden, Chumley, due to a brain tumor. Life just wasn't the same coming home to an empty house without a golden there to greet me. My parents rescued Savannah five years ago from GRRMF, and I realized I needed a rescue ... a dog no one wanted ... and I knew that Chumley would want me to love again. In went the application, and Betty Wyatt had the perfect dog for me. Her name was Kelly. My birthday was April 5, and I couldn't think of a better present to give myself. I adopted her on April 4! I decided to change her name so she'd have a new name for a new life. I named her Madison (Maddie), but I should have called her 'Lizzie the Lizard Hunter.' Having only lived in a backyard, it became apparent that lizards were her life (and still are but she's beginning to realize there's lots more to life than that). Maddie was never allowed in the house and had to figure out what A/C was all about. She now has tons of toys, bones, treats, a soft bed, comfy couch and plenty of love and affection, which she's slowly learning how to accept. Maddie finally is in her forever home. She is unique and special in her own way and certainly brought life back into my house. Thank you, GRRMF, from me and my Maddie Moo. We are both healing each other's broken hearts."*
-- Debbie B.

Rocky, 2-3 years, was turned in when his owner became terminally ill. He was well taken care of and very much loved. Lori & Tim M. and their children were thrilled when they got the call about Rocky. Their 6-year-old golden, MacKenzie, passed away last summer unexpectedly from cancer, and they missed having a golden in their family. Rocky did a lot of learning the first week, mostly looking for reassurance in his confusion over what was happening to him. Once he settled in, Rocky began showering his new family with plenty of love and kisses. Lori plans on taking Rocky to obedience classes and is eager for him to earn his Canine Good Citizen certificate, which shouldn't be difficult as Rocky is a smart boy and already knows many commands. He is particularly adept



at helping the kids pick up around the house ... sort of ... as he loves carrying everything around in his mouth.

Findley, now Fynne, is a sweet puppy of just 1 year. He was lucky to find a home with Bob, Patty, Dylann & Bryant. Fynne also resides with Molly the Jack Russell and a cat. He has been taking obedience lessons and doing well. On his first day with his new family, Fynne, who had never been swimming before, managed to fall into the pool by accident. Apparently, this traumatic incident had no long-lasting affects on him, because Patty reports it is now hard to keep him OUT of the pool!



Kendall was scheduled to be euthanized at animal control because he was reportedly deaf. GRRMF intervened, and a volunteer was dispatched to pick him up. Sure enough, in

the shelter, Kendall was unresponsive to voice commands. However, on the way home, the volunteer tried again - and guess what ... Kendall responded just fine! This dog was not deaf. He was simply shutting down due to the trauma of being confined to that terrible place. Like so many of the dogs we get from shelters, Kendall was a mess. But we cleaned him up and after a passing grade from the veterinarian, he was adopted by Al & Stephanie, who call him Shawn. Shawn is adored by his new family, which includes another older golden and a cat. His family reports it's hard to keep the weight off him when he does this (see picture). But ... he is losing weight and looks great!

Copper was turned in when his owners moved north. He's aptly named, as Copper is a big, red dog - and he's handsome, too! He was adopted by Lynn H., who knows she is the lucky one to have such a beautiful and well-behaved new companion.



Tinkerbell was found as a stray during the holidays. She's a pretty young female, but like so many rescues, she was completely untrained. Nicole D. felt she was up to the challenge, and took "Belle" home to begin her new life. Here's what Nicole has to say today: *"I have had Belle about three months now. When I first brought her home, she was a little terror, with little to no training. We immediately went through obedience classes together and began bonding. The first month was a bit rocky -- she was as mischievous as they come, but my how smart this breed is! As the second month went by, she began to find her confidence -- she began to feel 'at home.' Belle is now wonderfully adjusted. She is a little lover and sneaks snuggles at every opportunity. Three weeks ago, she had her first swim at the Davis Island water park and took to the water like a little fish -- making friends everywhere she went! Whatever has happened to Belle in her past seems to be a distant memory now. She now lives to make us smile (and for the next trip to the dog park). I'm so proud of her."*



Charlene, 7 years old, lived on a porch until her owner dumped her at PetsMart, who called GRRMF. They told us they'd never seen ears so infected, so we knew to expect the worst. Charlene had several health issues to clear up before she could be adopted. Suzanne G. offered to foster her, and the two quickly bonded. As time passed, Suzanne realized she could not give this special golden up. Charlene, now healthy and happy, can look forward to many happy years with her new human.

Buddyfreddie was purchased as a puppy. When the novelty wore off and the kids no longer paid any attention to him, his owners called rescue. He was going to a shelter if we didn't take him. His foster parents nicknamed him "Pony," as his head was as tall as the kitchen counters. Buddyfreddie is a beautiful boy, and we are glad to have saved him. He was adopted by Neil & Suzanne H., who can't say enough good things about him.

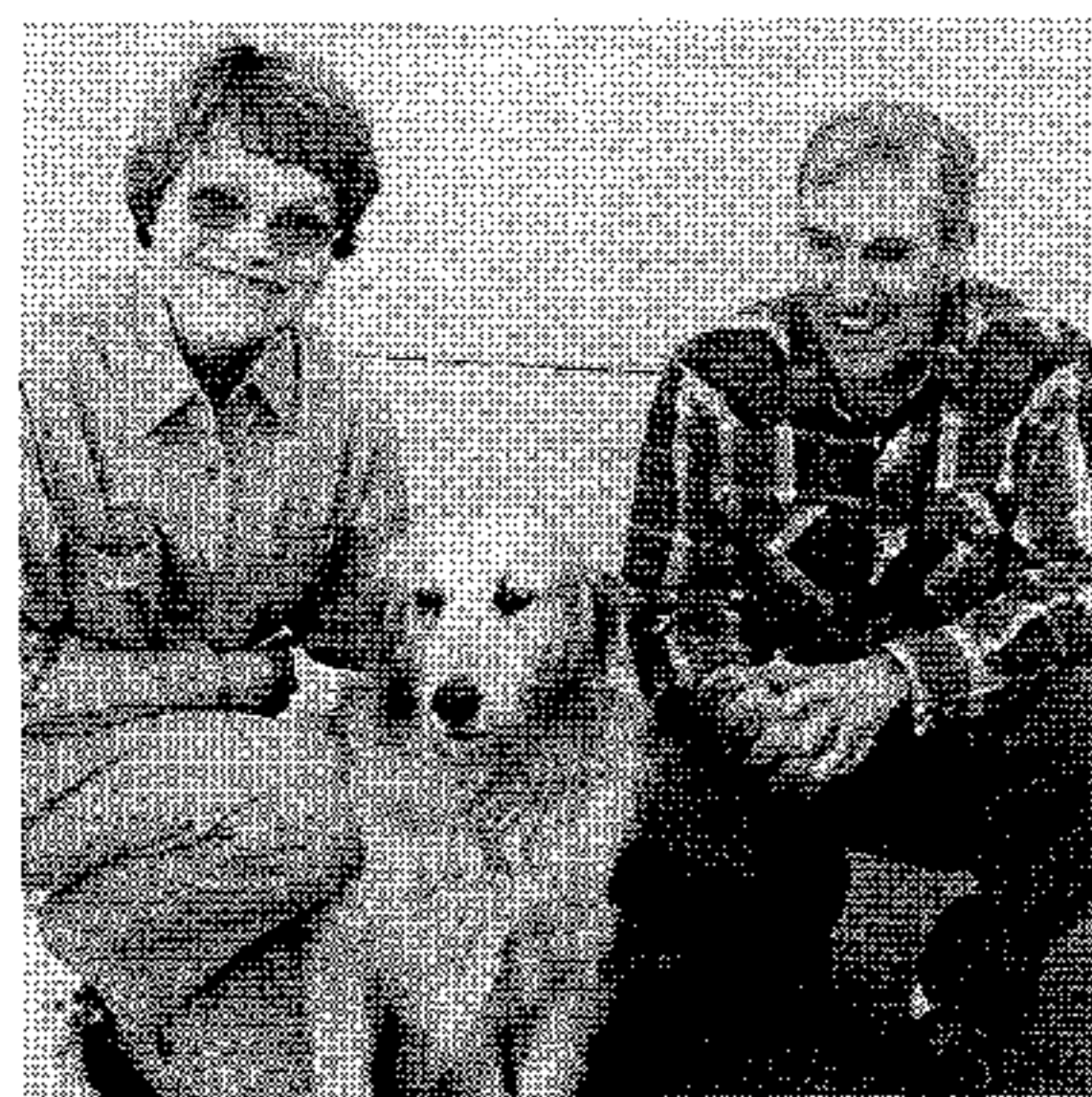
Brandi, 1 year old, belonged to a pair of medical residents who worked long hours. They left her in the backyard during work hours, with the garage door open to allow her some shelter. Lucky for Brandi, they finally came to terms with their situation and realized they owed it to Brandi to find a better home for her. Russ W., who shares his home with former rescue Summer, offered to foster Brandi. But Brandi had other ideas. She quickly bonded with Summer, so Russ had no choice but to make the arrangement permanent. What a wonderful life this former backyard puppy has now!

Bonnie, 4-5 years, was found as a stray and boarded while in heartworm treatment with Dr. Ehlers and his staff at 434 Animal Hospital. She was such a dear, everyone at the vet's office fell in love with her. Bonnie is a sweet and gentle dog, always smiling and wagging her tail. Maryanne & Jeff L. also fell in love with Bonnie, and took her home, where she is much loved.

And now Bonnie has a new brother, **Byron**.

Byron (at right in photo) also was found as a stray and turned over to rescue. He is older than Bonnie, but still a puppy at heart.

He loves playing ball and makes people laugh with his antics. After his heartworm treatment was completed, Maryanne & Jeff decided to add Byron to their family after meeting him at his foster mom's home. These two former strays clearly have found their own fairy tale ending - they are very much loved in their new home.



Lovey was rescued from an abusive situation. We received a call from a woman who said her ex-husband had already injured Lovey and killed the other family dog,

and she was afraid Lovey would be next if she didn't get the dog out. A GRRMF volunteer picked Lovey up that day. Despite spending more than an hour picking ticks off her incredibly dirty little body, GRRMF volunteers smiled as Lovey's personality sparkled. It's hard to imagine someone not loving this dear soul, let alone harming her in any way. She is a true Velcro golden - cuddly, sweet and very gentle. After heartworm treatment, we began looking for just the right family for Lovey. Along came Pat & Jim H., who were looking for a pet therapy dog. We knew immediately that Lovey had found her forever home. We are deeply indebted to all the volunteers and professionals who helped us with Lovey, and grateful that she has finally found a place where she no longer needs to be afraid.

*"To the world, you
may be one person,
but to your dog, you
are the whole world."*

Crystal & Troy were found together wandering the streets. The people who rescued them would have loved to keep these two beautiful and well-behaved goldens, but they already had a house full of dogs, so they called GRRMF. Chris S. adopted them and plans on taking them to obedience classes to help focus and direct their puppy energy. Good plan, Chris, and best of luck to you in earning top honors in those classes!



Carson came to us from an animal shelter on the east coast. Like so many we get in, he was heartworm positive and intact. Also like many of our rescues, Carson is laid-back,

well-behaved and sweet as they come. Carson was adopted and is now very much loved by Rebecca G. and her other dog, Jasmine. Actually, Jasmine is the one who adopted Carson. Jasmine is pretty picky about who she accepts into her home. When she met Carson, she accepted him immediately, and both get along fabulously.

Ginger was found as a stray and taken in by a good Samaritan who owned a horse farm and numerous other dogs. She called GRRMF and Karl & Eleanor agreed to foster. It was hard to even ID this girl because of lack of coat and poor physical condition. Once again, our foster program failed miserably when Karl & Eleanor fell in love and were unable to part with this wonderful golden. What a gorgeous girl she has become!

Bailey O'Toole was purchased as a puppy by a senior couple, who quickly realized a puppy wasn't a wise choice. At 9 months, he was turned over to GRRMF. Bailey is a sweet and handsome pup, and big, too! He was adopted by Martha & Richard B., who think he is absolutely wonderful. His favorite activity is going to the dog park, which he is lucky enough to live next door to.

Abe, 16 weeks, came from an animal shelter on the East Coast. The shelter had a kennel cough epidemic and was going to put all their dogs down. They called us, because they said Abe was just too sweet for the world to lose. Lisa Ann H.

and her two teenagers thought so, too. They took him home, where he is quickly filling the void left when the family's senior golden passed away. Abe is scheduled to begin puppy classes soon, and we're sure he's going to be a quick learner. Abe is one lucky boy to have found GRRMF and this wonderful family.

Ashley, 5 months, was relinquished when her owners split up. After a vet check and spaying, Ashley was quickly snapped up by Phillip & Karen R., who now call her Peanut. This little cutie has many endearing traits, the most humorous of which is watching TV - especially the Animal Planet. As soon as it is turned on, she jumps up on the couch, lies down, crosses her paws and settles in to watch the show.

Charlie is a pretty 5-year-old with a beautiful red coat. He lost his home when his owners moved into an apartment. Charlie loves to go for walks and already knows basic commands.

Seeing his potential for a devoted, lifelong companion, his foster parents, Bob & Mary C., decided to adopt him, which suits Charlie just fine. He's a dear boy.



Peaches was taken to a West Coast shelter by a lady who asked them to put the dog down because Peaches had

"medical problems." The shelter took Peaches in, but declined to put her down and instead contacted GRRMF. The medical problem turned out to be nothing more than hypothyroidism, an easily diagnosed and very common medical condition among goldens. It costs pennies a day to treat and is NO big deal. Peaches now lives the good life with Sonia Y., her daughter, a family friend and three cats.



One-year-old **Selma** was turned in when she became too energetic for a family with young children. She was fostered by Kristin A., where she enjoyed playing with foster brother and former rescue Cody. Kathy & Rich S. spotted Selma on the Internet and

thought she'd be perfect. They were looking for a dog who would keep them busy and entertain them. They got it, and Selma, now called Marley, has started her first obedience class, which will help her learn to channel her energy in positive ways.

Four-year-old **Zoey** was turned in because she didn't walk politely on leash. She was fostered and adopted by Susan and Randy A. and shares her home with former rescues Corbin and Daisy.

Sisters **Dora and Peggy** were banished to the garage when their family decided to get hardwood floors in the house. New Year's Day was the start of their new life as they entered into their foster home. The Lees, who were looking for one dog, decided the sisters shouldn't be separated and opened up their hearts to both of them. Dora and Peggy are smart girls - they've already been to obedience class and are model house citizens.



Oscar was from a shelter in Jacksonville. GRRMF received a call from Chesapeake Bay Retriever Rescue saying Oscar was a purebred golden, not a "Chessie." GRRMF took him in even though, in truth, he probably is a Chessie/golden mix. He was put into boarding until a foster home could be found. Susan K., who volunteers for GRRMF and is an experienced dog trainer, was asked if she could foster Oscar. He had been in boarding for some time, and it was evident we needed an experienced person to evaluate Oscar. When Susan first took Oscar in, he was dog aggressive, people

aggressive and food protective. She began training him in obedience. Oscar did well but still had problems with other dogs and was very unreliable with people. Susan began to think he was not going to be able to be placed. GRRMF wanted to give Oscar one last chance, so we contacted another Chessie Rescue group who said they would work on trying to find a home for Oscar. While Susan was waiting to hear from Chessie Rescue, Susan's husband told her he was going to build her agility equipment to use for training as her Christmas present. Well, he kept his promise and in January, Susan decided to start training Oscar in agility. It was as though he was a new dog! He LOVED agility ... it gave him a "job" to do. Oscar started to get along with Susan's other dogs and even became better with his people aggression behavior. Susan and her husband made the decision to officially adopt Oscar, and the rest, as they say, is history.

Finding a Reputable Obedience Trainer

GRRMF wholeheartedly encourages everyone to take their golden through at least a beginner's obedience course to learn the basics of good manners - sit, stay, down, come and heel, among others. More importantly, obedience classes provide an organized structure upon which you and your dog can build a lasting relationship and communicate more effectively.

Many people go on to advanced training and even agility classes - all good ways to build your bond and burn off energy in a constructive and fun way.

We recommend that you choose wisely when deciding on a trainer or class. There are many different methods, but overall, GRRMF supports positive-reinforcement training methods taught by certified dog trainers.

Following is a list of trainers around the state we often refer new owners to. Many of these trainers offer discounted or even free classes to GRRMF alumni:

Orlando/Central Florida

Best Paw Forward/North Orlando/(407) 328-0550 or (407) 327-1920/www.bestpaw.com

Oviedo Dog Training Club/East Orlando/(407) 275-5787

Three J Dog Training School/West Orlando (Winter Garden)/(407) 654-1119

West Coast/Tampa Area

Courteous Canine Inc. - Lutz/(813) 949-1465/www.courteouscanine.com

e-mail: info@courteouscanine.com

Maritime Pet Kennels - Tarpon Springs/(727) 939-1089/e-mail: maritimepet@earthlink.net

Dog Gone Positive-St. Petersburg/(727) 319-9288/www.doggonepositive.com / e-mail: dgp@prodigy.net

West Coast/Sarasota

GRRMF's own John Pfohler & Sally Anne Rowland offer FREE training to rescues

Thursday nights/(941) 924-4616 or (941) 355-4336

Top Dog Training/(941) 379-5999

South Florida/Palm Beach/Martin Counties

Babette Haggerty's School for Dogs (561) 747-8181

Note: See item on Page 13 regarding Babette Haggerty's new book, "Woman's Best Friend."

Multiple Dogs and Collar Accidents

Don't Let This Happen to You!

by Carol McKee, GRRMF Volunteer

One of the things I love most about having multiple dogs is watching them play together. Like siblings, they'll play-bite at each other's ears, paws, tails ... just about anything. I love the soft growls and whines they make, like they're talking to each other. Often, my youngest, Magen, will grab a toy and shake it in 6-year-old Haley's face, to entice her to tug. A game of "keepaway" is sure to follow.

I don't know about you, but at my house, what I just described occurs a minimum of three or four times a day. They love each other dearly and communicate in a way that I, as a human, can only observe. When play time ends, it's common for them to curl up, nose to nose, and catch a nap together.

One morning, not too long ago, I almost lost Magen during the kind of play I just described.

My two girls were playing nicely on the floor, when suddenly, it escalated. By the time my husband and I made it across the room, a full-fledged confrontation was occurring. Haley was lunging at Magen, snapping and biting, seemingly pinning her down, while Magen desperately tried to get away, yelping and crying.

However, we quickly realized this was no "ordinary" scuffle. Somehow, Haley had gotten her bottom canine teeth (the long ones) stuck around and underneath Magen's collar! In trying to get away, Magen had twisted, causing the collar to tighten around both Haley's jaw and Magen's neck. Both dogs were panicked, and the more they struggled, the tighter the noose became. Magen, my sweet baby girl, was suffocating right before my eyes, while I stood by helplessly, unable to get even a finger underneath the collar to help her breathe.

To top it off, Haley was lunging at whatever came near, snapping those razor-sharp teeth and snarling like some kind of wild animal. By sheer luck (and more than a little brute force), my husband finally managed to find the buckle and unsnap it. He got a tooth in his thumb for the effort, but he very likely saved Magen's life.

We were lucky, as neither dog was injured and quickly made up. "Probably just a fluke accident," we tried to assure ourselves. But you can imagine our reaction when those two

With the wide array of foods available today, it can be hard to make a choice of what to feed your golden. Golden Retrievers are particularly sensitive to dietary concerns, and feeding them a high-quality diet can help boost their health and immune system.

Feeding a high-quality food is not necessarily more expensive. Price is misleading: Cheaper foods require more volume to be fed, up to several cups at each meal.

A golden will normally eat about two cups of premium food per day, more or less based on activity level and metabolism. Golden Retrievers are prone to skin problems, and a poor quality diet will cause skin problems which translates into costly veterinarian bills.

You will need to go to the pet store to purchase your food. Grocery store brands do not offer the nutrition golden Retrievers need for good health. Do not assume that just because a pet food is available from your veterinarian's office it is okay; read the ingredients and decide for yourself.

Do not be persuaded by fancy advertising - many commonly hyped foods are not high quality.

Here are some guidelines:

- ◆Look for food free of chemical preservatives. Do not feed foods with Ethoxyquin, BHA, BHT, propylene glycol, or sodium nitrate/nitrite. Some of these additives are suspected of causing cancer.
- ◆Look for food preserved with Tocopherols (Vitamins C and E) as well as rosemary and other herbs. When purchasing naturally

preserved foods, always check the "buy by" date on the bag closely and make sure you have several months before this date. Also it is important to buy your food where there is a good turnover of food so you get a fresh bag. Don't buy a bag that has grease stains on the outside and never feed moldy dog food to your dog. Always store dog food in an airtight container in a cool, dry place. If you only have one dog, consider buying 20 pound bags instead of 40 pounds bags so the food is fresher.

- ◆Look for a food that has some form of meat as the first ingredient. Avoid foods that have grain as the first ingredient. Also look for multiple meat proteins such as lamb, chicken and fish in the first seven ingredients. Protein from multiple sources is generally viewed as being beneficial, unless your dog is allergic to certain proteins. Dog food companies sometimes list several types of grains in the first seven

Feeding Your Golden Retriever for Optimum Health and Longevity

By Barbara Durham, President, GRRMF

ingredients. Beware of this - your dog needs animal protein in his diet!

- ◆Don't buy food that contains animal digest or by-products. Animal "digest" is the intestines of

the animal -- including what is in the intestines! "By-products" normally contain beaks, feet, feathers, heads and other slaughterhouse wastes.

- ◆Avoid foods that contain sugar products, artificial colors or flavors or salt. Semi-moist dog foods are the worst - they usually are loaded with artificial colors and sugars.

- ◆Added vitamins and minerals. These are beneficial only when applied after the baking process, because heat destroys vitamins. We often recommend adding a vitamin/mineral

supplement to your dog's diet, such as Missing Link. You can purchase this product via our Web site - www.grrmf.org - with proceeds benefiting rescue.

- ◆Look for human-grade ingredients. Most dog foods contain meat products that are not fit for human consumption. They can include meat from diseased livestock, condemned material from slaughterhouses (such as tumors cut away from meat) and, as horrible as it sounds, some pet foods include euthanized pets sold to rendering plants and even road kill. Is it any wonder so many dogs die from cancer when they are being fed meat from these sources? Don't hesitate to call your dog food company and ask them questions about what grade of meat goes into their dog food.

- ◆High-quality grains. Nearly every dog food contains grains such as rice, barley, corn or wheat. Most golden Retrievers do poorly on foods that contain corn or soy. Many golden Retrievers are



allergic to corn or wheat. So if your golden starts getting a lot of hot spots or skin problems - check his food. He might be allergic to something he is eating. Also, look for high-quality grains. Whole rice or brown rice are much better than white rice or ground brewer's rice. Barley is an excellent food source. Often pet food companies take the sweepings off the mill floor and put it in pet food. These products are called "grain fractions" and include brewer's rice, rice gluten, rice bran and corn gluten meal. Look for whole grains instead such as oatmeal, brown rice, barley, whole wheat and whole oats. Beware of things like "peanut hulls" - how nutritious could a peanut shell be? One of the most popular "light" prescription foods found in vet's offices is almost 30 percent peanut hulls - and people pay top dollar for this food!

◆**The same advice applies to treats.** Many treats are filled with sugars, preservatives and artificial colors. Try buying biscuits at your local dog bakery or making some yourself. The dog food companies listed below have high-quality treats available for your dog.

◆**Weight reduction diets.** We recommend cutting your dog's regular

kibble back by 1/3, and adding a half-can of green beans (no-salt variety preferred) to each meal. Beware of some diet dog

foods, they can be loaded with fillers that provide no added nutrition. At least green beans are healthy. You can also use canned pumpkin. Typically goldens love it! DO NOT free feed your golden. Instead, feed a measured amount of food twice a day.

Most adult goldens will eat 1 cup of premium dog food twice a day. *Is your dog too fat?* You should be able to feel its ribs and your dog should have a waist. We have found that we have a different view of what constitutes a fat dog than some

veterinarians. They may not judge a dog to be fat

when our guidelines suggest otherwise. They will typically allow dogs to carry more weight than is optimal. This perhaps is because they do not want to insult their clients and risk losing business. Letting your golden get too fat is like chopping years off her life. We also see lots of hip problems with goldens, and keeping weight in check will give your dog better mobility. Fat goldens are an epidemic. We routinely get goldens into our rescue program that have to lose 30-40 pounds! We have a lot of experience at taking the weight off and it makes us sick when an adoptive home will let some weight creep back on. If you really love your dog, you will keep it at a normal weight. Remember: ribs and waists! Can you feel and see them on your dog? If not, break open the cans of green beans!

◆**Avoid exercising your dog right after eating to reduce the incidence of bloat.** Wait a few hours before any vigorous exercise.

The bottom line is, read the ingredients - do they sound like something YOU would like to eat? Probably the best choice commonly available in large chain pet stores is Nutro Natural Choice, either Chicken Meal & Rice Adult or Lamb and Rice Adult (do not get the large dog variety, which contains corn and wheat which are common allergens to goldens).



Foods such as Pedigree, Science Diet, Iams usually have by-products, chemical preservatives or animal digest in them and are not optimal. Some lower quality foods have no meat in them at all - only bone meal! There are also some very good specialty dog foods, but they are a little harder to find. Foods featuring "human grade" ingredients are the best; this means the meat in the dog food is the same quality that would be fed to people.

Here are some of the top brands available:

◆**Solid Gold Hund-N-Flocken Dog Food** (lamb, rice, barley),

www.solidgoldhealth.com, or order direct

from First Choice Pet Supply in Miami: (800) 994-7387.

◆**Natura Pet Food Company** -

Innova and California Natural Brands, Innova has multiple proteins - turkey, chicken, fish -- California Natural lamb and rice, www.naturapet.com.

◆**Candidae Dog Food** -

Contains multiple proteins including chicken, turkey, lamb and fish, www.canidae.com

◆**Wellness** brand made by Old Mother

Hubbard, three varieties including a fish and sweet potato that is good for dogs with allergies. www.oldmotherhubbard.com.

◆**Balance Diet**, www.balancediet.com

There are other good foods available besides those listed above - just check any food carefully to make sure you are feeding your golden a high quality food to enhance his or her health! And don't be hesitant to ask us questions. We're always willing to talk about good nutrition for our goldens! E-mail: info@grrmf.org or (407) 332-2840.



Happy girls: Abbey, Magen and Haley are relieved that their humans no longer panic when they engage in dog-play.

decided to play again a few hours later - you never saw two people jump across a room so fast!

What to Do?

We discussed removing their collars while in the house, but immediately dismissed the idea. Without ID tags, there is no connection back to us should something happen. Would my girls bolt if a door was left open or wasn't latched completely and drifted open while we weren't watching them? We'd all like to think our dogs are so happy and bonded with us that they'll never want to leave, right? But in reality, a dog is a dog.

And regardless of their loyalty, dogs are opportunists. This is how I envision my dogs' reasoning process:

Door open = outside = running, playing, sniffing, things to chase = FUN!
= GO! GO! GO!

Determined to find a solution, I decided to do some research. What I discovered made me feel physically ill. There are hundreds of stories about people - caring, loving dog owners - who experienced a similar scenario ...

only they weren't so lucky. Many of those dogs died, either from strangulation or spinal fracture; i.e., broken neck. In a recent survey, 96 percent of veterinarians surveyed reported at least one case of collar strangulation injury and/or death every year.

I came across a Web site for a type of collar called a "breakaway safety collar," developed by a woman who lost her dog, Chinook, to collar strangulation. I felt compelled to share my story, and here is her reply: "The accident you experienced is the number one most frequent dog collar accident. It most often occurs in the backyard or inside the home in our dogs' safe environment. To an outsider, the accident sounds very bizarre, but because our dogs are neck biters by nature, this type of accident is behaviorally induced from natural play activity."

I ordered the collars that day. I never want to go through that frightening ordeal again.

Know the Risks

I am writing this article to educate our families about the risk of a collar-strangulation accident. Trust me on this: It is impossible to reason with a panicked 70-pound-plus golden retriever. In other words, you will NOT be able to explain to your dog: "Just hold still for a minute so I can get this collar off you!"

GRRMF does not advocate taking collars off while inside the house or yard. It is our policy that former rescues wear ID tags at all times. This is for the dog's safety and for your peace of mind. I wholeheartedly agree with that policy. It doesn't take too long volunteering for a rescue organization like GRRMF to understand the importance of leashes and ID tags - the stories we have heard would make you cry.

If you are interested in learning more about the safety collar, it is called "Chinook Breakaway Safety Collar," and it can be ordered through this Web site: www.breakawaycollar.com, as well as some other pet supply stores. The collar is safe for full-time use, even during leash activities - it has two metal rings on either side of the safety clip, so you simply hook the leash through BOTH rings to bypass the safety clip. This is very important - if you don't, the collar will do just as it is supposed to do and "breakaway" when pressure is exerted, such as pulling on a leash.

PLEASE NOTE: This collar may not be suitable for children, who could "forget" to loop the leash through BOTH rings.

Or, you might consider using a different collar for walks and other on-leash activities.

Collar choices are infinite, and there is no "one-size-fits-all" answer. Whatever you choose for your dogs, I hope that you will at least take the time to educate yourself on the different options available and how to use them properly - very important regardless of collar type - and then make your decision based on the safety and well-being of your golden.

I know I'm breathing much easier - pardon the pun - these days whenever my girls engage in play ... which at my house is pretty much all the time!

Please note: This article reflects the author's opinion and experiences and does not serve as an endorsement by GRRMF of the breakway safety collar or other specific products. Its intention is to raise awareness of this problem with our readers and owners of multiple dogs.

HEARTS OF GOLD is published for members of Golden Retriever Rescue of Mid-Florida, Inc.
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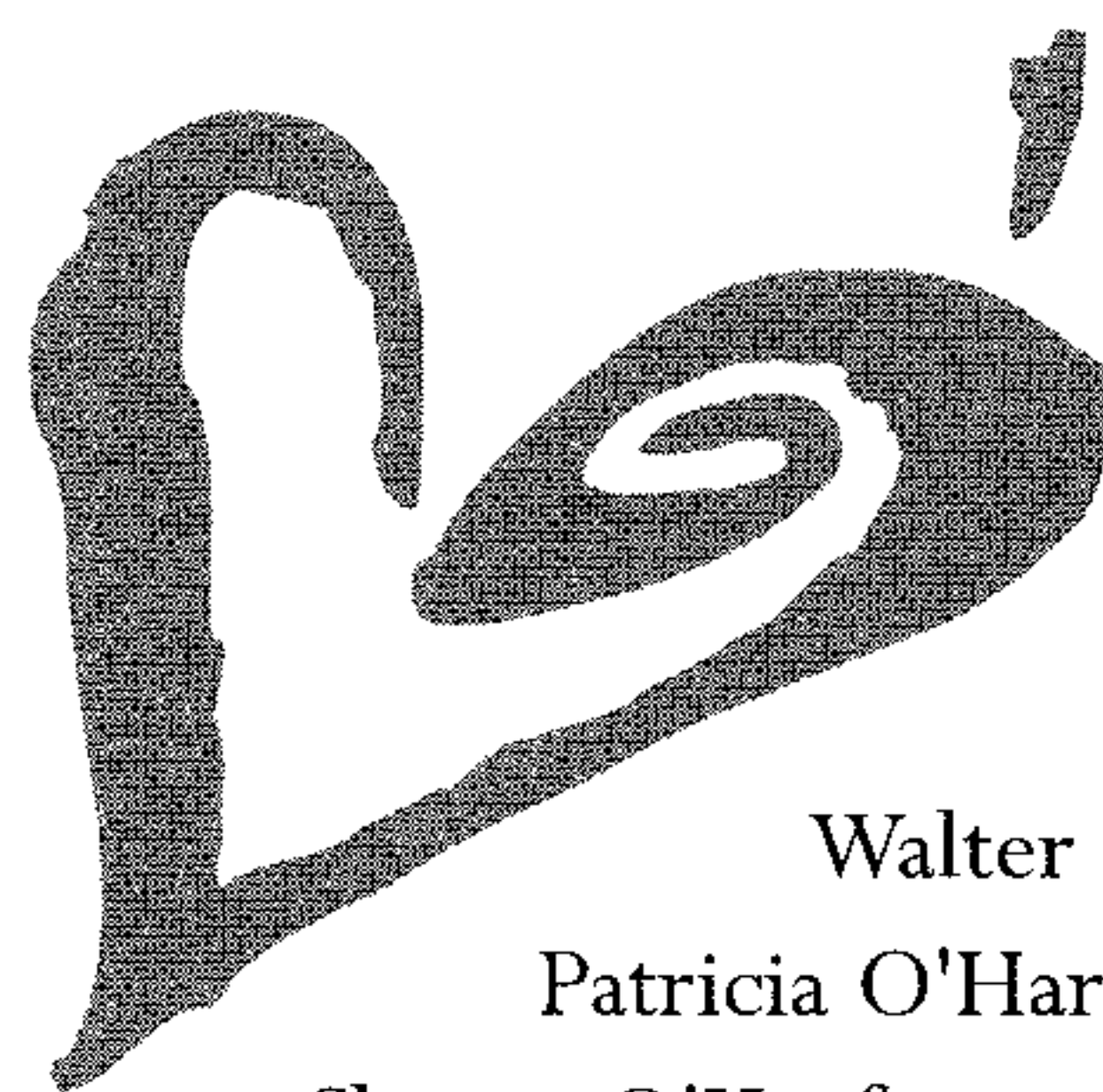
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Note: The GRRMF Board sends very special thanks to all volunteers and supporters - in our organization is growing, and we sometimes might miss a name or two. If we failed to mention and we'll try our best to list it next time. We couldn't operate without

Phyllis Sode
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Thanks!

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☀️**Transporting dogs:** John Foss, Gregg Eddie, Marcia McGovern, Loyd Kiernan, Marcie Caldwell & Jim Gallagher, George Toms.

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Carol Carrier, Lauren Hill & family.

☀️Special thanks to Sharon Sherwood for donating her graphic arts talents to design a logo for a new GRRMF t-shirt for our Rescue Reunion.

☀️A big thank you to volunteers who braved the rain and helped out during our Rescue Reunion in March.

☀️Many thanks to all who donated gifts for the Reunion Raffle & Silent Auction. Thanks to you, we raised nearly \$3,000 in much-needed funds for our rescue effort!

☀️Captain Haggerty for donating an autographed copy of his latest book, How to Teach Your Dog to Talk - 125 Easy-to-Learn Tricks Guaranteed to Entertain Both You and Your Pet, for the online ALOVE4GOLDENS auction to benefit GRRMF.

☀️A special thanks to Liz Warren, Pinellas County Parks Director, and Monte Alfonso, Parks Program Coordinator, for allowing GRRMF to set up education tables at all the Pinellas County dog park openings.

☀️To all who participate in Education Days around the state - our dedicated teams of volunteers are out there almost every week-end spreading the word about rescue with their goldens. Many doggie smooches to all of you! For schedule and locations: Page 16.

☀️For manning hotlines: Ellen Mathieson, Marie Pacheco, Betty Wyatt, Kerri Vorhies, Amanda Kern, Kelli Mehigan, Candace Jaffe, Emily Rowe, Diane Makinney.

☀️Applications Team: Sandy Sumner, Kathy Hendrickson, Pam Harrell and Peggy Litt.

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☀️Call Team: Linda Cohen, Vicki Ferros, Kathy Hendrickson, Sue Keiser, Melissa Knowles, Jeane Knowles, Robin Mackler, Carol McKee, Kathy Salisbury, Colleen Sosteri, Kerri Vorhies.

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☀️Veterinarians who helped by donating or discounting goods and services:

-All Creatures Animal Hospital, Lutz.

-Animal Hospital of Treasure Island, Treasure Island.

-Dr. Michael Schroeder, Animal Medical Clinic, Spring Hill.

-Dr. Rachael Beckett, Jackson Veterinary Practice, St. Augustine.

-Dr. Myburgh, Bright Cross Animal Clinic, Venice.

-Dr. Constance DiNatale, Veterinary Acupuncture, Winter Park.

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ing those we may have inadvertently left off this list. Although we try to list everyone, you, please let us know - (407) 332-2840 or e-mail our newsletter editor at 2boatrats@comcast.net - your help - you make a difference in the lives of hundreds of goldens!!

-Fox & Friends Animal Hospital, Sun City Center.

-Dr. Stanley Diment, Clermont Animal Hospital.

-Skyway Animal Hospital, St. Petersburg.

☀ For assistance and discounted or free services in training rescue dogs: Courteous Canine, Lutz; Best Paw Forward, Sanford; Oviedo Dog Training Club; 3J Dog Training, West Orlando; Babette Haggerty's School for Dogs, Jupiter; John Pfohler & Sally Anne Rowland, Sarasota.

☀ Christa Roman of Merial and Nicole Prosser of Novartis for donation of medical supplies such as Frontline, Advantage, heartworm preventive and heartworm treatment drugs. Also to Ellen Pavlik for coordinating these donations. We really appreciate your help!

☀ Staffs of PetsMart, Pet Supermarket, Border's Bookstore, Publix, Sam's Club other businesses across the state, for letting GRRMF set up educational booths. We are grateful for all their support of our organization.

☀ Andrea Davis, our new Intake Coordinator, and Nancy Carroll, Foster Coordinator, who are doing a fantastic job!

☀ Trainer Susan King, South Florida

☀ To Bob Harmeyer for donating a much-needed fax machine.

Get Well, Betty!

GRRMF sends special wishes to Adoption Coordinator Betty

Wyatt for a speedy recovery from recent back surgery. You are very much missed, Betty, and we all hope you feel better soon!

Anyone wanting to send Betty a note

can do so by writing to GRRMF, PO Box 1449, Goldenrod, FL 32733. Now more than ever, your notes - and pictures of your canine companions, of course! - will send some much-needed cheer to Betty as she recuperates from surgery.



A Dirty Little Habit

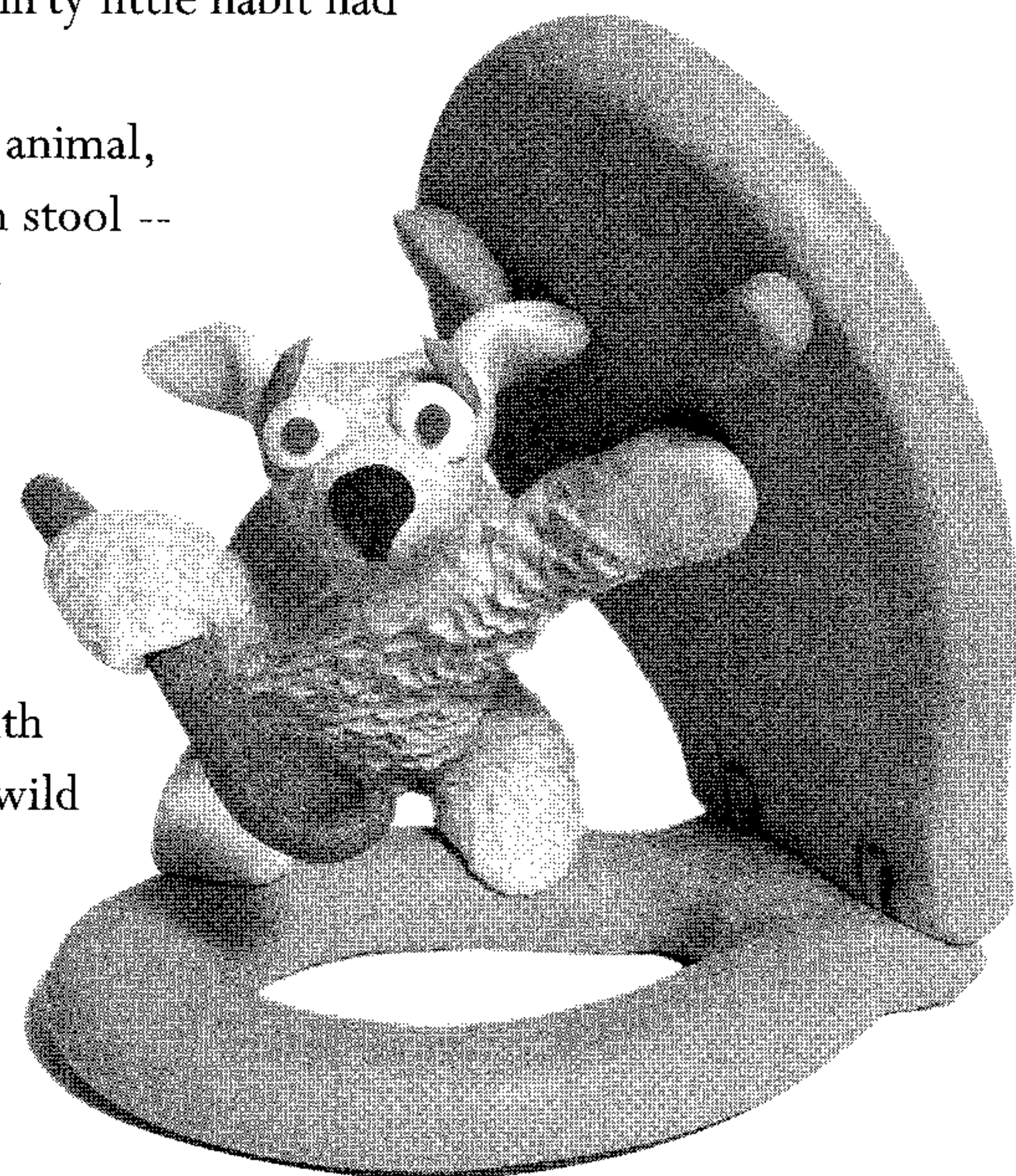
Behavior modification for dogs who eat feces

by Jacque Lynn Schultz, CPDT

As soon as Roscoe the retriever heard the sound of the resident cat scratching in the litter box, he made a beeline for the bathroom. There was nothing he liked better than moist, warm "kitty cookies" fresh from the cat! Since his follow-up behavior often included planting a big, wet smelly kiss on his guardian's cheek, this dirty little habit had to be extinguished ASAP.

Coprophagia, the ingestion of feces by an animal, is quite common in dogs. Some eat their own stool -- autocoprophagia. Some eat the stool of other dogs -- intraspecific coprophagia -- and, like Roscoe, some eat the stool of other animals -- interspecific coprophagia.

While disgusting to humans, fresh stool from healthy, domesticated animals is generally safe to eat. On the other hand, health risks are possible when dogs eat the feces of wild animals who are infested with internal parasites or of free-roaming cats who are infected with *toxoplasma gondii*. Unvaccinated dogs are at particular risk for contracting parvovirus or hepatitis if they eat the stool of infected dogs. Most canine coprophagics are 4-9 months of age and will outgrow the behavior. However, some dogs find the habit extremely rewarding, making it difficult to extinguish.



Oh My! Why?

The "whys" of coprophagia are many. Historically, dogs have been scavengers, living at the edge of civilization on the refuse and waste of others. Biologically, the mother dog stimulates elimination by her neonates by licking their genital regions and consumes their waste for the first three weeks of their lives. Normal investigative puppy behavior includes running nearly everything in the environment through one's mouth. The pup learns that some things taste better than others. Sometimes, that investigative behavior draws more owner attention than usual, resulting in a great game of chase around the house or yard.

When coupled with diarrhea or poor weight gain, coprophagia may be the result of a medical malady such as pancreatic insufficiency, intestinal infections or malabsorption troubles. Luckily, the exact reason why the dog engages in coprophagia does not need to be determined in order for a course of treatment to begin.

Pick a Plan

When signs of ill health are present, a veterinary workup is necessary. However, most coprophagics are simply healthy dogs who need a program that combines obedience training, careful management, environmental enrichment and, possibly, a dietary adjustment to achieve success. The treatment plan may vary depending on whether the dog is consuming his own feces or the feces of others.

For the autocoprophagic, leash walks for elimination are mandatory. You have to clean up the stool quicker than the dog can eat it. Use of a head halter will give you control of the dog's head. Teach the dog to hold a sit-stay a few steps away from the pile, so you can clean up. After picking up, reward the dog with a high-value treat before releasing him from the stay.

In cases where the dog consumes the stool while eliminating, a muzzle will be necessary. Change the dog's diet to one higher in fiber, and feed several small meals a day instead of one large one.

Dogs who eat the stool of others can be exercised off-lead in their own fenced property, but must be leashed and watched when off the premises. The handler must scan the ground a few feet ahead of the dog. When both the dog and handler spot a pile of feces, utter the command "leave it," and reward the dog when he averts his eyes from the object of desire.

Cat Cookies

Are cat feces your dog's dessert of choice? Since the dog is rewarded every time he raids the litter box, managing the situation - putting the box where the dog can't reach it -- will yield success.

If your dog respects barriers, gate off one room for the cat's litter pan. If your dog is large, cut a small opening in the vanity or linen closet or inside a large cardboard box from an appliance store, and set the litter box inside. Got a dog who's wary of the bathtub? Take advantage of that repulsion by placing the litter box in the tub. This solution works for households with small or short-legged dogs, too.

There may be a boredom component to this problem behavior. Try enlivening the environment and the dog's role in it by offering meals stuffed in food-dispensing toys or hidden throughout the house or yard. Engage the dog in active sports such as swimming, agility or long hikes in new territory. Time spent enriching your dog's life is never wasted and may be the final step in breaking this dirty little habit.

Jacque Lynn Schultz, CPDT, is the director of special projects for ASPCA Animal Sciences.

Reprinted from ASPCA Animal Watch, Spring 2003, Vol. 23, No. 1, with permission from The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, 424 East 92nd Street, New York, NY 10128-6804. Illustration by Samarra Khaja.

Smitten with a Golden

Six-year-old Erika Smitten is, well, "smitten" with a former rescue named Chase (formerly Gus). So much so, that she asked Chase's humans, who just happen to live next door, if she could "borrow" him one day for show and tell at her school.

Of course, Chase's humans, Linda & Barry Holliday, thought that was a charming idea. Seems that Erika is also very taken with Golden Retriever Rescue of Mid-Florida, and wanted to help spread the word in her own special way.

Barry and Chase were honored to tag along with Erika to school, where they proudly sat in front of the whole first grade class while Erika told Chase's story.

Goldens are naturally "hams," so we're sure no one enjoyed all the attention more than Chase!

But here is the sweetest part. Erika's birthday was in April. For her party, she asked her friends to bring donations to GRRMF in lieu of presents. Erika's dad promptly mailed a check to GRRMF for \$100 after the party.

Erika, GRRMF is honored to have you as our ambassador! You are our "honorary golden" for this issue. Kids like you certainly make the world a better place. You could teach a lot about giving and caring to many adults out there!

For Chase, it's back to normal. He's just happy to be alive and to be a golden. Chase lives with the Hollidays and another rescue golden, Shasta (formerly Bella).



School Daze: Former rescue Chase loved showing off for Erika Smitten's first grade classmates with his human dad, Barry Holliday



Mutt Strut: GRRMF volunteers at the recent "Mutt Strut" event on the West Coast had the wonderful opportunity to meet, chat and pose with animal behaviorist Joel Silverman of Animal Planet's "Good Dog U" fame. Many of us are long-time fans of his show and have learned many valuable training tips from him. Joel is a supporter of animal rescue and was happy to share his experiences with us from another golden retriever rescue group out West. He is currently developing a new TV series, hopefully to start airing next year. From what he told us, it promises to be every bit informative and educational as Good Dog U. Left to Right: Meg Newman & Noel, Sue Keiser & Saxon, Lisa Beck & Deuce, Debbie McGhehey, Joel Silverman, Donna Dossing & Haley and Chuck Graves & Tara.

It's Not Too Late! Renew Your GRRMF Membership Today!

Many thanks to those who sent in their 2003 membership dues. We really appreciate your support! If you haven't sent in your annual dues, please help us meet our goal of increasing our membership by 25 percent by sending it in today!

Memberships start at just \$25 per year. Or for \$100, you can join at the sponsorship level, for which you help a special-needs dog. Sponsors are recognized in the newsletter. And remember: GRRMF is an all-volunteer 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, so your dues are tax-deductible. One hundred percent of your contribution will go toward helping goldens in need.

Membership/donation form included on Page 16.

This issue, I want to continue some of the topics I wrote about in the last newsletter. One of the things I mentioned was the importance of microchips and how they should remain registered to GRRMF. We had not even gone to press with the newsletter when I received a call from an animal shelter in South Carolina. One of our dogs had shown up there, and they tracked it to us through the microchip.

While traveling, the owners had been involved in a car accident and were hospitalized.

The dog escaped from the vehicle during the crash.

Fortunately, the owners were able to communicate with their rescuers about their golden. The rescuers eventually caught the frightened dog and took her to animal control.

Thankfully, this story has a happy ending, because the owners knew where the dog had been taken and were able to claim her as soon as they were released from the hospital. I suffered a sleepless night worrying about the dog and its owners. And the dog and her family had a couple of rough days, but all is well now.

Before we knew what happened to the owners, we were prepared to make the necessary preparations to have the dog picked up and returned to our care. We rescue groups work together, and we were already in the process of making transportation arrangements.

Our challenge is trying to keep up with your address and phone changes - if we can't find you, we can't return your dog to you. Please remember to inform us when you move or change phones. Also, please let friends and family know to contact us if anything should happen to you. It's important to let people know where your dog came from and that it should be returned to us if the unthinkable happens - this way, you are assured that whomever adopts your beloved golden has to pass the same rigid standards that you did.

Along the same line, when you leave your dog

in the care of another person, please be careful and succinct in your instructions for the dog's care. Please be sure the dog won't be left outside unattended. Many rescues come to us as strays and backyard dogs. They can be escape artists and are very adept at digging their way out of confinement, especially when they become anxious or worried. Remember, they've already been displaced at least once, and can be sensitive to new surroundings - especially if you leave them.

This happened recently when a dog I had fostered and loved as my own was killed. The dog was left with a relative, who let him outside in the backyard unattended. When the dog decided it was time to go home, he dug under the fence and escaped. With no one there to stop him, he ran into the street and was killed by a passing car. What a sad and meaningless death for a beautiful and sweet golden. It was an accident, and Chad's family is devastated, as I am. But I can't help coming back to the same conclusion every time. This accident could have been prevented.

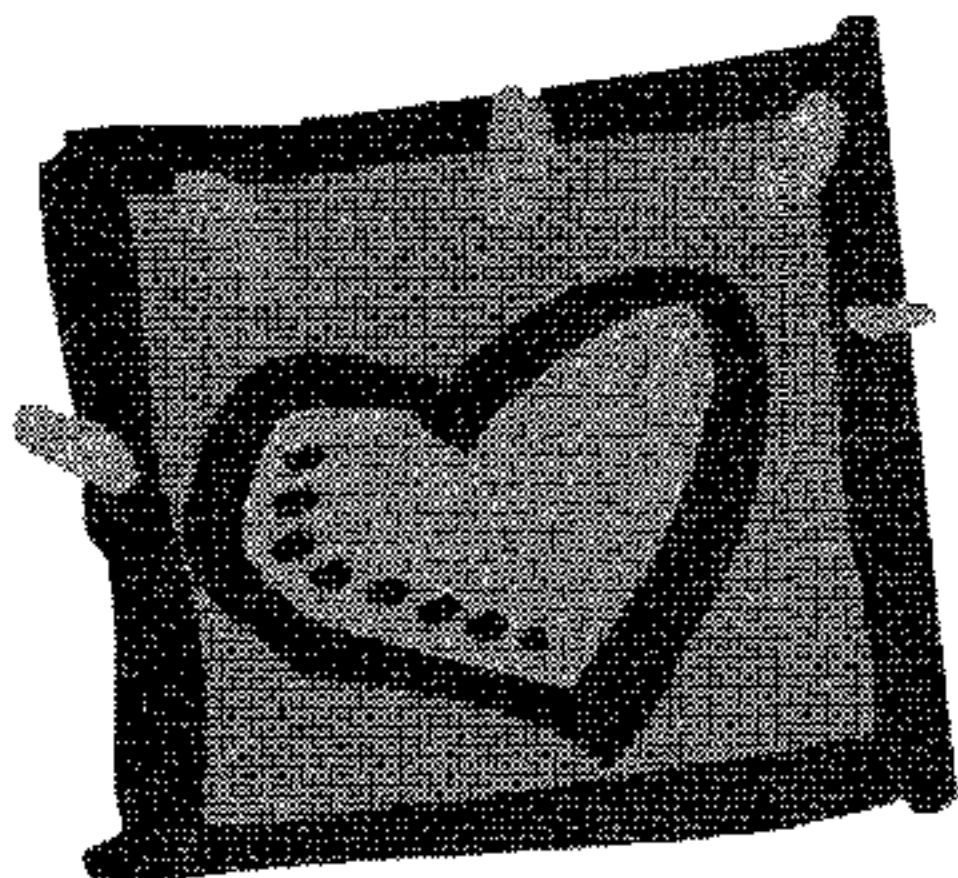
This month, I read two different articles by canine professionals that stated two years can be added to a dog's life by feeding a high-quality food. My own dogs and the dogs I have fostered over the past few years eat Nutro Natural Choice Chicken, Rice and Oatmeal. This is an excellent food you can get at pet supply stores, and it doesn't cost much more than many grocery store foods with fewer nutritional ingredients and more preservatives. There is no dog food that fits all dogs. I just ask they you do your homework and pick a good one to feed your golden. For more guidelines and food recommendations, please

read our article on nutrition in this issue. Once you read what's actually in many grocery store brands, I think you'll want to switch, too.

Also from my last column, I had some feedback about dogs who eat stools. In a book by Leon Whitney and revised by George Whitney, DVM, I learned several new things about this "nasty little habit." Whitney said that puppies eat stool and dirt in an effort to exercise their teeth and gums. Nutritional deficiency can be a cause in adult dogs. Underfeeding and parasites such as hookworm also are causes due to the fact that they cause anemia. If the dog does not secrete enough enzymes, adding meat tenderizer may help. Prozyme added to the dog's food will help the digestive process. The use of chlorophyll in the dog food will eliminate some odor and may help some dogs. He thinks most probable cause is that the dog smells something in the stool he likes. He went on to say that some retrieving dogs start it because of their desire to retrieve. I have seen dogs that don't actually eat the stool, just pick it up and carry it around. As disgusting as this sounds, I can see it as a retriever trait. Whitney suggests changing the diet over a period of weeks to change the bacterial intestinal flora. Try adding 25 percent yogurt or cottage cheese to the diet for two weeks. Solid Gold has a new product on the market that has helped some of our dogs. It's called SEP, which means "stop eating poop." Please see the article "Dirty Little Habit" on Page 10 for more information on this topic. And if you have more tips or questions, please contact me.

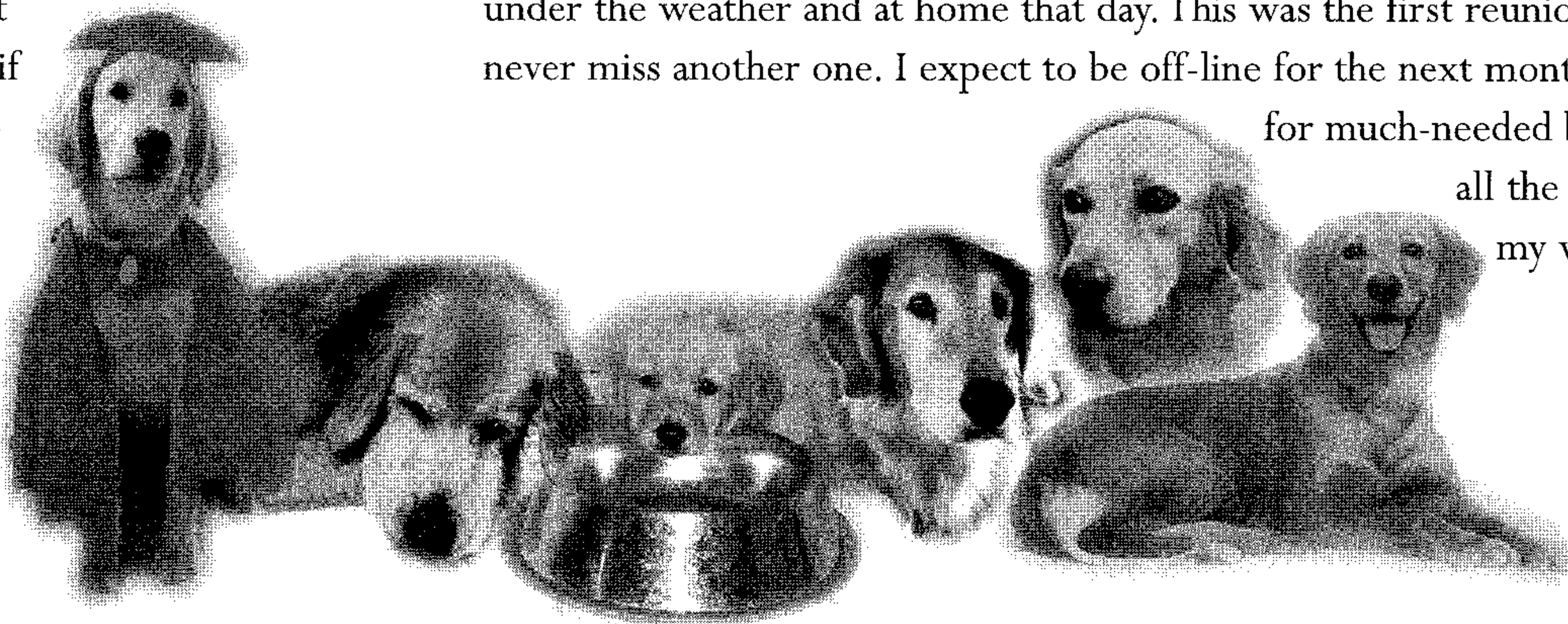
I want to thank all who attended the reunion. I was very sorry to miss it, but I was under the weather and at home that day. This was the first reunion I missed, and I hope to never miss another one. I expect to be off-line for the next month while I take some time for much-needed back surgery. Thanks for all the good wishes that come my way.

-Betty



HEARTS of Gold

by Betty Wyatt, GRRMF Adoption Coordinator

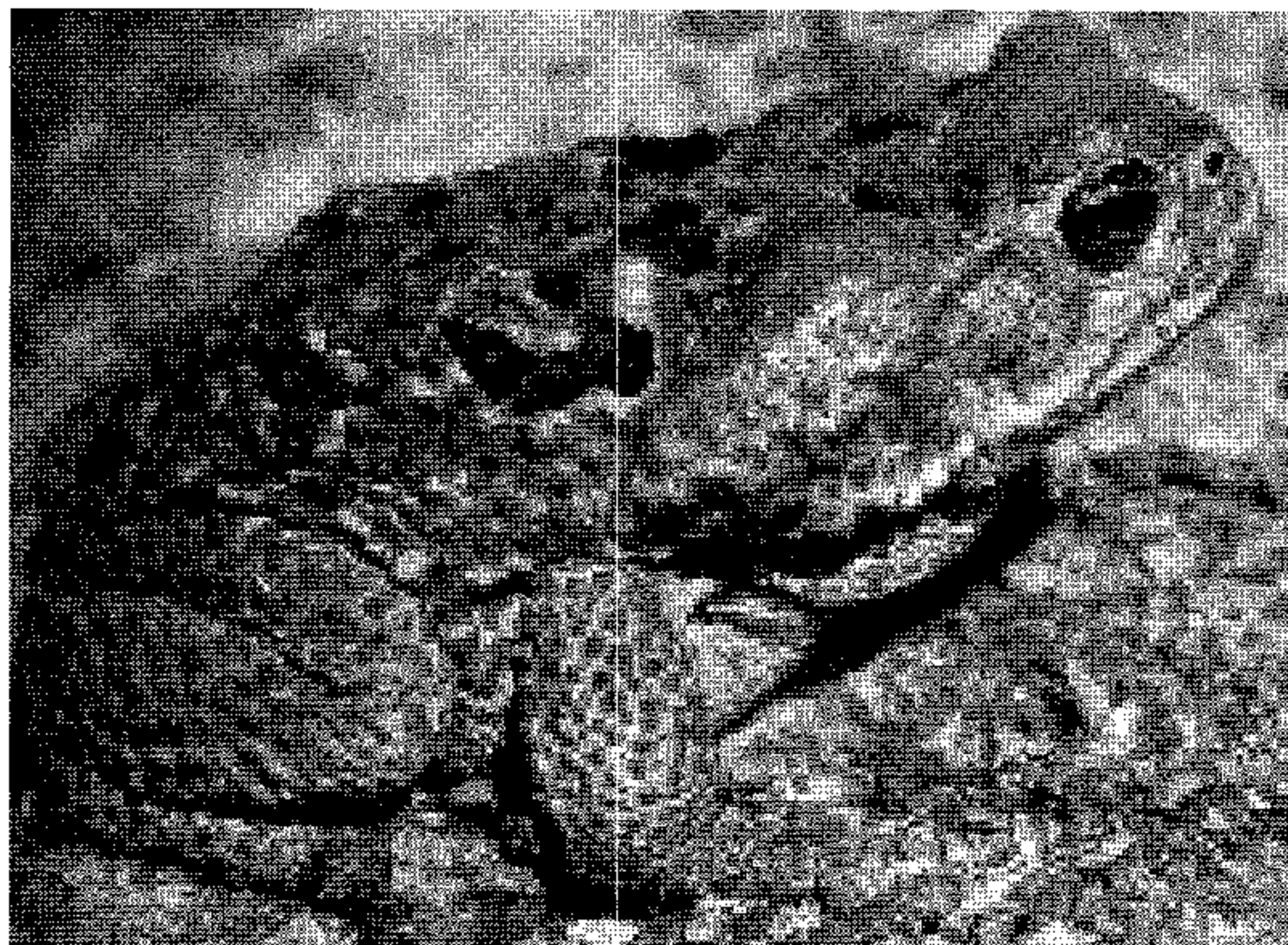


Bufo Toad Toxicity

By Nancy Carroll, GRRMF Volunteer

Legend has it that when the princess kissed the ugly frog, it turned into a handsome prince and they lived happily ever after. In truth, there is a toad (which looks like a frog, but is usually larger and typically flat and round) that is POISONOUS and potentially deadly to your pet. These toads are very common in Florida.

The BUFO MARINUS toad was introduced to Florida from South America in 1935 to control rats and mice in Florida's sugar cane fields. It is very active in moist environments mostly after dusk. Their slow movements attract curious dogs. When the dog mouths or bites the toad, the toad will secrete a whitish-yellow toxin from its salivary glands located behind its ears. This is generally very irritating to your dog and will cause him to immediately salivate or foam at the mouth. The dog will act as if he has swallowed something spicy such as a hot pepper.



The poison has the same effect as a massive overdose of Digitalis, a heart drug. The results range from salivation alone to a very slow heart and/or seizures, either of which may result in death. You must act immediately in order to save your pet's life.

What to Do if Your Dog Tries to Kiss

This Toad

This treatment is addressed to a dog, but applies to any pet:

- ◆ Rinse out your dog's mouth with his head held down. Do not allow your pet to swallow the water.
- ◆ Wipe the gums with a damp washcloth. This should reduce the amount of toxin absorbed.
- ◆ Do not attempt to wash your pet's mouth with the garden hose. This causes the dog to swallow the toxin and can result in accidental drowning.
- ◆ DO NOT ATTEMPT THIS IF YOUR PET IS EXPERIENCING A SEIZURE.
- ◆ Try to remain calm and be prepared to transport your pet as quickly as possible.

Call your veterinarian or pet emergency clinic. Follow whatever instructions you are given.

They will most likely request that you bring your pet in for an EKG, possible injections and observation.

The average emergency call will run approximately \$100 -- a small price to pay for your pet's life should he or she encounter a Bufo toad.

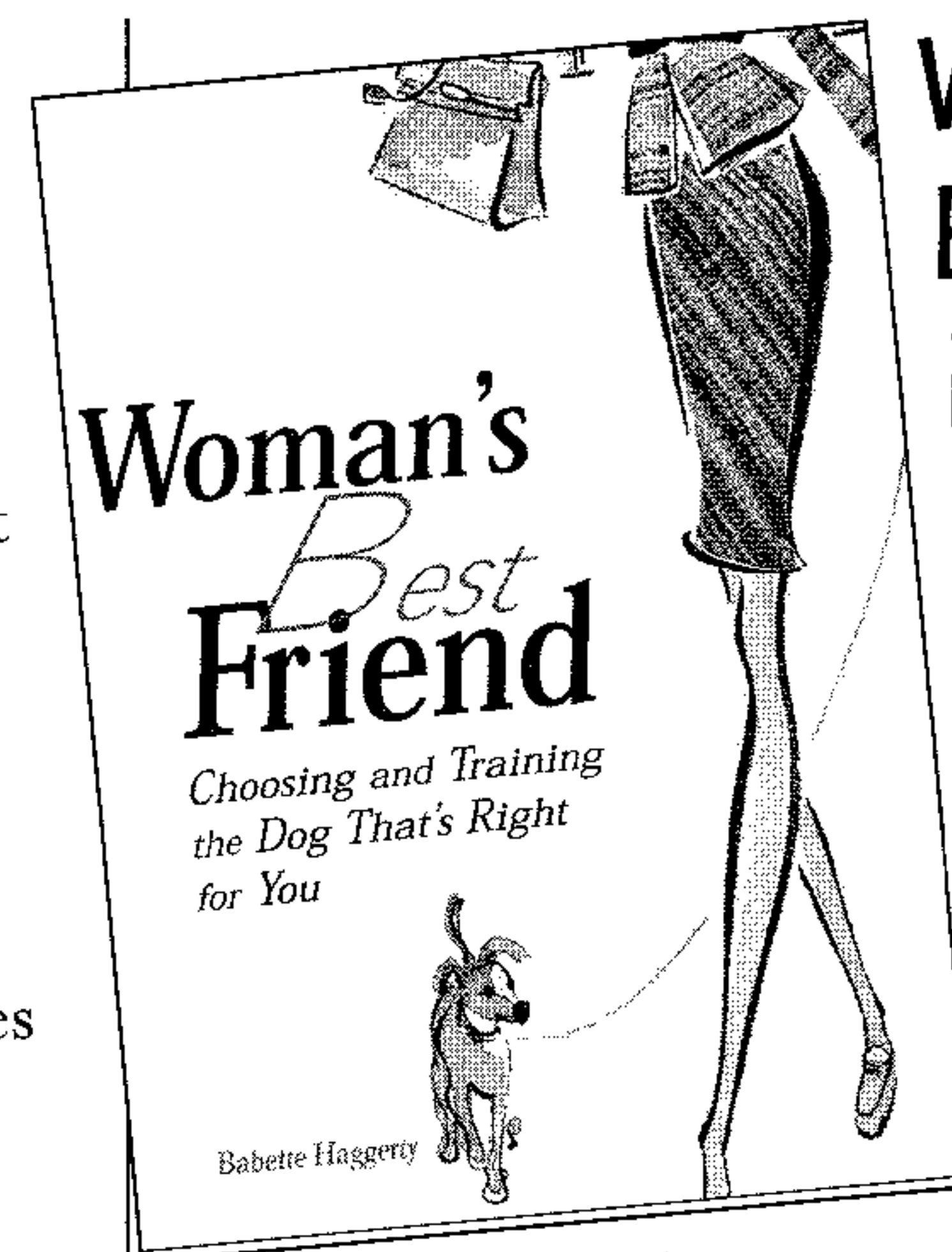
Toad Avoidance

Keep your pet leashed when outside, and closely monitor her activity. This is especially important during the rainy season, at dusk or in the early morning. Local emergency clinics reportedly are experiencing three to six toad emergencies per night.

Toads often hide in bushes and other vegetation. Pull your dog away from these areas.

Avoid allowing your dog to run loose in areas adjacent to rivers, ponds and swimming pools. Toads live under concrete pads and near air conditioning units due to the available moisture.

By Florida law, it is illegal to harm these toads. If your dog should manage to kill a Bufo toad, veterinarians recommend placing it in a ziplock bag and freezing it for a minimum of 72 hours before disposing of it in the trash. (These toads are cold blooded.)



Woman's Best Friend

Babette Haggerty is a certified dog trainer in South Florida who has helped GRRMF train many former rescue dogs.

We're pleased to announce that Babette is preparing to publish her first book and has agreed to donate a portion of the proceeds to GRRMF!

Scheduled to be released in September, *Woman's Best Friend* looks at the special issues unique to women and dogs. With warmth, humor and experience, Babette explores the personalities of different breeds and their needs as they relate to a woman's specific lifestyle.

Unlike other training books, this unique guide offers advice and suggestions specifically for women. Topics include:

- ◆ Choosing a family dog.
- ◆ Using effective commands.
- ◆ Dealing with embarrassing dog behavior such as sniffing, eating underwear and excessive barking.
- ◆ Avoiding being overpowered by the dog, e.g., leash tugging and door crashing.

For \$14.65, including shipping, Babette will send you an autographed copy of this 263-page book - and remember, part of the profit will go to rescue! To pay by credit card, visit www.haggertydog.com and click on the "Products" link. Or send your check to: Babette Haggerty, P.O. Box 30423, Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33420.

Moving?

Don't forget to notify GRRMF if your address or phone number changes!

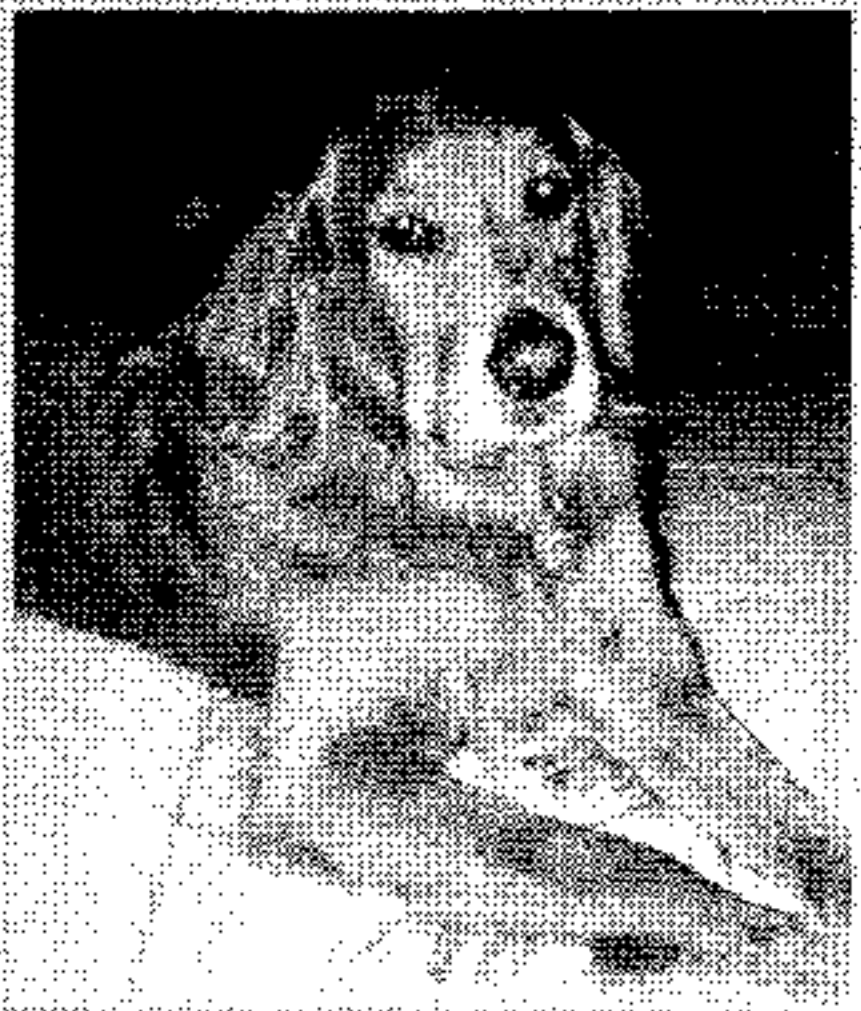
If your golden is returned to GRRMF through a shelter or other agency and we are unable to contact you, the dog will be re-entered into our rescue program.

Call or e-mail us of any name, address or phone changes: info@grrmf.org or (407) 332-2840.

Rainbow Bridge

'True Colors' - Remembering Chisum

Chisum lived his life in a pen. If that wasn't bad enough, his owner moved away and left



him there for 6 months before rescue stepped in. A neighbor would go over and feed him, but that was the only attention Chisum received. He was a special dog who was adopted to a special family. He spent the

last year of his life very much loved by Melissa Knowles and her family. Chisum was diagnosed with hemangiosarcoma and passed with dignity and quiet resolution surrounded by much love and compassion. He even wagged his tail when the vet helped him begin his journey.

Melissa writes: *"I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for allowing me to share this precious last year with an angel sent to me from heaven. He blossomed with a sense of humor, was obedient to a fault, enjoyed traveling with me and spending weekends with my parents and their dog (his brother) Beau. His manners were impeccable and his ability to love was beyond measure. He was loved deeply by all of us and was considered another child of the family. Every day was made special for him, and he was never taken for granted. I needed him as much as he needed me. 'Thank you' is not adequate to express my feeling of gratitude for the opportunity to experience the joy of having this precious being in my heart and home. His passing was not fair, for he deserved at least half a life more to experience the true pleasures he missed in his first 8 years, but he was able to show his 'true colors' before going to the Rainbow Bridge. His spirit will always be with me."*

To my Stinger -

You were always the happy dog in the house. You were the Sting-man, and when the tail went round and round, you were the Swing-man. You were always so sweet it took me months to realize you could not hear a word - but you knew that you were loved and adored. A smile or clap of hands from me would make that tail go. You would encourage my dinner preparations with a soft "woof" as if to say,



'could you hurry it up just a bit?' If you could not see me and were not able to hear where I was in the house, another soft "woof" would send me running just to show you where I was. You would then settle in for your nap, knowing that I was just a room away.

You loved every dog in the house, young and old. The puppy could jump on your head and you would just roll those eyes, which pleaded, 'a little help here, please?' I always had your back.

You became stiff and could not walk well, so off to hydrotherapy we went. They loved you there, Mr. Leisurely Swimmer who fell asleep during the massage part of the session in the water. And, of course, we had our trips to McDonald's afterward to replenish those reserves.

I truly believed I would have you for years to come. You went too quickly and not an hour goes by that I don't listen for that soft 'woof' to let me know that you miss me. Be there at the bridge for me, my friend. I promise to have a cheeseburger in my pocket for you.

Dutch was a recent rescue. At 7 years, he came to us after his owner passed away. He was owned and loved by the Deputlas, who only had him a short time but loved him like he was with them forever. Dutch is missed greatly but now is resting painlessly. Heartfelt thanks to the Deputla family for loving and caring for Dutch during his final months.



Baxter came to GRRMF almost two years ago weighing only 54 pounds due to hookworms. After medical treatment for worms, neutering and dental work, he began to feel better and gained weight. He stayed with his foster family, Sally & Vann Frazier, because he also was deaf. Sign language and the company of other dogs helped Baxter spend his last two years in peace and comfort. He won the "oldest dog" award at the 2002 reunion, but didn't make it to this year's reunion. He went to the Rainbow Bridge in February, just a few weeks short of his 14th birthday. His companionship is greatly missed by his entire family.

Montana, AKA "Monte," was fostered by Merrill Lochmaier. Merrill warned us that he was a character. He loved to run. One time, he escaped from Merrill's home and ran next door where a neighbor was unloading groceries. Monte grabbed a bag in his mouth and sprinted down the street with his treasure in his mouth and head held high. Monte was adopted by Bill & Mattie Becker and his name was changed to Dukie. Mattie taught him to sing, and the day before he died from cancer, they sang a duet. His life ended much too soon.

Patrick went to live with Jerald & Vivian Rosen when he was a young fellow. A handsome boy with a fantastic personality, he was very much loved by them every day of his life until he died of cancer.

Chad was a precious dog to all who knew him. He was the first dog GRRMF was able to take through hip surgery to correct severe dysplasia. He was quite a strain on our shoe-string budget in those days, but he was so beautiful and sweet, we had to help him. His foster wanted to keep him because of his fantastic qualities but decided to let him go. Chad met an untimely death when he escaped from a fenced yard and was hit by a car. This world lost a beautiful creature, and we all are mourning this tragic loss.

If it be I grow frail and weak,

And pain should wake me from my sleep,

Then you must do what must be done,

For this last battle can't be won.

You will be sad, I'll understand,

Don't let your grief then stay your hand,

For this day more than all the rest,

Your love and friendship stand the test.

*If It
Should Be*

We've had so many happy years,

What is to come will hold no fears,

You'll not want me to suffer, so,

When the time comes, please let me go.

I know in time, you too will see,

It is a kindness you do me,

Although my tail its last has waved,

From pain and suffering, I've been saved.

Do not grieve that it should be you,

Who has to decide this thing to do

We've been so close, we two, these years,

Don't let your heart hold any tears.

- Author Unknown

M e m o r i e s o f a R e u n i o n

In spite of a rainy weather forecast, those who attended this year's 11th Annual Rescue Reunion were rewarded with plenty of activities, gifts and prizes - and a car full of sleepy goldens when the day was done.

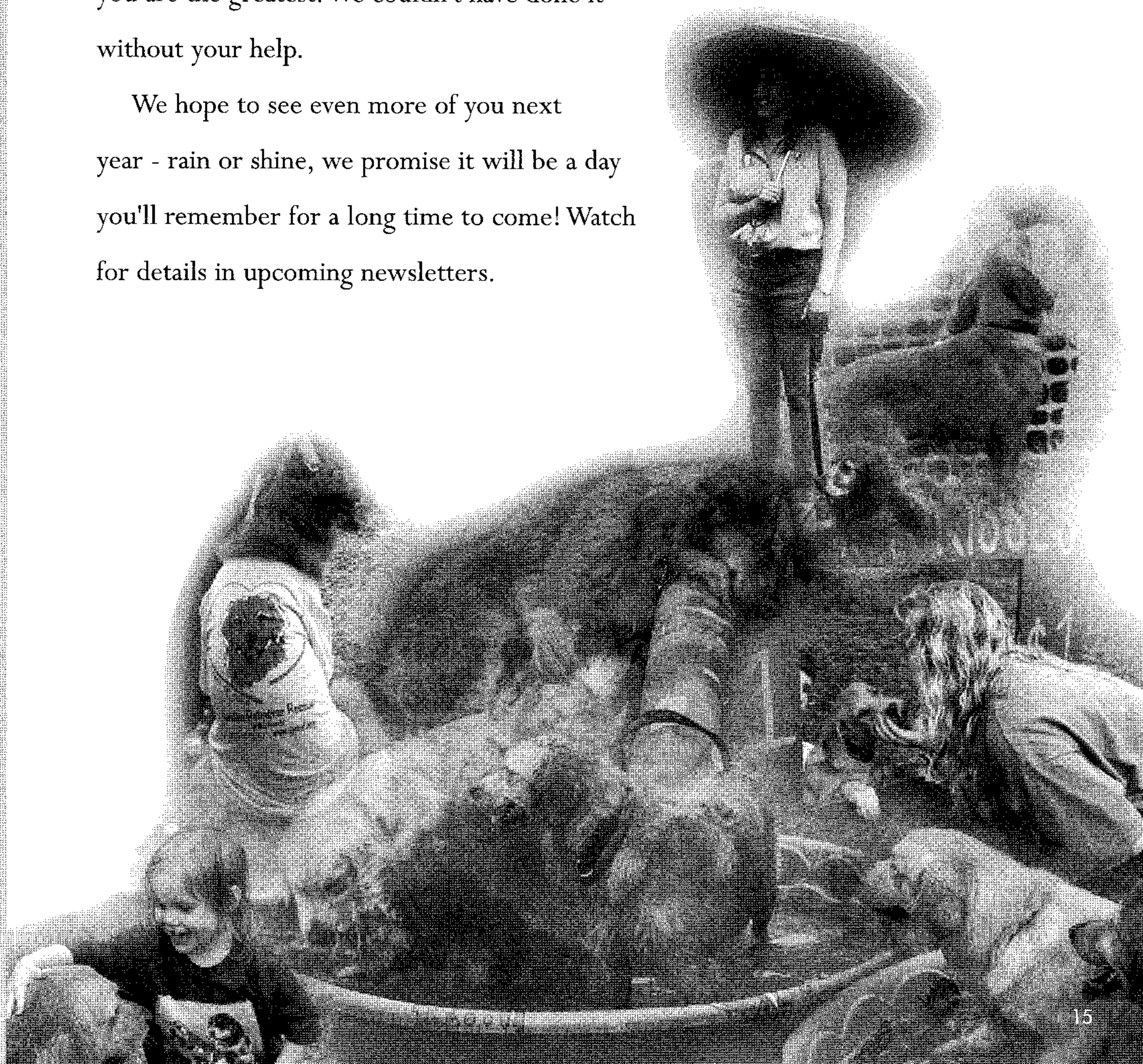
Held March 23 at Gemini Springs Park in Debary, the reunion welcomed some 100 former rescues and their families. The dogs frolicked together in the fenced gaming area, splashed in the wading pools, enjoyed a variety of organized games and, in general, were true to their golden personalities - each one added his or her own special ray of sunshine to the event. Who needs Mother Nature, anyway?!

In all, nearly \$3,000 was raised for rescue - funds that are much needed during a time of increasing numbers of goldens coming in to the program and the vast array of medical needs they present.

To those who braved the rainy weather, our volunteers send heartfelt thanks. We can't say enough what a morale booster it is for the people who work tirelessly day after day helping our goldens. Seeing those happy faces and wagging tails remind us of why rescue exists, and why we dedicate so much time and devotion to "the cause."

And to our hardworking (and a bit soggy) volunteers - you are the greatest. We couldn't have done it without your help.

We hope to see even more of you next year - rain or shine, we promise it will be a day you'll remember for a long time to come! Watch for details in upcoming newsletters.



Help Us Spread The Word About Rescue!

GRRMF is in need of volunteers to spend a few hours a month "preaching the golden gospel" at our educational days across the state. It's a great opportunity to make new friends, spread the word about rescue, and you can even bring your dog, if he or she is people and dog friendly!

Melbourne/East Coast: Publix, Suntree/Melbourne

Tampa/St. Petersburg/Clearwater: PetsMart, Citrus Park/Tampa -- Every first and third Saturday, 10 a.m.-noon.

PetsMart, Countryside/Clearwater - Every first Saturday, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. / PetsMart, Tyrone/St. Petersburg -- Every first Saturday, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Sarasota: PetsMart, The Landings/Sarasota -- Every second and fourth Saturday / PetsMart, Bradenton - Every third Saturday

Orlando: PetsMart, Waterford Lakes/East Orlando - Every second Saturday, 10 a.m.-noon.

Borders Bookstore, Oviedo - Every third Saturday, 7-9:30 p.m., (limited physical space for dogs, but humans welcome)

PetsMart, Lake Mary - Every first Saturday

Palm Beach: Pet Supplies Plus, Lake Park

If you are interested in helping, please obtain a volunteer application available at www.grrmf.org or by calling 407.332.2840.

We'll hook you up with the Team Leader for that location.

Check our website under "events" for the latest schedule in case of last-minute schedule changes.

GRRMF Membership/Donation Form

All memberships and donations are tax-deductible.

Name _____ Address _____ City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Please check one:

☐ General Membership \$25

☐ Sponsorship to help special-needs golden \$100

☐ General Donation \$ _____ ☐ Woody's Fund \$ _____ ☐ Capital Campaign \$ _____ ☐ Boarding Fund \$ _____

☐ In Memory Of: _____ \$ _____ ☐ In Honor Of: _____ \$ _____

Send acknowledgment to: _____

Mail form and check to: GRRMF, PO Box 1449, Goldenrod, FL 32733

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