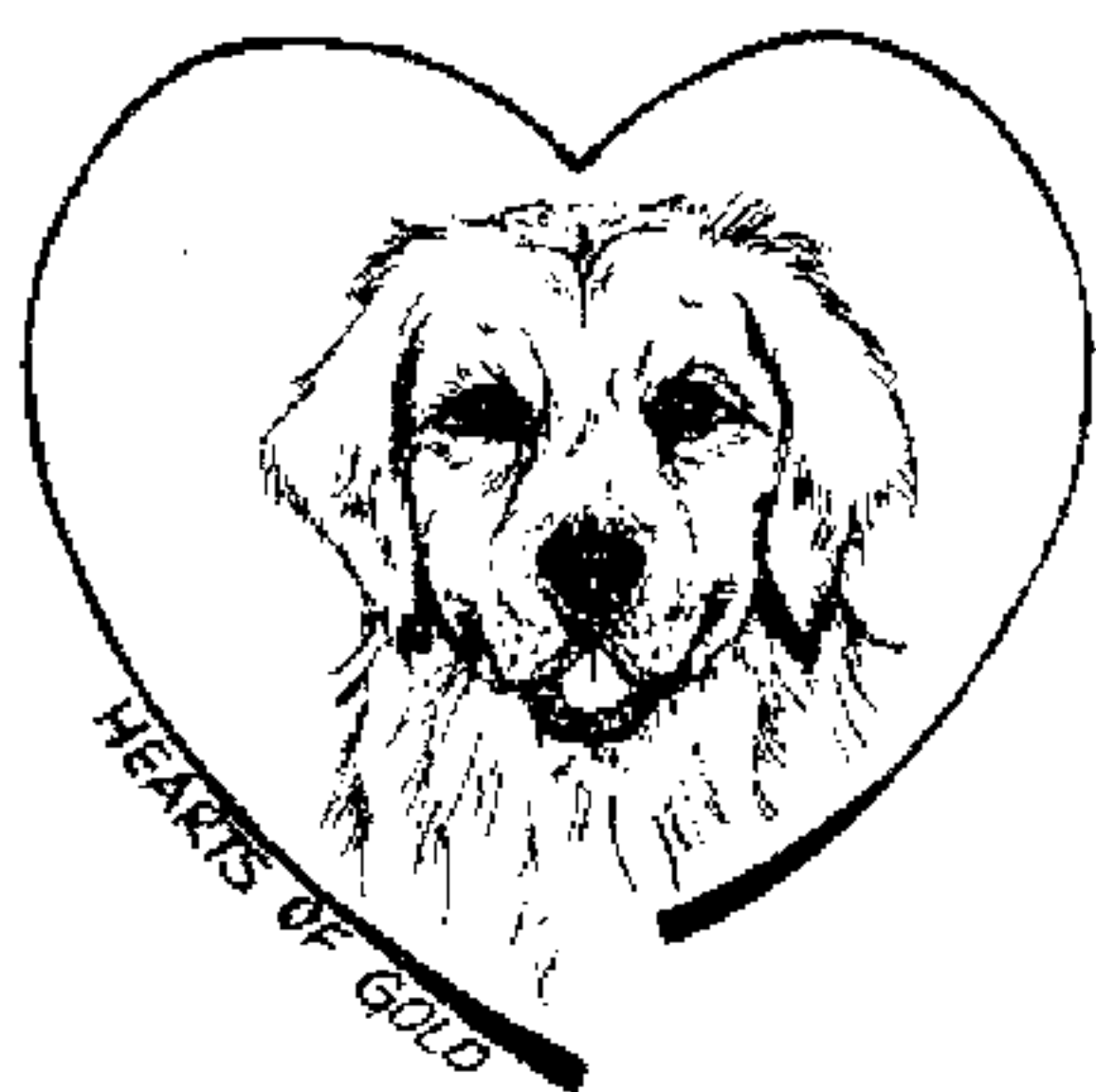


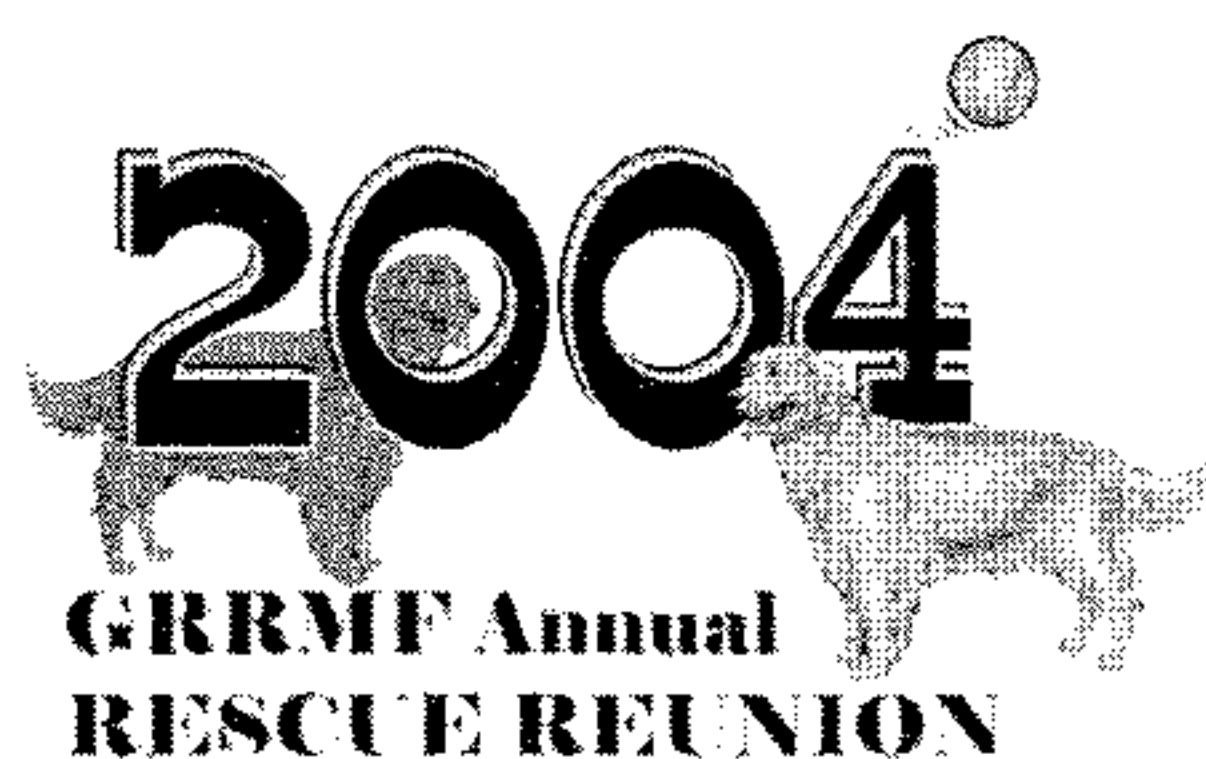


HEARTS OF GOLD

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

Volume 7, Issue 1

Spring 2004



IT'S REUNION TIME!

Join us March 20 for our Annual Rescue Reunion Lake Parker Park, Lakeland. You won't want to miss this event!! See Page 3 for details.



TWILIGHT DOGS

Read about adorable Abbey, turned over to rescue at age 14. GRRMF doesn't turn away dogs just because they are in their "twilight years." Page 12.



A TAIL OF TRANSFORMATION

Read about Brandy's journey, from a chubby 94 pounds to a svelte 65! See page 12.



I'M ADOPTED!

Mark, in rescue for a very long time, was adopted! Read about Mark and many more recent adoptions starting on Page 4.

Rescue Is Here to Help Goldens of All Ages: Meet Gem & Ellie

by Andrea Davis, GRRMF Intake Coordinator

Gem and Ellie have very different stories and represent opposite ends of the spectrum in terms of ages. But they had one thing in common: They were in pain and needed our help.

A Precious Gem



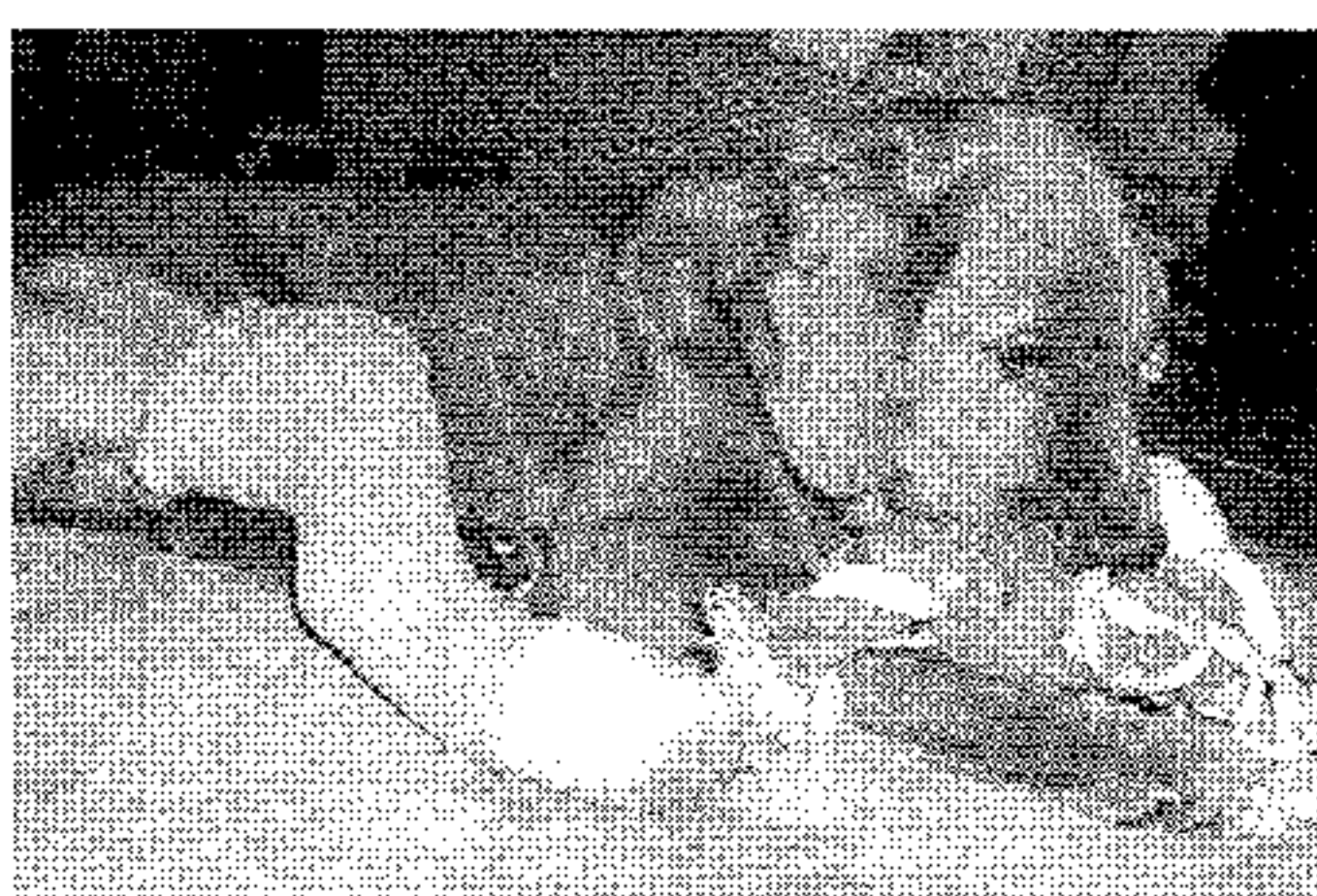
How could we resist this face?

Gem is a 5-month-old cutie-pie with a long road to recovery ahead of her. She was turned over to rescue because of her mounting medical bills. Her family loved her very much, and giving her up was a difficult decision.

They simply did not have the financial resources to help her. And without medical intervention, Gem faced a life of pain and immobility.

Gem has hip dysplasia in both hips, but believe it or not, that is not what has the veterinarian most concerned.

Gem has what is called a cranial cruciate ligament



Gem after knee surgery.

avulsion fracture in her right rear knee. In English, this means her tendon has detached itself from the bone, also taking a small piece of bone with it. Our veterinarian thinks it was due to some type of trauma as a very young dog.

GRRMF's generous donors helped pay for the first surgery to repair Gem's knee. Depending on how her body recovers, Gem may need her knee replaced in a couple of months. Only time will tell if she will need corrective hip surgery, too.

One thing we do know is that some very special family is going to be very lucky to add this precious GEM to their life. Gem's foster parents, Dave and Pat Wilson, adore her. In fact, all who meet her fall in love with this precious girl. She has an extremely sweet disposition, and is so cuddly you just want to wrap your arms around her and "make it all better."

And thanks to all of rescue's generous donors, we've been able to wrap our "collective" arms around little Gem, staying beside her through this surgery and initial recuperation period. And if she needs further medical care, we're committed to helping Gem get it.

continued on page 2



Ellie in "costume".

A Year of Change

by Sandy Sumner, GRRMF Adoption Coordinator

2003 was truly a year of change. Higher than ever numbers of dogs coming in, as well as more applicants than ever. Goldens with serious health or behavioral issues and goldens who had been very neglected.

But nothing prepared us for the biggest change. In May, Betty Wyatt was scheduled to have major back surgery that would sideline her from rescue for months. We all had some big shoes to fill. I looked at the position of Adoption Coordinator and took a big gulp. I volunteered to help out ... and braced myself.

Well, it has been a wild ride, but I can honestly say I've enjoyed just about every minute of it. I have received support and guidance from an incredible group of people: Andrea Davis coordinating intake and fosters, as well as those nightly brainstorming chats; Sue and Ray Angle, the "transportation angels" as they are fondly called; Kathy Hendrickson, our Call Team coordinator; Carol McKee, my Web page guru; Nancy Spears for keeping the supply train running; Jennifer Longman, who

was able to sort out the mile-high piles of paperwork accumulating daily; regional coordinators Suzanne Rider, John Pfohler, Diane Makinney, Pam Harrell and Peggy Litt; and all our foster parents, who provided regular feedback that proved invaluable in placing goldens in permanent homes. Last but not least was GRRMF President Barbara Durham, the poor soul who let me rant and vent ... and also helped me sort through some very unknown territory. There are so many more wonderful people I should include as well ... but I'm out of space. You know who you are – and I send you my most sincere gratitude.

Rescue has never been about individuals – it is the collective teamwork of all of us – including our wonderful veterinarians and those who support us financially, whether it's \$5 or \$500 – working together to help this wonderful breed we all cherish so much. That spirit of teamwork was never more apparent than this past year. I mean this from the bottom of my heart – I could not have done it without you ... and I look forward to an even more successful 2004!

– Sandy



Ellie after surgery.



Ellie's future is bright!

Ellie's Bright Future

Ellie's future is looking much brighter after finding her way into rescue. She was found wandering the streets, and a good Samaritan picked her up and called us.

After more than two hours of grooming to remove hundreds of fleas and matted hair, Ellie's personality began to shine. However, her foster parents, Chuck and Donna Dossing, couldn't miss the fact that Ellie had tumors all over her body, including one the size of a grapefruit on her shoulder. A veterinary checkup told us what we needed to know. Ellie was in pain and needed surgery.

In all, Ellie had 11 tumors removed,

and her prognosis is good. Donna says she is like a new dog these days – running and playing with the other dogs in her foster home. Ellie smiles all the time now, and we're pretty sure she has many more happy and healthy years ahead of her.

The GRRMF board didn't hesitate to authorize the money for Ellie's surgery. Even though it was more than \$700, we felt it was money well spent – we're sure our members would have made the same decision.

Ellie is 6-8 years old (we'll never know for sure) and is one of the most loyal and affectionate dogs in rescue. She has that true golden disposition – easy-going, pleasant-natured and eager to please. She is recuperating well under the ministrations of Donna and her family. Ellie is now ready for adoption. Her ideal home would be with someone ready for constant companionship and willing to give lots of belly rubs. Ellie is looking

for that perfect home – could it be with you?

We know that many of our members would love to take these two home. But even if you can't adopt right now, you could help Ellie, Gem and others just like them by sending a small donation. The year has just begun, and already GRRMF is facing more special-needs goldens than ever before. But remember – these are also goldens who deserve a chance to live normal lives – and can do so with our help. GRRMF's list of "turn-around dogs" is long – Fargo, Ava, Angie, Justice, Dreyfuss, Maggiemae, to name just a few. All were helped through our caring network of volunteers, and through your donations. Stay tuned to your next newsletter and to our Web site – grrmf.org – for updates on Gem and Ellie.

Yes, I'd like to help GEM & ELLIE!

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, PO Box 1449, Goldenrod, FL 32733.

It Was a Very Good Year

Just ask the 197 goldens adopted in 2003!

Like many companies and individuals, Golden Retriever Rescue of Mid-Florida faced its share of challenges last year.

Of course, the greatest challenge for our group never seems to change: The overpopulation of golden retrievers in Florida is unrelenting, and GRRMF still cannot take in every golden who needs our help. It is a never-ending cycle ... often frustrating, and sometimes heartbreaking.

But it's also an opportunity. Because every single golden retriever that we are able to save is worth every minute of our volunteers' time and every dollar spent on recovery. Seeing the smiles on the new family's faces, the wagging tails of the goldens who seem to realize that, "Man, have I just lucked out!" – what better reward could anyone ask for? Those success stories are truly worth their weight in "gold."

In all, we took in 187 goldens in 2003 – and adopted out 197, for a total of 1,357 since our inception in 1991.

That seems worth repeating: Nearly 200 golden retrievers got a

new leash on life last year, thanks to our hardworking volunteers and generous donors.

"Last year was full of challenges, but the results don't lie," says GRRMF President Barbara Durham. "Our organization has made great strides toward achieving its mission of helping all the goldens who need us."

For Adoption Coordinator Sandy Sumner, the proof is in the teamwork. "It was the efforts of many, acting together as a team with one goal in mind that made the difference. When it comes down to it, the group effort makes rescue run so smoothly. Without our fosters, coordinators, transporters – and everyone in between – we could not survive, let alone thrive."

So, for all of you out there who made a difference – whether it was through a small donation, an hour spent here or there volunteering, or a more critical role such as coordinating adoptions or fostering – GRRMF and our nearly 1,400 goldens say THANK YOU!

**It's Reunion Time Again!
Come Rain or Shine!**



GRRMF members, supporters, volunteers and their Golden Retrievers are ALL invited to attend ...
NEW Location, NEW Day & Time, NEW Exciting Events. NEW Faces

Saturday, March 20th, 10 am - 3 pm

Beautiful Lake Parker Park, Lakeland

– mid-way between Orlando & Tampa just off Interstate 4
We've reserved a huge covered/screened pavilion, and have
more activities than ever are scheduled!

ALL rescued & non-rescued Golden Retrievers are invited to attend the event of the YEAR!!
(people and dog-friendly dogs only, please!)

Lunch will be available by "Chef Dave" from 11:30 - 1 pm
(all lunch proceeds to go to GRRMF)

What to Bring

Your dogs *(on leash!)*

Picnic tables available *(1st come - 1st served!)*

Bring a blanket or chairs to be sure!

Water & bowl for your dog

Crates or ex-pens for time outs if required

Sunblock and a hat *(there is some shade!)*

Comfortable attire

Pick up bags for doggie clean up

Spare Change – We'll be collecting loose change as donations to rescue – see page 14 for details.

Many Special Events Planned including:

Doggie Games with Prizes • Golden Goods Booth • Golden Grooming

• Canine Good Citizen Testing – See Page 14 for more information

• Raffle & Silent Auction • And so much more - you won't have time to be bored!!!

Convenient access off I-4 (less than a mile) Exit 33, follow the signs for Marchant Stadium.

Web site for Park: www.lakelandgov.net/parkrec/parks/LakeParkerPark.html

Or call the GRRMF Hotline (407) 332-2840, e-mail: INFO@GRRMF.ORG

Be There!

Recent Adoptions - Spring 2004



Mark, 5 years, was in rescue for a very long time. He was quite a challenge when he first arrived – his high energy level and lack of training made him too much to handle for his first humans. Mark also had a medical condition that

required expensive diagnostic and treatment procedures from several veterinary specialists. Mark gets along great with everyone, including cats, and he passed his obedience classes with flying colors. He just needed a family who would be committed to continuing his training to ensure he didn't forget all the good manners he'd learned. Along came the Norrings, who realized that a more fun-loving or sweeter dog would never be found. They took Mark home, and all are now enjoying life to its fullest.

Brandy also was in rescue for a very long time. So long, in fact, that foster mom Sandy Sumner figured she'd care for Brandy for the rest of her life. Brandy and her sibling **Stinger** were turned over to rescue when



their owners moved out of the country. Both were elderly, and Stinger passed on to the Rainbow Bridge early last year. Brandy has a distinguished white face and a personality that is "solid gold." She charmed everyone she met as GRRMF spokesdog during educational days, and very much enjoyed her long walks with Sandy and friends. Donna & Jim T. were looking to adopt a senior golden. They loved the idea of a mellow golden who also could keep up with them on daily walks. Even though she knew she would miss Brandy, Sandy knew it was meant to be. Brandy has now found her forever home, with a wonderful family who love her dearly. We know we've said this before, but **WE LOVE HAPPY ENDINGS!**



When Nancy C. got the call about a 5-year-old blonde male needing a foster home, she hesitated to say yes. Just one week earlier, she lost her 14-year-old blonde foster Jake to lung cancer. And of all things,

the new dog's name was, you guessed it, **Jake**. His human family was turning him in to rescue due to a divorce. He wasn't permitted in their new apartment. In the end, Nancy did agree to foster Jake, and he moved in with her and her resident canine companions the day after Thanksgiving. Nancy knew immediately her first task would be to get his weight under control – Jake tipped the scales at 113 pounds! By Christmas, Nancy and her family decided that Jake needed to be a

permanent member of their family. We are happy to report that Jake has lost 13 pounds and is very busy playing with his new canine brothers and sister.

Georgia, a timid and petite 1-year-old, was turned in to Animal Services by a woman who said she



had been near a dead raccoon. The woman said she didn't want her kids to get rabies, so she took her to the shelter. One look at this "Sweet Georgia Peach" (at right in photo) and we knew she'd never get near a raccoon, let alone touch one! Even so, per county law Georgia had to be quarantined for six months, and Sandy S. agreed to keep

her throughout the quarantine period. During that time, Georgia came out of her shell – she learned how to play with other dogs and also that people can be trusted. On her first day out of quarantine, Georgia was spotted at the dog park by Jeff and Ann H., who previously adopted **Erica**. Georgia was a perfect fit, and what started out as a sleepover ended up a permanent arrangement. Another perfect ending. Georgia and Erica have become best friends and can be found at the Sanford dog park most Sunday mornings.

Buffett, as in that famous Parrothead, Jimmy, was an owner turn-in. His elderly human had broken her hip, and as much as she loved him, she knew she was not able to give Buffett the care he deserved. Eleven years old and going on eight, Buffett is a sweet, loving boy with great manners. He was fostered by the Fraziers, who decided he was just too wonderful to let go and made him a permanent member of their household.



Scooby, 7 years old, was dropped off at Edie H.'s house by a neighbor. That turned out to be Scooby's lucky day, because Edie also happens to be a GRRMF volunteer! Scooby was unspayed and also had to have several tumors

removed – luckily, they were benign, and Scooby was well on her way to an improved lifestyle, with a healthy diet to lose those extra pounds and daily walks with Edie. Once again, this foster story has a happy ending, because Edie fell in love with Scooby and decided to make it permanent. It's a perfect match, and Scooby and Edie are becoming more and more attached every day.

Adam and his brother **Jacob** were turned in to an animal shelter by a woman who told a story of finding four golden retriever puppies and only being able



to find homes for two of them. Luckily, GRRMF has a great relationship with the shelter manager, and she called us. Adam even had his TV debut on Orlando

UPN-65's Saturday morning community show with reporter Brad Stephens. Kelly M. and her family fell in love with Adam's picture and scooped him up. He has two canine play buddies, two human kids to play with and all the love he can handle.

Jacob was taken to a shelter with his brother, **Adam**, by a woman who said she had found them. Jacob was the more active of the two initially, but he



soon learned how wonderful it felt to snuggle and wiggled his way right into the heart of his foster mom, Sandy. She loved him very much, but not so much that she didn't want to see him go to a great home, which would mean she could keep fostering. And boy did he find one! Tiffany K. was looking for a companion for her 1-year-old golden, Ginger. She is an active single woman who works from home and centers her life around her true love – her dog. Jacob goes on long walks with her, enjoys lots of playtime with his new best buddy, Ginger, and even has a swimming pool.

Sumner, 5 years, found himself in an animal shelter with no adoption prospects in mind. He was heartworm positive, and few people will adopt sick dogs from shelters. Likewise, shelters do not have the room or resources to treat heartworm-positive dogs, so Sumner was on death row. Along came GRRMF, who got him out of the shelter and into a veterinarian to begin heartworm treatment. His foster mom, Lori C., and her family worked with Sumner to help him overcome his shyness. At first, he would just sit in a corner by himself and fall asleep sitting up. Now he plays all the time and wants to be loved. Sumner became such a lovebug that they decided to make him a permanent member of the family.



Luke's owner passed away and his family turned him over to rescue to find a good home for him. No problem, as Luke is a wonderful golden boy. Within just a few weeks, this handsome fellow found his forever home with Sharon and Robert P.

Recent Adoptions *continued from page 4*

Seven-year-old **Keiser** has had nothing but good times since coming to GRRMF. Prior to being surrendered by his third home, Keiser got a “bad rap” when he snapped at a child who was repeatedly hitting him over the head with a metal toy fire truck. Since coming into rescue, Keiser has been a star on a morning news show promoting GRRMF. He was fostered by John F and adopted by Mary P. Mary says he just fits in wonderfully with her family and is perfect in every way. He quickly made friends with the other resident dog, Zeke, and the two are now “like two peas in a pod,” Mary says. “I don’t think I could have found a better fit for us.”

Ginger’s humans were getting a divorce and neither could take her to their new home. At 10 years old, after spending her entire life with this family, Ginger found herself homeless. To say she was depressed was an understatement. When foster mom Sally Anne R. met Ginger, she thought she was deaf and quite old and feeble. Oh how looks can deceive! Ginger was ill – she had a chronic fungal infection in both nasal passages, which had gone untreated. Ginger came from a reputable breeder, and when that breeder was contacted by GRRMF, she agreed to pay for Ginger’s medical expenses. We’re happy to report that Ginger has found her forever home ... with Sally Anne and her crew. No one could be happier than Ginger – she has blossomed under Sally Anne’s care and is now the life of the party. Her nicknames are: “Duchess,” “Queen” and “Princess.” Does that tell you anything? We’re so happy that Ginger’s doggie prayers have been answered!



Mac was saved from an animal shelter, where he was scheduled to be put down. Mac was underweight and his face was a mess from who knows what.



Obviously, this dog had been abused. He wouldn’t even look at GRRMF volunteers John P. and Sally Anne R. and had to be carried out. Mac moved in with John as a foster dog, and thus began a period of “mutual admiration” – John loved Mac and vice versa! It was a month or so before Mac would trust even John, but once the bond was established there was no separating these two. We’re delighted to report that John’s wife, Gail, placed a big bow around Mac’s neck and presented him to John for Christmas. Santa came early to Mac and John this year – both got what they wanted most of all ... each other!



Ava was our “cover girl” in GRRMF’s last *Hearts of Gold* newsletter. Her breeder was going to euthanize her when, at just a few weeks old, Ava was diagnosed with a bladder condition that

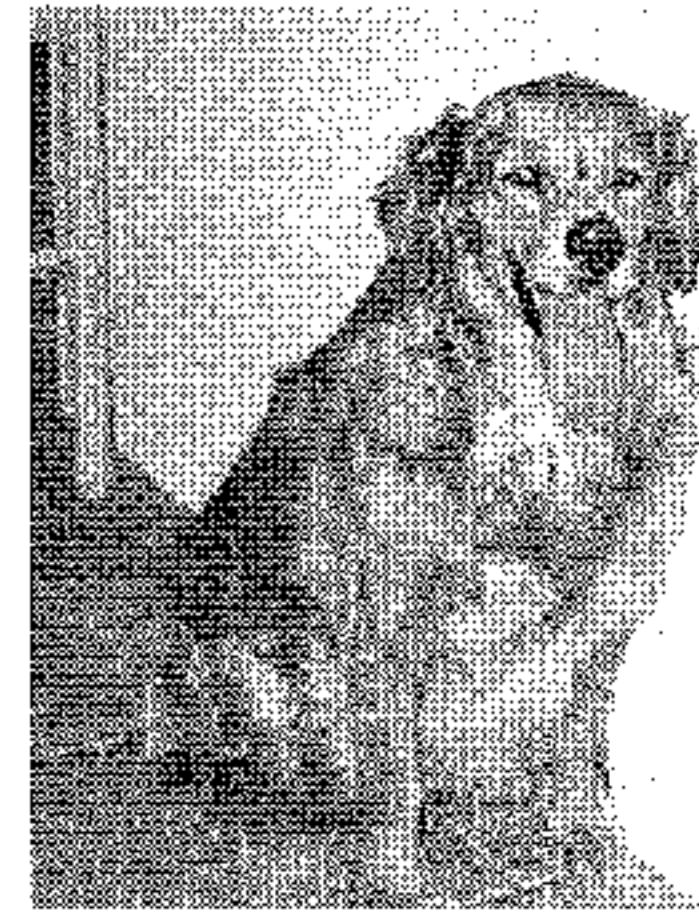
required corrective surgery. Luckily, GRRMF came to the rescue, and through a special fund-raising effort, we raised enough money for Ava’s surgery. Adoption Coordinator Sandy Sumner fostered Ava through the surgery and recovery period, and soon she was on her way home with Emily R. and her golden **Lexi**. Ava is now called **Lola**, and she already has started her basic obedience classes. Lexi and Lola have become close buddies, and we especially appreciate Emily’s keeping us informed of her progress through regular e-mails and photos. This is one very special golden girl, and it makes us feel great to know that Lola is so happy and healthy in her new home.

Fostered by Guillermo P., 3-year-old **Sasha** had a lot to overcome. From the time Sasha was a puppy, her owners left her tied up to a tree in the backyard day and night. They must have forgotten she was there, because when they vacated the house they left her in the yard. Poor Sasha was alone without food or water for a week before she was found. Needless to say, Sasha had many fears, the most troublesome of which was the fear of being abandoned. Her foster dad was very patient and helped Sasha learn to live inside a home. He also helped convince Sasha that he really was going to come back if he had to leave the house. Sasha was adopted by Keith and Amy J., who have taken her to obedience class and continue to help her feel comfortable and loved.

Boston had some hard luck during his first 8 years. He was found as a stray and taken to a local humane society. He was adopted by a couple who later decided they couldn’t keep him and called rescue. Boston is a big, curly, red boy and as sweet and mellow as the day is long. Hettie B. agreed to foster him, and he fit in so well with his new family, which includes several other canine buddies, that Hettie decided to make it permanent. And in spite of adopting her first GRRMF foster, we’re relieved that Hettie still wants to foster again in the future! Thanks, Hettie, and congratulations on your new family addition!



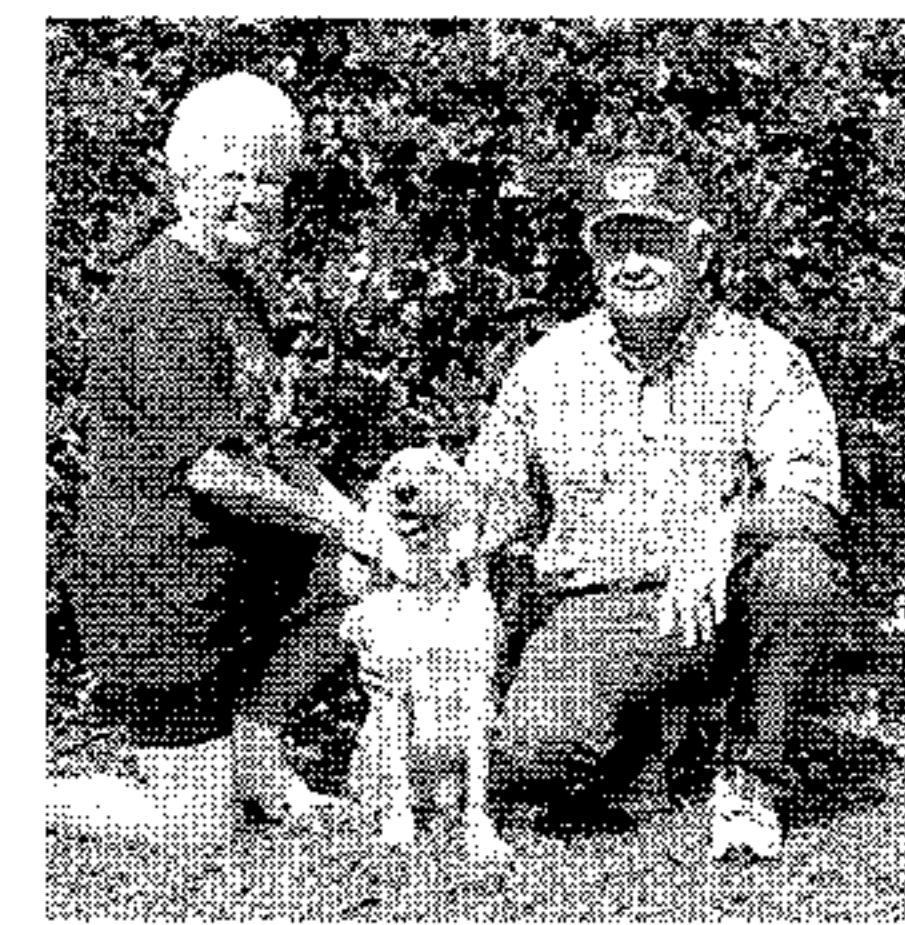
already share their lives with several dogs, cats and horses, so they knew they couldn’t keep him. Their son happens to live near volunteer Carol McKee, and when he told her the story, Carol said “bring him over.” He was covered in fleas, but a quick application of FrontLine took care of that. We discovered that Bowie is about 5 years old and as sweet as they come. If you kneel down, he just melts into your body and absorbs every second of attention he can get. Bowie was adopted by the Smiths, who fell in love with him at first sight. His new name is **Wally**, and he is one lucky boy, as he goes to work every day with his new mom.



Ryder, approximately 5 years old, was a stray turned in to animal control. The poor guy was covered head to toe in burrs and was so frightened his teeth wouldn’t stop chattering. Steve L. came to the res-



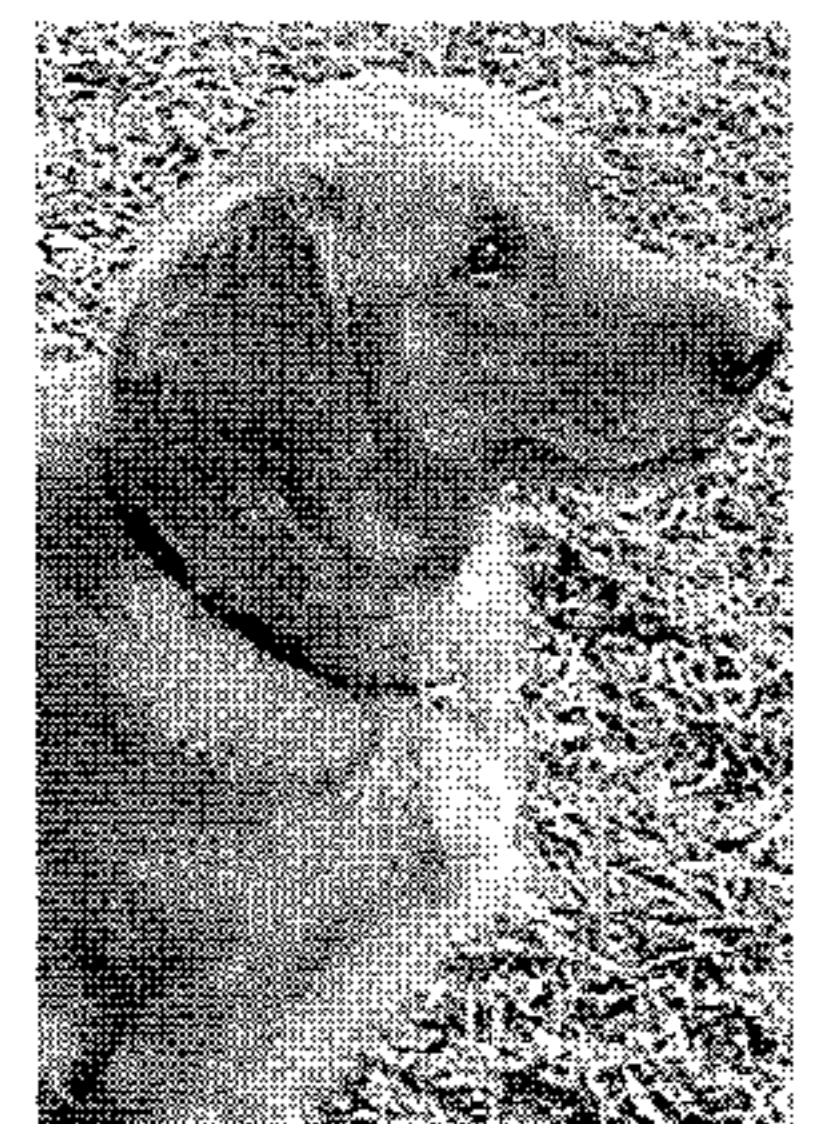
cue, taking Ryder home to foster. Steve had just lost his GRRMF rescue dog **Joey** and was looking for some company. Ryder fit the bill, and they bonded very quickly. After everything they both have been through recently, Steve decided Ryder had to stay. They are now best buddies, and Ryder has his new forever home. But before you give a sigh, thinking we’ve lost another foster home, think again! Steve has decided he still wants to continue fostering. We couldn’t be more pleased!



Abe Lincoln came to us as a puppy. He was adopted once, but proved to be too much for his new family. Gregg & Tom Eddie fostered this little boy and did a wonderful job of socializing him and teaching him some house manners. We think he is a mix, because his ears are a little short and he is small – less than 40 pounds. That didn’t bother Bud & Jane H., who were looking for a smaller golden to share their lives with. They met Abe Lincoln at a park and fell in love. Once their application was approved, they wasted no time taking him home. We’re happy to report that Abe Lincoln, now called **Jake**, has already started obedience class and is doing fantastic, learning new skills and exercises to help channel some of his energy in positive ways. That’s no surprise to us – we knew he was a very smart boy!

Bella was found abandoned at a local dog park. She was turned in to GRRMF by the good Samaritan who found her there, and we were told she was a shaved golden. Well, the hair never grew out, so we had a lovely “goldador” on our hands. Fostered by Barbara D., Bella quickly showed she was an active older dog who was full of personality. Charlie and Bonnie M. saw her on GRRMF’s Web site and applied to adopt her. Bella enjoys her long daily walks with Charlie and her huge fenced back yard. She gets along well with her new sister Freeland, a golden retriever. Bonnie says Bella loves her big, fluffy dog beds and playing ball with their son, John. Bella and Charlie often join our GRRMF volunteers for walks on the Cross Seminole Trail in Oviedo, where Bella leads the pack on the walk. What a happy ending for an abandoned dog!

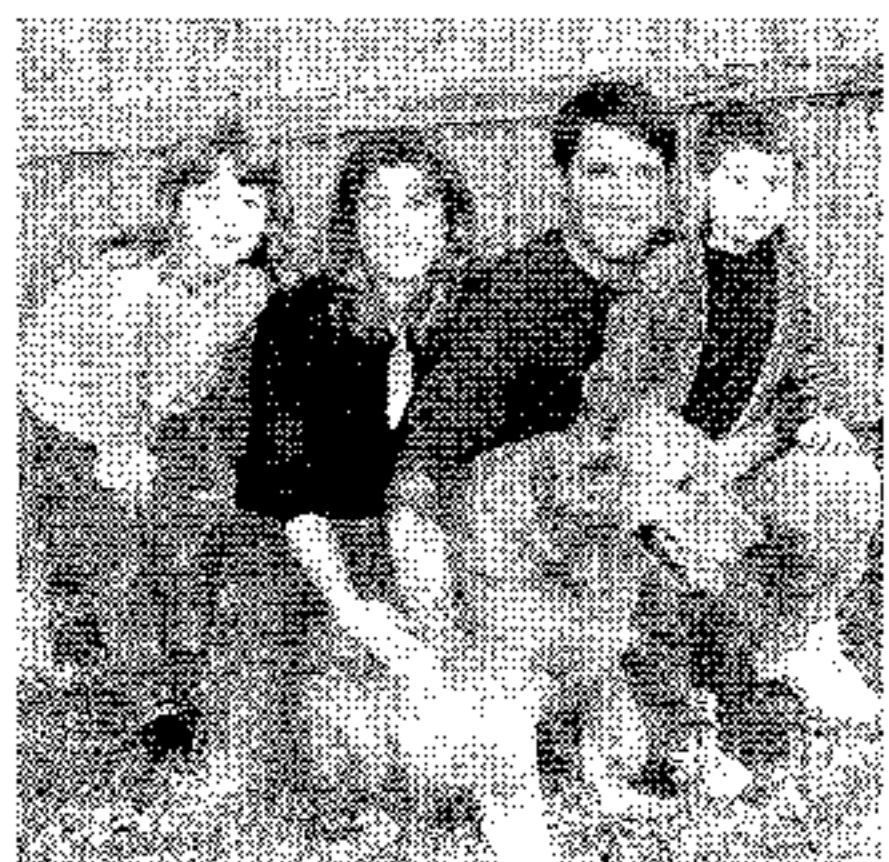
Aspen was a pretty and sweet little redhead. She was found as a stray and turned over to a shelter. Her hair was matted and her ears badly infected. Aspen wanted nothing more than to be loved and chase lizards. She blossomed under the care of her foster



Recent Adoptions *continued from page 5*

parents, the Albrights, who put her on a quality diet and tended to her ears. Soon, her coat was shiny and her ears were clean and clear. Along came the Brongs, who instantly fell for this sweet girl and took her home.

Three-year-old **Aiden** came in heartworm positive. She had a hard time with the treatments since she had been left untreated for two years. She was a trooper through the whole thing, and we sincerely thank her foster mom, Emily, for seeing her through. Aiden is a sweet and a happy girl. Her foster sister, Lexi, taught her how to play and swim. At first, Aiden wanted nothing to do with water, but after a while became a "golden fish." She captured the hearts of the Martins, who had been looking for a special golden to fill their lives and fell in love with Aiden at first sight.



Oggie, a sweet 5-year-old, was turned in to rescue for a very typical reason. The family was having another human baby and there was "no room" for him. He was quickly adopted by Greg and Jana G. and

their family. He has fit in perfectly. Oggie, now called Auggie Dawgie, has everything he could ever hope for, with a family who promises to love him for the rest of his days.

Riley was a stray found wandering the Orlando area. A good Samaritan turned him in to rescue where he was adopted by Shawn L. She has big plans for this little guy. Lots of walks, hiking and obedience school!



Missy is a sweet but shy 2-year-old given up due to a family move. Fostered by Kelly and Michael M. and their crew, Missy soon got over her shyness and began romping around with the kids –

human and canine. She was adopted by Yvonne and Brian B. and is ready to start a brand new chapter in her life.

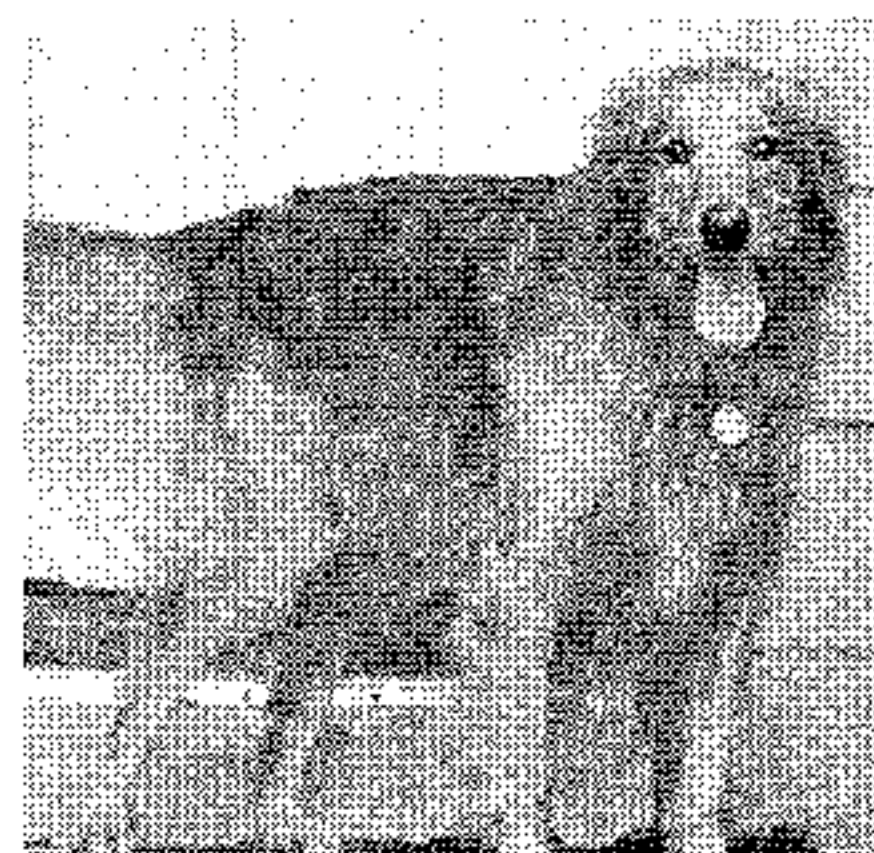
Abbey, 8 years old, has a common story – her family was moving into an apartment and she wasn't

invited. Abbey was fostered by Regina and Marcel V. and adopted by Laurie and Jackie, who love her very much and have promised that she no longer will be homeless.

Sparky was definitely well-named, as he is like a little "sparkplug." The day he landed in rescue at 6 months old was the luckiest of his short life. He had lived the first months of his life in the garage, so he was quite a bundle of hard-wired, pent-up puppy energy. We owe a debt of gratitude to Sparky's wonderful foster parents Rick and Cindy O., who worked to teach Sparky house manners and some basic commands. He was adopted by Cheryl W., who has incorporated this ball of energy into her active lifestyle and the two of them are having a blast. She plans on enrolling him in obedience classes, which should further help channel his puppy energy in a positive and focused manner. A reminder to all: a tired puppy is a good puppy, just ask Sparky!



Her name means "little warrior." **Malyn** came to rescue at just 6 months and had to spend the first two weeks in isolation due to kennel cough, which she had picked up in the shelter. True to her name, Malyn battled her way through and went to live with her foster mom, Kristin Anderson. The Fischer family waited patiently for this little girl to get well so they could add her to their family. She is now healthy as can be and living the good life.



Phoebe, 4 years old, was surrendered to rescue when her human owners could no longer get along. When she arrived, she could barely walk due to terrible hips and a knee injury which had never healed correctly.

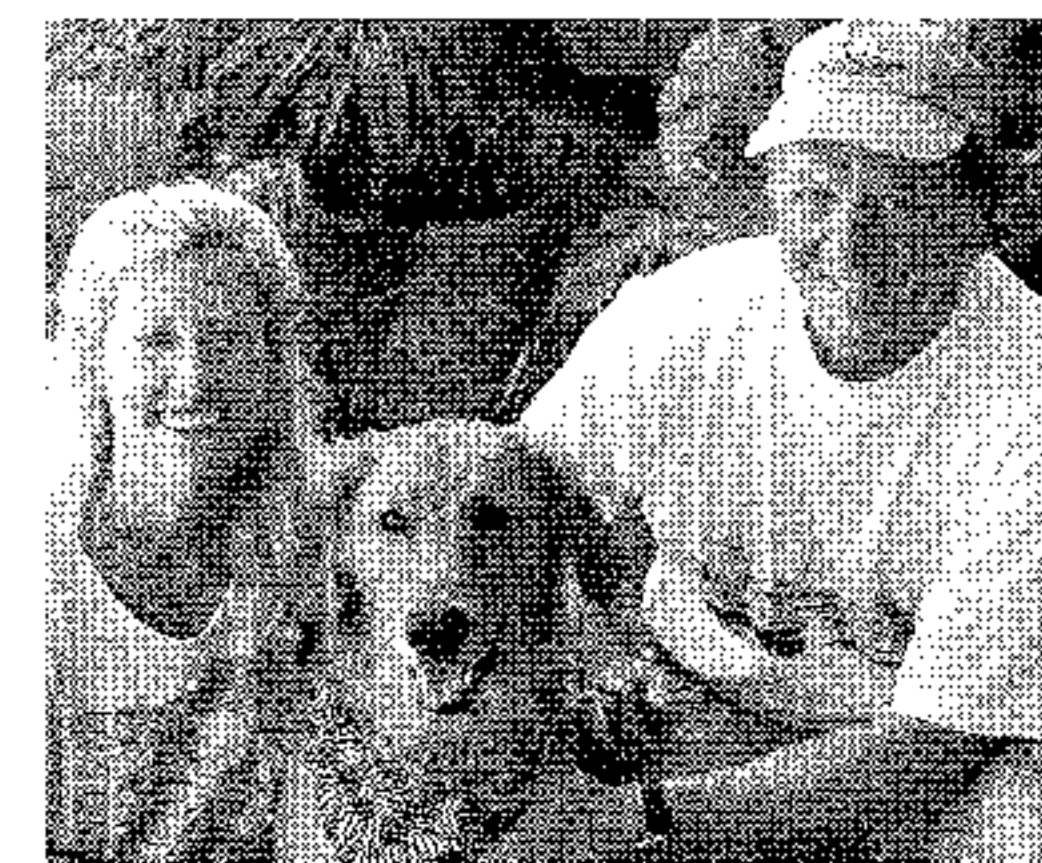
GRRMF and her foster dad, John F., fixed Phoebe right up with double FHO surgeries and she now runs laps around the house. Phoebe and Monty, another GRRMF alumni, adopted John as their owner. They also share their home with a foster.

Beau came into rescue at 6 months old – his first humans purchased him from a breeder and had him just long enough to create a monster. He learned to bark to

get what he wanted, which posed greater and greater challenges as the months wore on.

Eventually, his owners gave up and turned Beau over to rescue. He landed in foster care with

Suzanne Rider, a certified trainer, and her husband – what luck! They were able to provide positive and consistent guidance to help this very handsome golden boy correct the undesirable behavior. Lisa and Chuck M., who recently lost their former rescue **Jebber**, adopted Beau and are committed to working with him to continue his progress. They are sure to be rewarded in a very big way, as Beau is a very beautiful and bright golden retriever.



Drew was relinquished with his younger sister, **Savannah**, when their family decided they wanted to travel. Savannah was adopted last year and featured in a previous newsletter. Drew had horrible allergies which required daily injections. He was fostered, cared for, loved and adopted by Jerry and Paul. Drew is now a local celebrity and has appeared in a local paper promoting GRRMF.



Jersey, a beautiful, sweet boy, came from Animal Control. He was heartworm-positive, so his time in the shelter was extremely limited. His foster parents, the Bradleys, said he was nearly perfect in every way. Jersey was com-

pletely housebroken and also well-mannered. Jersey stole the hearts of Nancy and Vic. He now has a swimming pool and lots of neighborhood friends to play with. A friend gave him a toy saxophone that makes a noise when he squeezes it. His new mom thought he was just adorable when playing his new "sax," so she renamed him Jazzman.

Jackson is a happy little guy, nearly perfect in every way. He was fostered by Susan and Arlen S. and adopted by Debbie and her two canine buddies. Now the three of them enjoy wrestling and playing tug-of-war ... between belly rubs that is! Debbie says she needs to grow a third arm so she can pet all three of them at the same time. Jackson loves resting his head on her lap so he doesn't miss any petting action. When the weather gets a little warmer, Debbie says she's going to teach Jackson how to swim.

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* Education * Intervention * Spay/Neuter * Adoption

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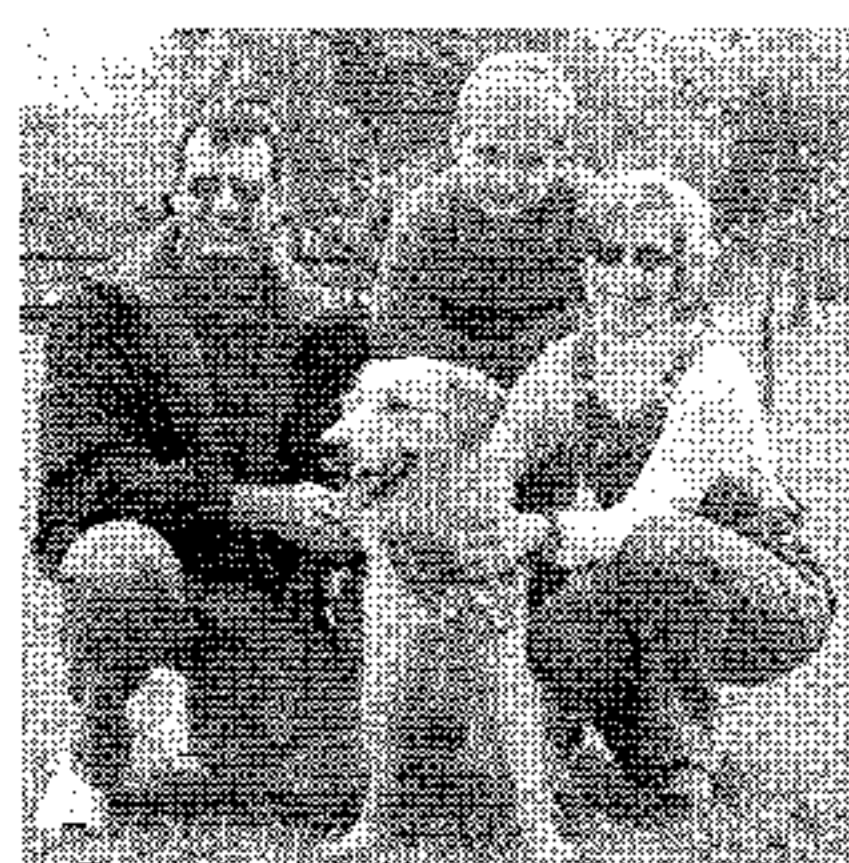
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Recent Adoptions *continued from page 6*

Callie, 4 years, has received a new leash on life with David & Kimberly R. She has already completed obedience training and, according to Kimberly, "has completely stolen our hearts." Callie loves going for long walks, playing fetch with her mint-flavored tennis balls and rolling around on the carpet. "She is quite a character and we are happy to have her in our lives. She makes us laugh uncontrollably on a regular basis. We are so thankful for the opportunity to welcome her into our lives and look forward to many, many years with our little girl," Kimberly says.



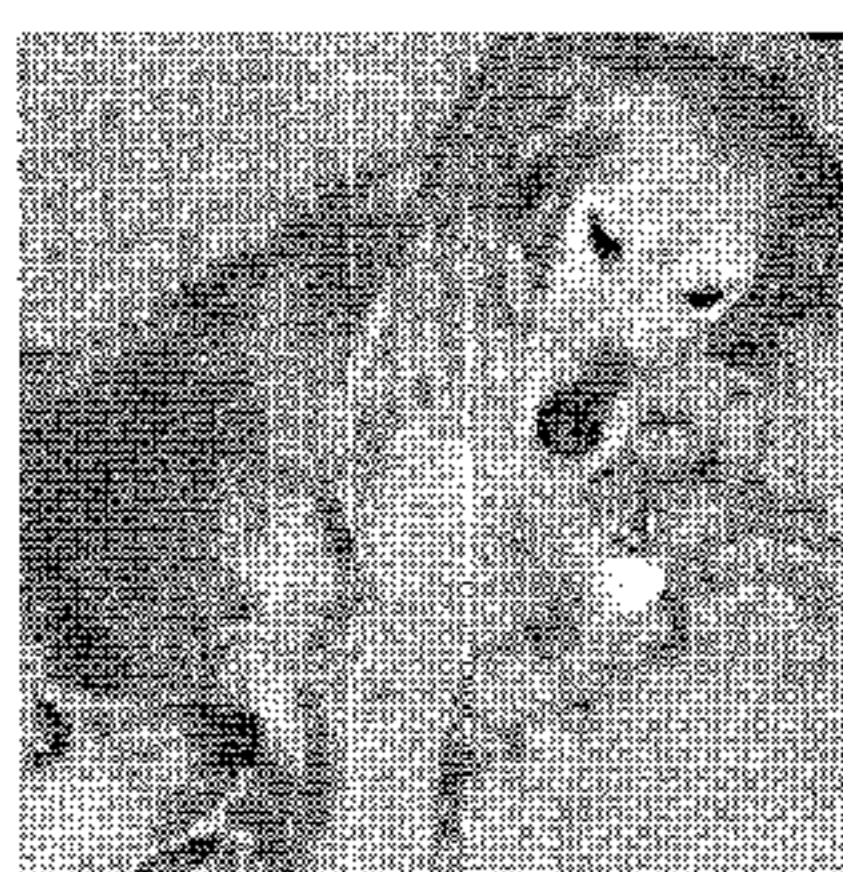
Anastasia, 6 years, was surrendered by her owner, who conveniently failed to mention her long list of medical problems. As per our usual protocol, we took Anastasia to our veterinarian, who recommended Xrays of her spine. The findings were shocking. Her entire spine was fused together and from the pelvis down were painful bone spurs. Anastasia was fostered by Kristin A. and adopted by Julie and Chris K., who are such wonderful people to have adopted a special-needs girl such as Anastasia. They will be continuing her treatments and medication, and assure us that Anastasia will be well taken care of.



Baxter lived his entire life chained up in a fenced backyard, where the neighborhood kids would torment him, screaming and throwing rocks and other objects at him. Because he was tied up, Baxter couldn't escape.

When he came to GRRMF, he was intact and heartworm positive. He also was very fearful of raised voices or too-quickly-moving hands or arms. Barb & Frank M., fostered him through heartworm treatment and were careful to be gentle and positive. He got along wonderfully with their GRRMF girl **Sierra** and they would have loved to keep Baxter, but they also wanted to continue fostering, so they unselfishly decided to let him go. Along came Wendy D. and family, who fell in love with his photos and drove all the way from Sarasota to Melbourne to meet him. Here's what Wendy has to say about her new golden boy: *"Baxter has quickly become the favorite member of our family. He is such a cuddle bug and is giving our kids some much needed exercise! He has adapted very well and seems to love his new backyard, although I think the squirrels and birds will be looking to relocate. Thank you for all you did to bring Baxter into our lives!"*

Seven-month-old **Lindsey** was a stray picked up by a kind couple. They tried to keep her but found her to be too energetic. She was your typical playful pup. Lindsey was fostered by Linda and George A. and adopted by Kurt and Mickey. Lindsey is now buddies with Payton, another GRRMF alumni, and the two spend lots of time every day wearing each other out.



Shelby came to rescue with many health problems. She was fostered by Rick and Cindy O., who helped nurse her back to better health. Thank goodness Cindy is a nurse! Taking over were her foster family left off is Ana, Mo and Les, who took one look at her and knew she had to be part of their family. Shelby is in good hands

now and will be as healthy as can be.

Lexi was turned in by her owners. They had a new baby in the house and didn't much care for all the dog hair getting on the new child. They shaved Lexi to cut down on the shedding, but in the end decided it would be best to let her go. We were happy to get this wonderful 6-year-old golden. She is well-behaved, sweet, cuddly and also very pretty. Susan & Jeff B. thought so, too, and now Lexi has a new leash on life.



Trevor was bought from a breeder as a puppy and spent most of his life in a crate. His owner wasn't able to give him the training and exercise a young golden needs and turned him over to us. Trevor had never been

socialized and didn't know much about "bite inhibition" — a dog usually learns early on how hard he can use his mouth in play or friendly activities. Most pups learn this from their mother and siblings. The behavior is correctable; it just required GRRMF to find the right family. We knew he is a beautiful golden boy inside who would pay his humans back tenfold for every minute they spent teaching him good manners. He found the perfect family with Jim and Judi S., and they tell us he already is making progress.

Barney's New Adventure

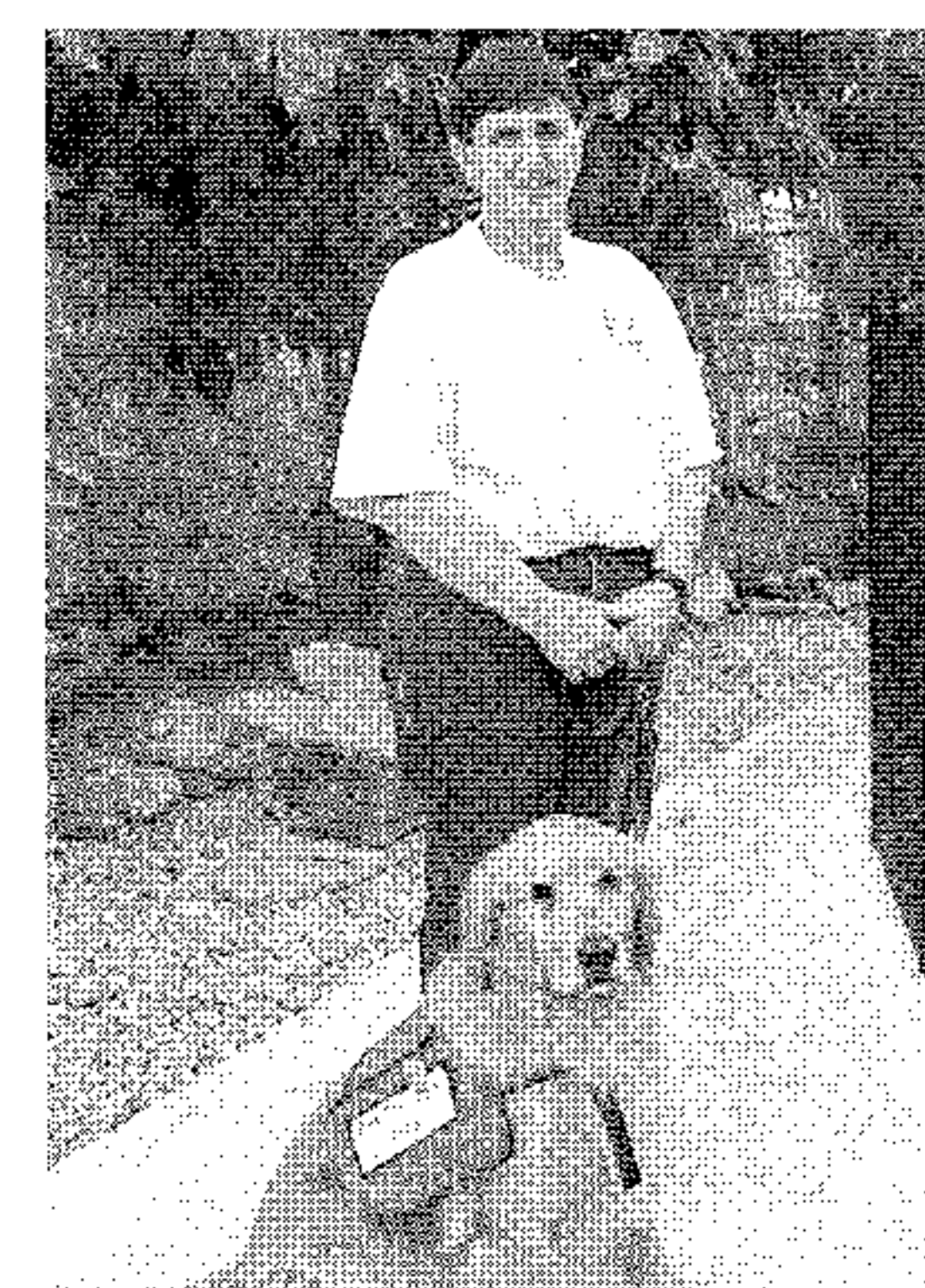
We acquired Barnum (Barney) from GRRMF in July 2002. He was estimated to be about 4 1/2 years old at the time, which makes him now almost 6. He had some training and was a very well-behaved boy. This made him a good candidate for further obedience training. We took him to a basic obedience class, where he got his CGC (Canine Good Citizen) certification. Every two weeks, he socializes with many people and other dogs at our local PetsMart, where we display an education table.

On the weekend following Thanksgiving, Barney went for his Pet Therapy certification. At first we thought that the balloon popping and chair dropping

at the beginning of the exam would throw him off because of his thunder phobia, but this only lasted a minute or so. He got wide-eyed for a second, but our boy passed the exam with flying colors. Whew!

Recently, Barney debuted as a pet therapy dog at one of our local rehab centers and was received very well by the patients, staff and even a few doctors. The rehab center was ecstatic by his visit, because it had been a long time since someone had visited to do pet therapy.

The only thing Barney didn't much care for was the unexpected elevator ride down after the visit, which sent him looking for the nearest shrub as soon



as he got outside. However, we're pretty sure he'll ride that little scare out, too, because he loved being the center of attention too much to want to miss another visit!

*Submitted by Barney's humans,
Charlie & Barbara White*

BUFO TOAD UPDATE

Once again, it is time to be on the lookout for the ugly toad. With warmer weather and rain upon us the Bufo will rear its ugly face once more. Should your dog encounter the poisonous toad, you must act immediately in order to save your pet's life.

TREATMENT IN CASE OF EXPOSURE

1. Rinse out your pet's mouth with its head 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.

2. Call your veterinarian or pet emergency clinic. Follow whatever instructions you are given. They will most like-

ly request that you bring your pet in for an EKG, injections and observation. The average emergency call will run approximately \$100 and will include the EKG, injections and observation. This is a small price to pay for your pet's life should he or she encounter a BUFO.

3. Try to remain calm and be prepared to transport your pet as quickly as possible.

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ASHLEY -- Maria St. Van
AVA -- Ali St. Van
BRUTE Oreto -- Jennifer Dabeck
BRUTE Oreto -- Sixth Grade
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COCO CHANEL -- Scott &
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For AVA,

*last issue's "Cover Girl," who needed
costly bladder reconstructive surgery:*
Roumen & Mariana Bagaler
Susan Bongiovanni
Burdines Fund-Raiser
Ms. Clawson
Frank & Frances Darling
Jordan German
Ronald & Linda Helm
Cheryl Kovalik
Roger & Christine Leggatt
Megan Newman
Susan Smith
Susan Stagon

"RUN FOR JUSTICE" --

*Special fund-raiser coordinated by
GRRMF volunteer Sally Anne
Rowland, who ran a marathon for
Justice, who needed hip surgery:*

Ana Maria Alvarez
Robert Anderson
Ray & Sue Angle
Ronald Beahm
Charles & Lisa Beck
Bill & Mary Benjes
Theresa Bradley
Thomas Cail
Brooks Carson
Leanne Crowley

Bruce & Janet Dattilo
Donna Dossing
Ted & Margaret Duncan
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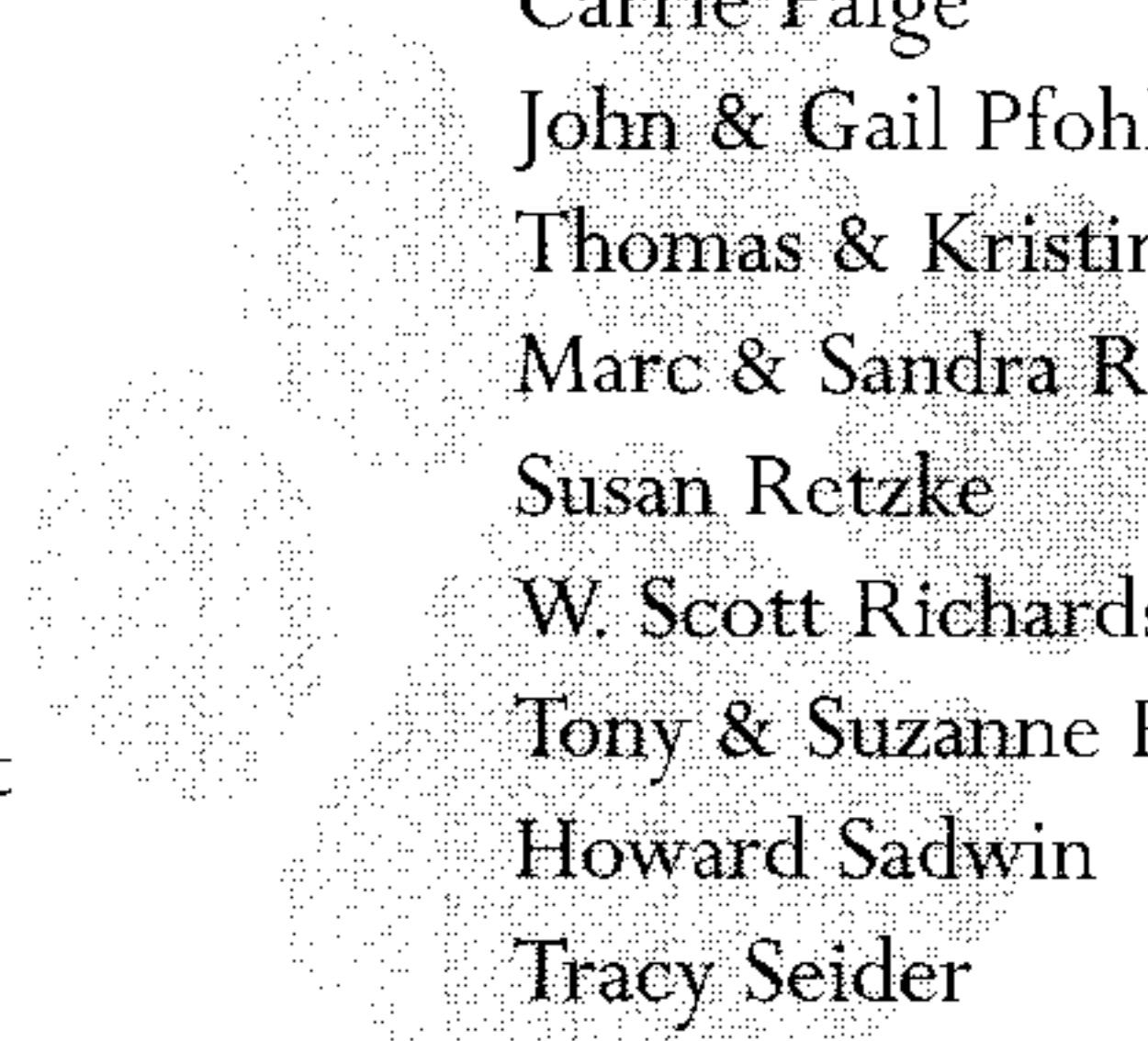
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Ray & Linda Sharp
Michael & Dawn Sheffield
Stockdale Technologies
Richard & Virginia Withington
Karen Weber
Stewart & Faith Worby

Boarding Fund

Rebecca Gushwa
Emory & Susan Kendrick -- in
memory of REX
Allola McGraw

Golden Friends



Note: The GRRMF Board sends very special thanks to all volunteers and supporters - including our organization is growing, and we sometimes might miss a name or two. If we failed to mention you, and we'll try our best to list it next time. We couldn't operate without

Leanne Rubin
Dick & Nancy Spears
Richard & Virginia Withington

General Donations

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Karen Johnson
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JADE & SAMMY
Robert & Grace Shappell
Gail Weber

Doggie Kisses to the Following Golden Friends:

- Home Visits: Linda Arnold, Ed Burger, Mary Chaundy, Irene Clifford, Linda Cohen, Chris Daher, Gregg Eddie, Ann Fitzpatrick, Jordan German, Hedy Greene, Pam Harrell, Joanne Hell, Kathy Hendrickson, Steve Jaffe, Sue Keiser, Julie Kielts, Peggy Litt, Terry Martin, Susan Matlock, Laurel O'Connor, Renee Perkier, John Pfohler, Suzanne Rider, Gayle Risley, Sally Anne Rowland, Kathy Salisbury, Randi Shoemaker, Nancy Spears, Bill & Celeste Watkins, Barbara White.

A note from Peggy Litt, HomeVisit Coordinator: Thanks also to everyone's 'better halves' who may not have been mentioned - we treasure you, too! In January alone, HV volunteers were responsible for getting 25 applicants through the system. What a great start to a new year!

- Fosters: Ani Akarjalian, Jennifer & Philip Allbright, Linda Arnold, Charlotte Bauer, Bob & Theresa Bradley, Hettie Buck, Ed Burger, Marcie Caldwell, Nancy Carroll, Deb & Cary Cash, Bob & Mary Cooper, Lori Cubbedge, Don & Penny Dalton, Amanda & David Daly, Andrea Davis, Chuck & Donna Dossing, Barbara Durham, Tom & Gregg Eddie, Linda Fike, Courtney Fitzpatrick, John Foss, Sally & Vann Frazier, Lisa Halpern, Pat Harrington, Loyd Kiernan, Steve Lobeck, Ron & Jennifer Longman, Diane Makinney, Frank & Barb Markowski, Kirk & Michelle Martin, Kelly Mehigan, Sally Anne & Dave Rowland, Cindy & Rick Owens, John & Gail Pfohler, Guillermo Porro, Suzanne & Tony Rider, Susan Salladin, Judy Santos, Maggie & Tim Stambaugh, Sandy Sumner, Susan Vieaux, Dave & Pat Wilson, Darcy Wright, Leah Wright.
- Call Team: Linda Cohen, Vicki Ferros, Kathy Hendrickson, Penny Iannone, Sue Keiser, Jeane Knowles, Melissa Knowles, Carol McKee, Kathy Salisbury.
- Transportation Volunteers: Sue & Ray Angle, Linda Arnold, Chuck & Lisa Beck, Ed Burger, Nancy Carroll, Pat Chesley, Maggie Duncan, Gregg & Tom Eddie, Keith & Wendy Erskine, Kathy Ferguson, Sally & Vann Frazier, Jana and Greg Garrison, Richard & Diane Gleason,

Rebecca Gushwa, Penny Iannone, Bill Jacobs, Kim James, Judy Ladney, Kirk & Michelle Martin, Kelly Mehigan, Pat and Bill Shepard, Kathy and Mike Stastka, Olinda Sykes, Betty Taylor, Lynn Wagner, Rodney Wilcox.

- Education Days/Events: Many thanks to all who participate in these events around the state - our dedicated volunteers are out there almost every weekend spreading the word about rescue with their goldens. For schedule and locations, see back cover or log onto our Web site: www.grrmf.org.
- Admissions Hotline: Linda Arnold, Donna Dossing, Kelly Mehigan, Emily Rowe, Lisa DeJordy.
- Applications Team: Sandy Sumner, Kathy Hendrickson, Pam Harrell, Peggy Litt, Marie Pacheco.
- Mail volunteers: Carol & Hal Avey.
- Master recordkeeper: Jennifer Longman.
- Info@grrmf.org e-mails: Ellen Mathieson.
- Lori McDerby for assembling adoption packets.
- Priscilla Brunjes of All Creatures Pet Grooming in East Orlando for grooming fosters at no charge. NOTE: Priscilla also offers discounts to GRRMF members and former rescues!
- Veterinarians who donated or discounted goods and services: Affiliated Veterinary Specialists, Maitland; All Creatures Animal Hospital, Lutz; Animal Hospital of Treasure Island; Dr. Athey, Orange City Animal Clinic; Dr. Rachael Beckett, Jackson Veterinary Practice, St. Augustine; Dr. Michael Berkenblit, Village Animal Clinic, North Palm Beach; Dr.

ng those we may have inadvertently left off this list. Although we try to list everyone, 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!!

Kevin Conrad, Sunset Point Animal Hospital, Clearwater; Dr. Robert Difonzo, Movement Improvement, Oviedo; Dr. Stanley Diment, Clermont Animal Hospital; Dr. Constance DiNatale, Veterinary Acupuncture, Winter Park; Dr. Bill Ehlers, 434 Animal Hospital, Winter Springs; Fox & Friends Animal Hospital, Sun City Center; Dr. Charles Gerhart, Southwest Ocala Veterinary Hospital; Drs. John Kirsch & Matt Oakes, Tampa Bay Veterinary Surgery, Largo; Dr. Myburgh, Bright Cross Animal Clinic, Venice; Dr. Martin Neher, Palmer Ranch Animal Clinic, Sarasota; Dr. E. J. Rackowski, Treasure Coast Animal Clinic, Vero Beach; Dr. Rick Rubinstein, Tusawilla Oaks Animal Hospital, Oviedo; Dr. Charles Steiner, Wickham Road

Animal Hospital, Melbourne; Dr. Michael Schroeder, Animal Medical Clinic, Spring Hill; Dr. Leland Simmons, Sand Lake Animal Clinic, Orlando; Skyway Animal Hospital, St. Petersburg; Dr. Spencer, Gateway Animal Hospital, St. Petersburg; Drs. Topor, Green & Buchanan, Livingston Animal & Avian Hospital, Lutz; Dr. Pam Wood, Wellington VCA Animal Hospital, Wellington.

- Training: 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.
- Staff of Hip Dog Therapy in Winter Park for providing hydrotherapy for our rescues with

hip and back problems.

- 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, Petco, Border's Bookstore and other businesses across the state, for letting GRRMF set up educational booths. We are grateful for all their support of our organization. Also, thanks to Stuart Fine Foods for allowing GRRMF to set up an Education Day.
- South Brevard Real Estate for donating ad space in Florida Today's "HomeSource" advertising supplement.

President's Message

Getting Started: Volunteering for GRRMF

<None>So you want to volunteer? How do you get started? And how do you know what activities you'd like, or how your efforts would be most effective?

First, you need to fill out a volunteer application. We're concentrating hard on contacting all those interested in volunteering and connecting them to the proper people within GRRMF. We are also inviting new volunteers to our Internet newsgroup, which is our main vehicle for sharing information. But volunteering can be kind of like trying to jump on a moving train: Where do you start?

One of the best places to "jump on the train" is by attending one of our education days. Many key volunteers attend these events, and it's a good way to get your feet wet. Take the opportunity to talk with these volunteers about what they do for rescue. Chances are something will spark your interest.

That's how I got started with GRRMF. I rescued my golden Rocky on my own in 1994 and joined the Mid-Florida Golden Retriever Club. At the time, rescue was a committee of that club. I walked into the meeting with my big red dog and stuck out like a sore thumb in the midst of all those blonde show dogs. But Rescue Committee Chair Sarah Davis greeted me warmly and asked me to help at an education event. I agreed, and soon found myself at a dog event staffing a booth with Sarah. I listened to her every word, as she effectively communicated with the public on all kinds of dog-related issues. As we do today, Sarah talked not only about Golden Retriever Rescue,

but the need to spay/neuter pets and also about the different aspects of responsible pet ownership. She even talked a few people OUT of getting a dog, which was the best thing for them. I was there to staff an education booth, but in the end it was me who got educated!

When GRRMF incorporated in 1997, Sarah asked me to serve as secretary on the board of directors. Truthfully, she was having a hard time finding seven willing souls to serve. I accepted and one of my first tasks was keeping the database for our mailing list, as well as editing and publishing the first GRRMF newsletters. I also worked to gather our intellectual property and document how things were done. Between them, Sarah and Betty Wyatt had a virtual rescue "how to" manual in their brains, but it wasn't down on paper.

Betty was very gracious, patiently answering my questions as I documented procedures and contracts. Betty's willingness to share her vast knowledge of rescue is one of the key reasons we have been so successful. This was especially evident this year as she faced medical leave. If Betty had not been so willing to educate the rest of us, we would have been in a world of hurt.

My involvement in rescue grew over time, and in 1999, when Sarah and her family relocated to St. Louis, I became GRRMF's president.

I write this to let our new volunteers know that we don't expect you to know exactly what you want to do — we are happy to let you try different things until you find your niche.

continued on page 11

President's Message

continued from page 10

The most important things you can do are to pace yourself and be dependable. We'd rather have volunteers who commit even a small block of time but are reliable, than those who promise the moon and don't follow through. We understand that some aspects of rescue can be emotional, and maybe you aren't suited for those tasks. Don't worry, because there is something for everyone.

I'm a perfect example. I handle a lot of administrative tasks for rescue. They must be done, and I know that indirectly I'm supporting the dogs by interfacing with the state, IRS, etc. However, I tend to be a bit of a mess if you let me work directly with the dogs. Recently, I fostered a dog and have since been informed by our adoption coordinator that I was a high-maintenance foster home and she wasn't sure if I should foster again! She was kidding, but I know she's right: I nervously sweated every detail up until Bella's adoption last month to a terrific family. So I'm better off doing the paperwork.

Please come to some of our events and talk to our long-time volunteers. And feel free to e-mail me about volunteering. I'm currently acting as volunteer coordinator, so I'm happy to help. Please put "Volunteering for GRRMF" in the subject line of your e-mail. I'm also at Borders Bookstore in Oviedo the 3rd Saturday of every month from 7-10 p.m. I'd love to meet some new volunteers there.

For a schedule of education days, see the back cover of this newsletter, call our Hotline or e-mail me. Here's to a great 2004 and welcome to all new volunteers!

Barbara Durham
Red2dogs@aol.com

My Perfect Vacation

by Magen McKee

Last fall, I traveled with my family to the greatest place in Florida for dogs! It is called Cape San Blas, and it's up near that oyster place – Apalachicola.

My Mom and Dad drove me and my sisters, Abbey & Haley, to this awesome vacation house RIGHT ON THE BEACH! The house had all tile floors, and there was even an outdoor shower and a hose-off area for us dogs so we didn't track all that sand into the house.

For a whole week, we got to play and swim on the beach as much as we wanted. The people at the rental company said the beaches were very "dog-friendly," and they didn't have any problems with us being there – even though there were three of us goldens and a chocolate Labrador named Maxx (he loves me, even though he plays hard to get) staying in the house.



Magen enjoys the view from her vacation home on Cape San Blas in the Florida Panhandle.

Mom said I should write a story about my trip. Well, here it is. In the morning, we'd sit out on our balcony and watch the birds and the dolphins in the Gulf of Mexico. I loved just lying there watching the water and sniffing the breeze. Then we'd go for a long walk on the beach. We'd chase the birds, sniff all the neat stuff that was lying around, go for a quick dip, then walk some more. Mom put us on long leads, so we could REALLY RUN if we wanted to! I really loved digging big holes where the waves were breaking. For the life of me, I just couldn't figure out how those holes kept filling back up with water! The more I'd dig, the more they'd fill up. Very strange.

Of course, my favorite part was swimming. Abbey liked lounging under the beach umbrella with Mom best. Haley? Well, Haley is a NUT about tennis balls, so you know what SHE wanted to do 24/7! The water was nice and calm, so sometimes we'd just float around on rafts and watch the neat fish under the water.

My humans were so happy to find a place where they could take us kids, they wanted to share it with others who may be looking for a good "dog vacation," too!

The only bad parts were: 1) sand spurs in the dunes around the house; 2) big scary crabs with really BIG pinchers; 3) saltwater – it tastes awful, and it's even worse coming back out (trust me on that one); 4) having to get a bath every day; and 5) coming home.

If anyone would like to go, Mom said to visit these Web sites: www.paradise-coast.com (that's the rental place that really liked me), www.visitgulf.com, or www.gulfcountybusiness.com. St. George Island is in the same area, and we've heard they're really dog-friendly out there, too. Spring and Fall are best, because all the out-of-state tourists are gone. I'm not sure what a "tourist" is, but I can tell you this was ONE REALLY FUN place to go!

And for all you goldens out there reading this ... go tell your humans to take you to this beach! Bark like Haley until they say "YES"!

Love,
Magen

Twilight – Providing for Abbey

by Sandy Sumner, GRRMF Adoption Coordinator

Rescue is known for taking in young, crazy dogs that need some obedience, and also for coming to the aid of sick dogs needing heartworm treatment or other medical interventions. We take in strays and abuse cases. We take the badly neglected ones and nurture them back to life.

But a little known part of rescue is *hospice care*. Every once in a while, we get a call about a senior golden who needs our help. Chances are, the dog won't be adopted, but we feel strongly that it deserves to spend the rest of its life in comfort and peace. Many times, these dogs are dumped at shelters or even veterinarian offices and will be euthanized if we don't step in.

Recently, Abbey came to stay with me. **Abbey's** owner had two goldens, both 14 years old. They had been therapy dogs earlier in life but now were coming to the end of their days. Abbey's buddy had to be euthanized due to health issues, and that left Abbey on her own. Abbey's owner loved her and had always provided for her. He even took her to the University of Florida recently for extensive tests to be sure she was as healthy as possible for her age. Unfortunately, his work schedule changed, requiring him to put in longer hours, which left Abbey all alone most of the time. So he called rescue.

We have a small core of volunteers who will take in these "twilight dogs" and provide for them in their final months. We know our time with these dogs is limited, but the love and devotion we receive from dogs like Abbey, no matter how brief our time with them, is worth the heartache to come.



Abbey, bottom center, snuggles with volunteer Jennifer Longman and foster siblings **Ashley** (in Jennifer's lap) and **Banjo**.

Abbey is a sweet ray of sunshine. She is a happy girl, but she has some older dog diseases that limit what she can do. After all, she is 14 years old! She has cataracts and vestibular disease which makes her unsteady at times and causes her to constantly have a quizzical tilt to her head. She needs a house without stairs and with low dog beds. She can't take long walks but loves to stroll around the back yard.

So instead of spending her twilight years all alone, Abbey is now in a home with plenty of other dogs for company -- we call them her very own "in-house doggie movies." She enjoys watching them play and occasionally even goes after a tennis ball if she feels up to it. They come and lick her face and are careful not to step on her. It is as if they know she needs special care.

I know Abbey's time with us is limited, but already she has given back so much more than I could have asked for. She is a dear girl and has joined the ranks of many other goldens who have wormed their way into my heart and soul. This is part of where your donations go -- to dogs like Abbey that need to live out their days with the same love that she has given to so many before.

It has been a privilege to know Abbey. And I hope that while you're reading this newsletter, Abbey is still happy and healthy. We're taking it one day at a time, Abbey and I. And when her time comes, whether it's tomorrow, next week or next year, I will be with her. Like so many of you, as a caring dog person I would never abandon Abbey in her time of need.

Tail of Transformation: Brandy's Story

by Laura Breen Galante

The call came on a Friday afternoon. We were "expecting" a golden, and GRRMF had a dog for us! I was thrilled! I learned that our potential new family member was named Brandy, was 5 years old and was "a big girl."

Armed with these details and a leash, I hopped in the car and began a long, rainy drive to Lutz, Fla. "How big?" I wondered. When I finally arrived, Brandy was standing in the driveway. The minute I saw her sweet face, I knew we would be friends. It was dark, but I could tell that she was big, all right, and scared to death. She looked down at the ground, and her tail was jammed between her legs. She slowly waddled over to

Brandy was a beautiful dog, with a stunning red coat and a long, blonde fluffy tail, but her face and eyes were sad. Weighing in at a whopping 94 pounds, the poor girl had a hard time moving around and mostly just lay on the tile. She had little interest in looking out the window or going outside. It was difficult for her to get up, and when she stood, her legs shook.

With help from GRRMF, we immediately cooked up a recipe to slim down our portly pooch. Ingredients: quality food; limited, healthy snacks; and lots of exercise. We fed her NutroMax on a regular schedule—once in the morning and once at night. So she wouldn't feel hungry, we supplemented each meal with half a can of unsalted green beans, which she gobbled up. For treats, we fed her mini-carrots. Our grocery cart was filled with cans of green beans, and we received quite a few odd looks at the checkout line. After a month or so, we omitted the green beans and stuck to the regular food schedule, although our grocery list now has a standard entry—"carrots for Brandy."

Brandy Boot Camp consisted of walks around our neighborhood mixed with a good amount of fetching. On her first excursion, she stayed glued to my leg, looking at the ground. She walked slowly and often paused to catch her breath. The first time we threw the ball, she watched the ball roll down the hall, then looked back at us as if we were nuttier than a jar of Jif. "You want me to what?"

The weight came off quickly, and a new Brandy emerged. Over the course of 10 months, she lost 30 pounds. She started to smile, wag that fluffy tail and let



The "new" **Brandy** – a gorgeous 65 pounds!

us pet her. Now she's addicted — she nudges us for pets on the head and loves snuggling and giving kisses. Most mornings I arise to the "whack-whack" sound of her tail hitting the bed or a wet nose and whiskers tickling my face. Brandy is an affectionate, energetic, happy dog. When we come home, she sprints to get a toy and greets us at the door with her tail wagging at a frantic pace. And she actually retrieves (whether it be a tennis ball or stuffed monkey), galloping down our long hallway or in the yard. If she sees me sitting on the floor tying my shoes, she comes bounding up to me, tail wagging, ready for her walk. Brandy is a regular on the trail—she prances with her head held high and stalks squirrels.

Friends and neighbors are astounded at the changes they see in her. We ran into a friend who hadn't seen Brandy since last March. "Is that the same dog?" he asked. I smiled. In many ways she is a brand-new dog.



Brandy tipping the scales at 94 pounds.

the car and needed help getting into the back seat. I talked and sang to her the whole way home, but she just uttered a few deep sighs (no doubt she found my perkiness annoying).

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Brandy's story is not uncommon. Many of the dogs we take in are overweight and out of shape. Please remember that by controlling your golden's weight, you are lengthening his or her life and preventing serious health problems such as diabetes, heart disease and arthritis. Your golden will thank you by living a longer, healthier life.*

RAINBOW BRIDGE

Some people come into our lives and quickly go. Some stay awhile and leave footprints on our hearts. And we are never, ever the same. Anonymous



Pumpkin

My dear sweet, red girl with your crossed eyes, which just endeared you to us even more, we miss you more than you will know, but knowing you are at peace eases my heartbreak. It was an honor to

have you in our lives, even for just 13 months. Your spirit and strong will to survive is beyond measure, only you could defy the odds.

Her friends she loved. I believe she did but feign to hate. My hand will miss the insinuated nose, mine eyes the tail that wagg'd contempt at fate.

Be at peace my angel.

The Eddies -

Gregg, Tom, Cody, Spirit, Hadley and Wolfie

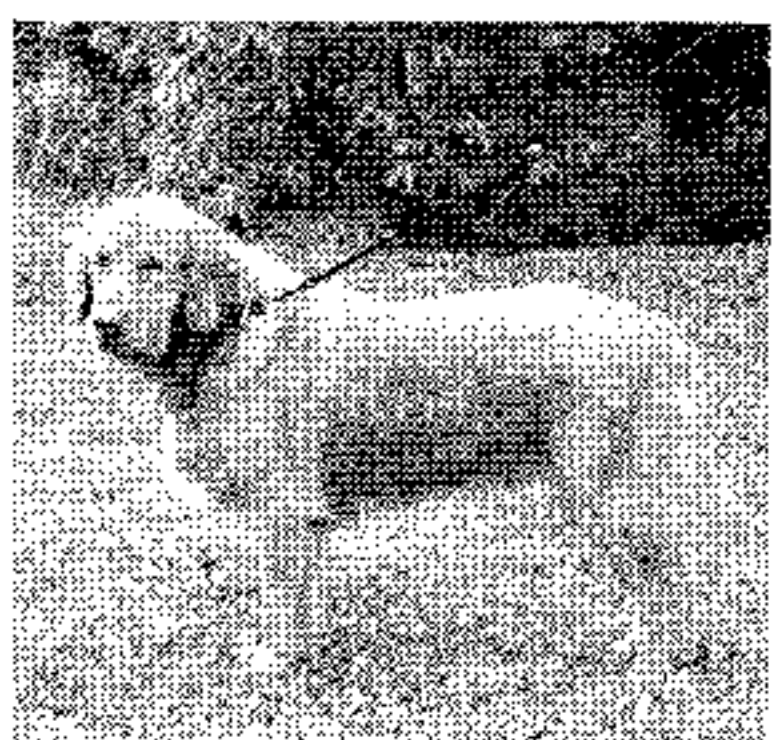


Brody (1999 - 2003)

This past summer, I lost one of my best buddies. Brody contracted bloat at 1 a.m. and by 5 a.m., he was gone despite a trip to the emergency vet. For any of you who met the Brody Roadster, he was hard to

forget. With the ever-present smile, hip dysplasia swish walk and those wild "Walter Cronkite" eyebrows, he was a memorable guy. But it was his personality that showed through, and there is not one day that goes by without my thinking of him. May you be at the Bridge, my friend, waiting for me with **Stinger, Stella, Mia and Beau**. I will be sure to bring a mountain of cookies for you! We all miss you

— Mom Sandy and the Canine Crew



Dallas before.



Dallas after.

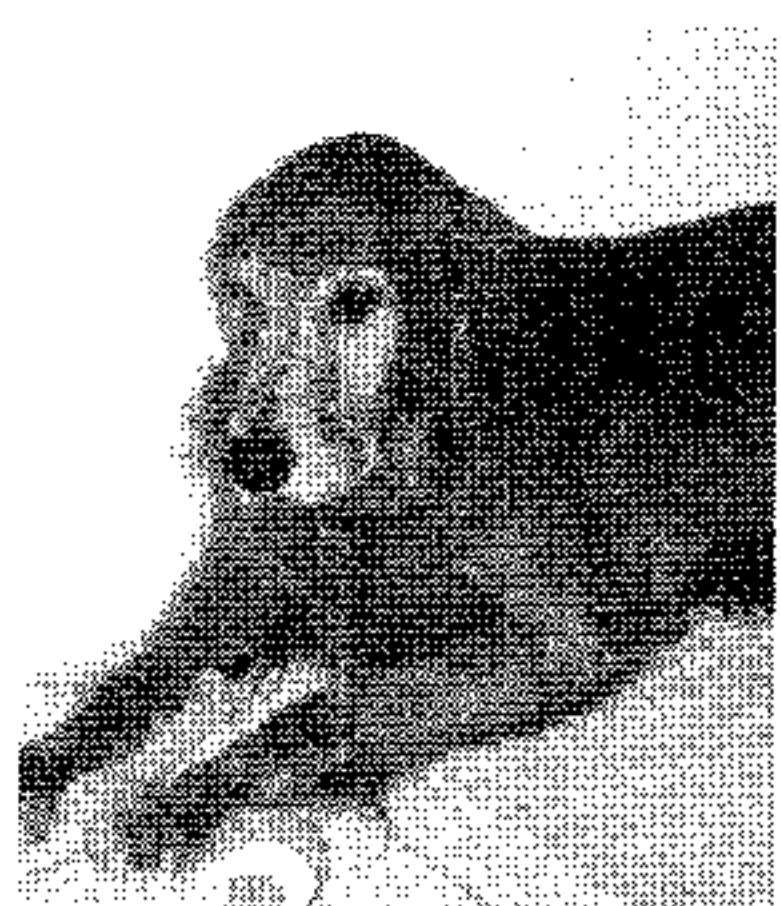
Dallas came to rescue after living his life in a garage. He was in terrible shape — so bad, that some folks thought he wasn't a golden retriever. But after some TLC from Suzanne Rider and others, Dallas began to shine. He was adopted by Janet Parker. Sadly, Dallas passed away in January from cancer. Even though his time with us was too short, we are happy that he had a chance to live his last year of life to its fullest.

Elsa

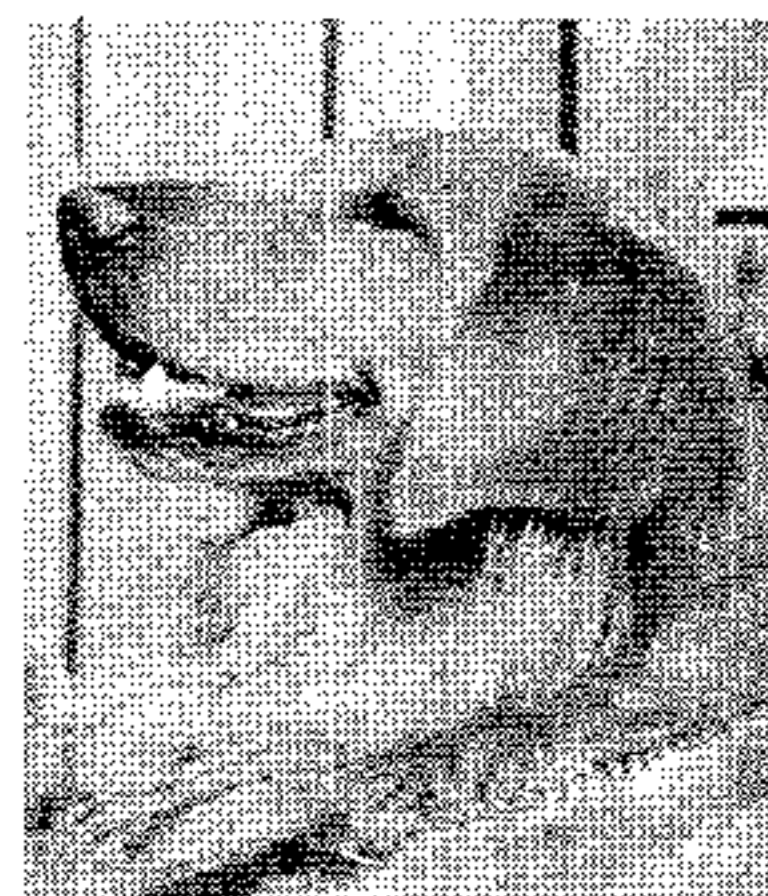
On my way home from animal control in December 1999, with a heartworm-positive, allergy-ridden, senior female golden in the back seat, I passed a camper that had "born free" emblazoned on the door. I looked at the trembling little girl who resem-



bled a lioness and decided to name her **Elsa**. I hoped she would be as strong as a lion and survive the heartworm treatment. She won the battle and turned out to be the perfect companion for **Casey**, my shy, formerly abused golden boy. I officially adopted my foster girl. Elsa loved everyone, and everyone loved her. She was always happy and smiling. Elsa was diagnosed with insulinoma and given 6 months to live in June 2002. This was a battle she couldn't win, but she fought it and showed incredible resilience as the disease progressed. Her spirit was strong until the end, but her body was shutting down, so I helped her find her way to the Rainbow Bridge on May 29, 2003. Not a day passes that I don't miss my baby girl, and I shall always be grateful for the joy this little angel brought to my life. — Jan Jennings



Joey was a very special golden who came to me in May of last year. He captured my heart with his personality and playful antics. I will never forget the day I brought him home and how he strolled through the house and right into the pool as if to say, "Yep - this is where I belong!" And belong he did! Joey gave me more love than I could ever have given back. He was a joy to be around. A terrible disease - cancer - took him away far too soon. But I know now that heaven is a richer place with Joey there! — Steve Lobeck



Glory - GRRMF's Calendar Cover Girl

Ridge Pine's Golden Glory, whose picture graces the cover of the GRRMF 2004 calendar, has gone to meet her housemates at the Rainbow Bridge. Glory came to us

along with her "sister" **Chelsea** in December 1997 as fosters. After just one weekend, it was obvious that the two of them had found their permanent home. We lost Chelsea in May at the age of 12, but Glory stayed on until January. When Glory arrived, she was a small golden lady weighing 96 pounds. A diet was in order and in six months she lost 33 pounds, became very active and truly learned to swim instead of just splash!

Glory was our "Miss Innocence," loving and tail wagging until the very end. Sometimes we called her "Flopsy Mopsy" because of her habit of crashing to the floor with all four legs in the air begging for a belly rub. But she took her responsibilities seriously and

did her service on home visits, loving them all.

Glory was an incredible sweetheart and we miss her more than words can describe, but we know she's happy with **Dusty, Toby and Chelsea** at the bridge, where she's waiting for us to join her.

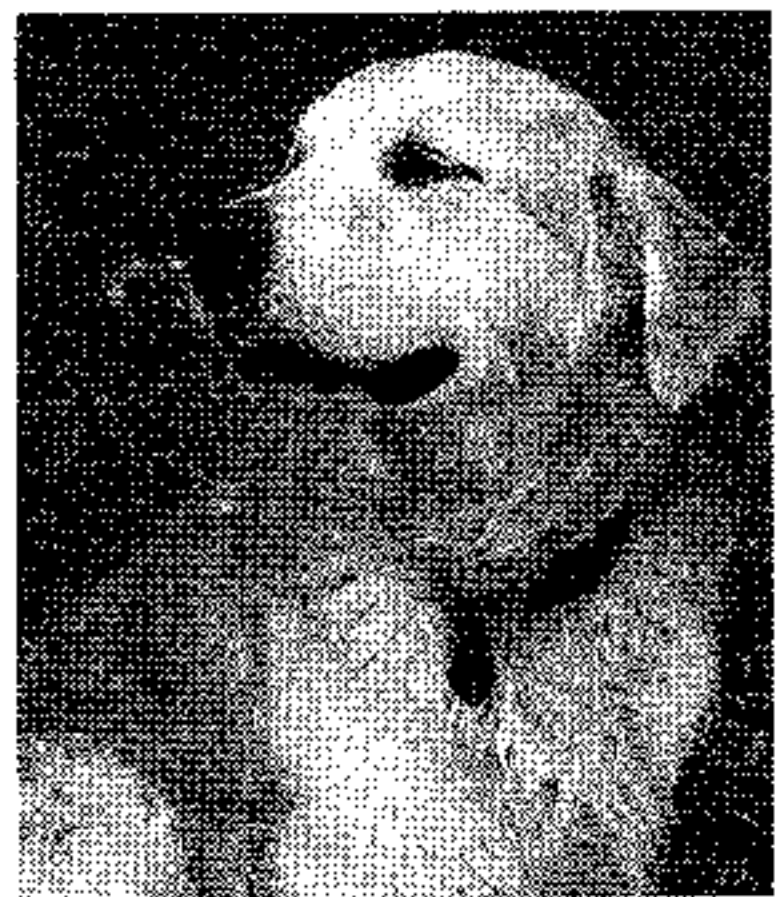
— Nancy & Dick Spears

In 1993, we adopted **Kelly**, a 5-6 year old female — Dog #110 — who had been fostered by Becky Nicholas. We fell in love with her the first time we saw her. We lived in Melbourne at the time and Kelly was a wonderful companion and a great therapy dog. We moved to Minnesota in late 1999 to care for my 94-year-old mother, and Kelly adjusted amazingly well. She passed the Canine Good Citizen's test and the Delta Society therapy test. She was getting too arthritic to work anymore, so we considered her retired. Kelly got along with our other two dogs and cats and everyone she ever met. In all the years we had her, I never heard her growl or even hint at anything but total love and acceptance of everyone she met — young and old. We lost our beloved Kelly in October. We kept her with us as long as we could, but finally one weekend she couldn't get up anymore, and the light went out of her eyes. We knew her spirit had given up so we helped her go peacefully to the Rainbow Bridge. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to know this wonderful friend and companion who shared our lives for 10 years. No matter how many other dogs I have had or will have in my lifetime, Kelly will always be a special one who always gave everything she had to everything she did, especially the love. — Mary Heitz



Honey came to us, one of 13 puppies. We were given the pick of the litter, and were so honored. She was meant to be with our family, it was evident from the start. Honey brought us such joy every day of her life. She was almost human

with her response to our questions and commands. She was truly a member of our family in every way that mattered. Honey lived better than most people, and she deserved it. Her constant love and companionship was unprecedented. At 13 years, Honey died of natural causes on Nov. 3, 2003. We mourn her deeply and will be forever better for having her in our lives. She added such quality to our otherwise average lives. Honey, there are hundreds of tennis balls in Heaven just for you. You are whole again and we miss you terribly. We will never be the same without you. You were such a gift! You will remain in our hearts always. — The Higleys



Hogan (originally **Sam IV**) was adopted in 1997 by Andy & Carrie Miles. Initially, he was plagued with issues from his past life of neglect and was a very needy and insecure golden. The Miles' showered him with love, took him to training classes and spent lots of time teaching him how to play with his canine siblings. Eventually, Hogan overcame his fears and became happy and joyous golden. He loved everyone, and never knew a

stranger. Hogan died in December from a brief bout with cancer. His humans are heartbroken, and he is very much missed by all.



Rex

We were one of those rare homes who actually wanted "old gold." We adopted Rex (formerly Captain). He had been picked up off the street and Kathy Spilker saved his life by taking him out of the shel-

ter. We enjoyed sharing our lives with Rex for three full years. When we first got him, Rex had little hair on his tail and very calloused tail and rear end. He was, as my friends described him, "an old bag of bones." We showered Rex with love, oodles of toys and treats galore, all of which contributed to his filling out like the beautiful golden boy we knew he could be. From the day we brought him home, Rex had perfect manners. His favorite pastimes were to romp and bark as our younger dogs played with and around him. And, of course, he never missed his two square meals a day! — Emory & Susan Kendrick

Maya: A Tragic Story

I am writing to let you know that our dear adopted golden Maya (formerly Laura, adopted in December 2000) was hit by a car last night and died. We had her on a retractable leash, which I am kicking myself about now as I did have problems controlling her on it when she saw something she wanted to chase.

A person who lives in our neighborhood apparently was testing one of his cars. He drove to one end of the neighborhood, then turned around in the cul-de-sac. We couldn't see the car, but suddenly heard it accelerating in our direction. Maya had a good deal of slack in the leash, and when she heard the sound, she jumped toward the street. I didn't have time to retract the leash to get her out of the path of the speeding vehicle. Maybe Maya was trying to protect us, we'll never know. Our 1-year-old baby was with us too, so maybe Maya did save us after all. The driver was arrested for speeding and driving on a suspended license.

I question whether I could have prevented the accident by using our short, nonretractable leash, which I usually do. I am glad of one thing, though, that Maya died instantly and didn't have to suffer.

I wanted to tell this story for those who use retractable leashes, as I would never use one again. Hopefully, our story can help someone else avoid a terrible accident such as this. Maya gave us great joy the three years we had her, and our lives were enriched by her much more than I can express in words. She was part of our family and we'll never forget her. — Caryn Kirley



IS YOUR DOG A GOOD CITIZEN?



Take the AKC's Canine Good Citizen Test at our Rescue Reunion and find out! GRRMF Volunteer Susan King is a certified evaluator for the American Kennel Club's Canine Good Citizen test and has graciously volunteered to hold CGC testing at GRRMF's Annual Rescue Reunion on Saturday, March 20, 2004.

To receive the CGC certificate, dogs take the 10-item Canine Good Citizen Test. Any dog who has completed a basic obedience class should be able to pass the CGC test.

Entries are limited, and there is a \$10 entry fee for each dog tested, with all proceeds benefiting GRRMF. Entry forms can be found on the GRRMF Web site — grrmf.org, click on "2004 Reunion," or call/e-mail us and a form will be sent to you: (407) 332-2840, info@grrmf.org.

Here's a brief overview of the tests. More detailed information is found on the Web site.

Test 1: Accepting a friendly stranger.

Demonstrates that the dog will allow a friendly stranger to approach it and speak to the handler in a natural, everyday situation.

Test 2: Sitting politely for petting.

Demonstrates that the dog will allow a friendly stranger to touch it while it is out with its handler.

Test 3: Appearance and grooming.

Demonstrates that the dog will welcome being groomed and examined.

Test 4: Out for a walk (walking on a loose lead). Demonstrates that the handler is in control of the dog. The dog may be on either side of the handler.

Test 5: Walking through a crowd.

Demonstrates that the dog can move about politely in pedestrian traffic and is under control in public places.

Test 6: Sit and down on command and staying in place. Demonstrates that the dog will respond to the handler's commands and will remain in place when told to do so.

Test 7: Coming when called. Demonstrates that the dog will come when called by the handler.

Test 8: Reaction to another dog.

Demonstrates that the dog can behave politely around other dogs.

Test 9: Reaction to distraction.

Demonstrates that the dog is confident at all times when faced with common distracting situations.

Test 10: Supervised separation.

Demonstrates that a dog can be left with a trusted person, if necessary, and will maintain training and good manners.

Collect Some Change and Change a Life

Do you have some spare change lying around, just waiting to find a purpose?

Well, we know just what you can do with it! Rolled or unrolled, GRRMF will be collecting your spare change at the 2004 Rescue Reunion in Lakeland on March 20. Those pennies that get thrown into baskets or drawers, the quarters and dimes that you find in the laundry ... every red cent will help us "change" a dog's life! Maybe even more than one dog!

So bring your grocery bags, your piggy banks, your envelopes full of change to the reunion, and ask for Nancy Spears — she'll be collecting change and can give you a receipt on the spot. Remember, ALL donations are tax-deductible — whether 5 cents or 5 dollars!

Come on, collect your spare change ... and change the life of some precious gold!

Bloat: A Medical Emergency

by Betty Wyatt, GRRMF Board Member

We've published articles previously about a medical condition called "bloat," but we have many new members, so a review is in order.

Bloat, also known as *gastric dilatation volvulus* or *GDV*, is a very serious, life-threatening health risk, yet many canine caregivers are unaware of the condition until it happens to their dog. Deep-chested dogs such as goldens and Labradors are prone to the condition, and it occurs more often in males than females. Stress can be a factor, along with swallowing air, food or fluid. The stomach may rotate, trapping air, food or fluid between the esophagus and the large intestine. The bloated stomach obstructs veins in the abdomen, leading to damaged internal organs, decreased blood pressure and shock.

It is considered a veterinary emergency, and the dog will quickly be in imminent danger of dying. Bloat often occurs at night. That's when my dog and Sandy Sumner's rescue **Brody** came down with it.

Here are some of the symptoms: dog attempts unsuccessfully to vomit, apprehensive, pacing, hunched back, abdomen swollen and tight like a drum, pale gums, drooling, gagging, foamy mucous around the mouth, may not want to lie down and eventually collapses.

Contributing factors include rapid eating; drinking too much water just prior to or immediately after eating (dilates the gastric juices); eating gas-producing foods such as soybeans, alfalfa or brewer's yeast; and exercising just after eating.

Prevention techniques include: adding a small amount of water to dry kibble and allowing it to sit for a few minutes prior to feeding; not exercising just prior to or after a meal; feeding 2-3 smaller meals a day instead of one large meal; avoiding dry foods with fat as one of the first four items; feeding a high-quality diet; and promoting healthy bacteria in the intestines by adding yogurt or acidophilus.

My cocker spaniel Susie was 10 years old when she died of bloat. It was midnight on July 4, many years ago. Susie woke me when she started pacing and panting around the room. I let her out several times and then noticed her sides were expanding. She was unable to vomit or defecate. I knew the symptoms and took Susie right away to the emergency vet clinic. There was a corgi ahead of us, who also had been diagnosed with bloat. Both dogs had to undergo surgery. The corgi survived, but Susie did not. Sandy's Brody also experienced similar symptoms, again in the middle of the night. Neither of our dogs had recently eaten, exercised or shown any signs of problems before bedtime. We'll never know why it occurred. And, in spite of urgent medical care, neither Susie nor Brody survived.

Much of the information in this article was taken from the Internet with permission to share. I urge you to talk to your veterinarian for further information on what to look for and also for preventing bloat. Above all, please be observant. If your dog awakens you in the middle of the night, pay attention and seek medical care immediately if you observe any of the above symptoms.

I hope all of you had a wonderful holiday season. I hope to see you and your rescued goldens at our reunion in March.

It's Not Too Late – Membership Drive Still Under Way

Please help us meet our goal of increasing membership by sending in your membership renewal today! A membership form is included on the back cover of this newsletter.

Memberships start at just \$25 a year, and you will ensure that you continue to receive this newsletter. For \$100, you can join at the sponsorship level, in which you help a special-needs golden. 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.

All It Takes Is Love



Lovey was rescued from an abusive situation and adopted by Jim & Pat Herrington. Pat was looking for a golden who would be a good candidate for pet therapy, and what better match than a golden named Lovey, who had a personality to match!

With guidance from Jim & Pat, Lovey sailed through three obedience classes at Best Paw Forward in Sanford. "She is a 'natural' star student," Pat says.

Lovey passed her Canine Good Citizen test in December 2003, and she and Pat are scheduled to attend orientation to join the Orange County Humane Society's pet therapy program in April. Jim & Pat are very excited about Lovey's new "career" as a pet therapy dog. We're proud of her, too ... just knowing that rescue played a role in saving this golden's life, and that now, through her wonderful humans, she's going to help others – what greater reward could we ask for?

"Lovey LOVES everyone she meets and is the gentlest, sweetest dog I have ever met. I am looking forward to sharing this very special girl with others," Pat says.

Want to learn more about taking the CGC test? See page 14 – we'll be conducting CGC testing at the March 20 GRRMF Rescue Reunion. Many local trainers also offer the test and could also provide more information about pet therapy in your area. Contact the GRRMF Hotline: (407) 332-2840 or e-mail: info@grrmf.org for the name of a trainer in your area.

Pat is interested in talking to others who are currently involved in pet therapy in the Orlando area. You can e-mail her at: jpherrin@bellsouth.net.

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: PetsMart, Melbourne / **Petco**, Viera/Suntree

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 First 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 - Every fourth Sunday

If you are interested in helping, please complete the volunteer application in this newsletter or call 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.

Golden Retriever Rescue of Mid-Florida Membership Application/Donation Form

ALL memberships/donations are tax-deductible.

Name _____ Address: _____

City/State/Zip _____ Phone (Home) _____ (Work) _____

E-mail: _____

Membership includes a subscription to the quarterly "HEARTS OF GOLD" newsletter and is on a calendar year basis. Memberships received after September 1 of any year automatically carry forward to the next calendar year.

Please check one:

☐ **General Membership \$25** ☐ **Sponsorship \$100** (for helping a dog in need -- you will be recognized in our newsletter and receive notification of the special GRRMF dog you are sponsoring.)

☐ **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. ☐ \$ _____ 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, Post Office Box 1449, Goldenrod, Florida 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.



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